



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

336 East 45th Street, New York NY 10017

STATEMENT

by

H. E. Mr. Amadu Koroma

Deputy Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone
to the United Nations

at the

8th Annual Informal, Interactive Dialogue of the General Assembly on the
Responsibility of States to Protect their populations by preventing genocide,
war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity through
appropriate and necessary means.

New York, 6th September, 2016

Check Against Delivery

Mr. Moderator,

My delegation is very pleased to participate in this year's Informal Interactive Dialogue on the responsibility of states to protect their people, convened by the President of the General Assembly. We sincerely hope that the purposes of this dialogue which are to enable member states to assess the obstacles to mobilizing collective action; how such obstacles could be overcome; the next steps to accelerate implementation of the R2P Principle and improved capacity to coordinate early responses will be achieved.

We have asked for the floor not only to respond to the above objectives but to also to reiterate the commitment which my country made at the 2005 World Summit to its responsibility to protect its people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The basis for our recommitment stems from the fact that we have had the experience of a very bitter and destructive civil war that lasted for eleven years from 1991 to 2002 in which all kinds of atrocities were committed against the people. This blemish in our national history will continue to serve as a constant reminder to us and we will continue to appreciate the need to foster peaceful coexistence and never again to go down the destructive path of violence.

As you may recall, those who bear the most serious responsibility for those atrocities did not go unpunished, they were tried at the Special Court and those found guilty are now serving their sentences. The residual mechanisms of the Special Court are now being managed by the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone. Funding is a major obstacle for this court and we hope to engage with member states very soon to share with you the various options that are available to ensure a more reliable and sustainable funding for the court.

Mr. Moderator,

My delegation acknowledges the fact that prevention of violent conflict remains the most critical ambit of the Principle of R2P. Where there is peace and harmony in a state, there will not only be development, progress and quality life for the people but also there will be no need for those in authority to commit crimes that will shock the conscience of mankind such as war crimes, ethnic cleansing, genocide and crimes against humanity. Ensuring a perpetual and sustainable peace at the national and global level is therefore essential to the success of R2P.

Government in my country sees the need to ensure sustainable peace and harmony by constantly engaging with all stakeholders including the opposition, traditional rulers, religious, women, youth groups and civil society. Requisite political space is given to the opposition and free speech is encouraged by allowing private radio stations and newspapers to operate freely within the ambit of the law to discourage underground and nefarious political activities. Efforts to promote the rule of law and maintain the independence and strengthen national institutions such as the judiciary are well advanced. If the people have confidence in the legal processes, the need to resort to violence will be averted. But peace alone is not enough; underdevelopment, proper management and equitable distribution of national resources, extreme poverty, poor education, and diseases will continue to serve as drivers of conflict.

Mr. Moderator,

My delegation welcomes the Secretary General's report on R2P which was presented this morning and which contain elements such as conflict prevention strategies, early warning mechanisms, rapid global response to the outbreak of conflicts, data collection, increasing capacity in information sharing, complementarity with other mechanisms, coordination with regional bodies, institutional capacities, regional networks, etc. are agreeable to my delegation.

We will continue to support the principle of R2P because the idea of its formation is firmly rooted in the Charter of the United Nations. We welcome your appointment as Special Adviser of the Secretary General on Responsibility to Protect and we wish you a very productive tenure. We look forward to a frequent interaction between your office and member states of the United Nations. Your predecessor Jenifer Welsh did a marvelous job, the leadership that she provided, her commitment and her contributions will serve as a foundation from which you can take from to further advance the accomplishments made so far.

Mr. Moderator,

My delegation will continue to align itself with the call for full support of the Rome Statute and the International Criminal Court established to address impunity for gross crimes of human atrocities. Notwithstanding the challenges, my delegation continues to recognize the ICC as a platform of accountability for perpetrators of horrendous crimes. We call on those States that have not yet ratified the Rome Statute to do so because it is only the Statute enjoys universality that the Court can become more effective and relevant.

Mr. Chairman, Sierra Leone wishes to align itself with the proposals relating to the suspension of the veto in cases involving mass atrocities and genocide.

I thank you for your kind attention.