

Informal Interactive Dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect
New York, 6th September 2016
SPAIN

Thank you very much Mr. President,

My delegation would like to subscribe to the European Union and the Group of Friends' interventions,

Nationally, we would like to reiterate our commitment to the Responsibility to Protect.

Mr. President, recent developments are important but not sufficient. The persistent increase of atrocity crimes, the growing wave of violent extremism and the rise of attacks against civilians in armed conflicts (including medical facilities, schools, humanitarian workers, peacekeeping personnel and journalists) prove that there is something we are not doing well. The Secretary General has wisely identified the main obstacles that we are dealing with. Our current goal has to be to get over them. In this common effort we want to highlight three main aspects:

First, it has been repeatedly said that prevention is a priority. However, we are still missing a real culture of prevention. Political will and resources are being diverted to other apparently-more urgent objectives despite the fact that the cost of prevention is proven much lower than that of a timely-response. We need to reinforce the prevention structures and the early-warning systems with the necessary resources. Moreover, given that one of the main risk factors for the commission of atrocity crimes is its occurrence in the past, the prevention should be addressed to avoid its recurrence. This fact demands to strengthen the interaction with the structures of post-conflict reconstruction. It also demands to end with the general impunity that fuels the cycle of violence and the violations of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights. Once again, we encourage the States that have not yet done so, to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Secondly, the Security Council has not yet assumed its role. It is missing political will. It is also missing commitment to get over a serious institutional handicap: the veto discourages the research of solutions and contributes to the conflict's deadlock. The Responsibility to Protect has to be discussed in the Council. We have to establish patterns of interaction between the Security Council and the mechanisms of prevention and early warning and to promote the regular presence of the Special Advisers on the Responsibility to Protect and the Prevention of Genocide as briefers for the Council. Spain has already organized an Arria-formula meeting with Chile on the Responsibility to Protect, and it is committed to promote a greater presence of both advisers in the following formal meetings of the Council.

Thirdly, the Responsibility to Protect has to be a national priority. It is necessary a transversal approach involving all fields of the public administration and civil society. The Spanish experience has included, among other measures, the designation of a Focal Point, the organization with Chile of the 5th Meeting of R2P Focal Points in Madrid, the creation of an Observatory for Religious Pluralism and a Centre of Resources for Cultural Diversity in Education and the adoption of a National Strategic Plan against Violent Radicalization.

Mr. President, Spain would also like to thank the efforts of the Secretary General to make the Responsibility to Protect a priority and we trust that his successor will remain the same.