

## **Brazil's Statement at the 2016 UN General Assembly Thematic Panel Discussion, From Commitment to Implementation: Ten Years of Responsibility to Protect [Transcribed]**

26 February 2016

Thank you, Mr. Moderator, and I think I'd like to start by saying that this is a difficult time for civilians caught in conflict, and I believe that they are much worse off now than they were 10 years ago. This should be the very sobering starting point of the record of the past 10 years, and not an encouraging one. And I think that the debate today (which was not a monologue, by the way, and that is welcome in itself) raises moral issues and practical issues.

There is a moral dilemma here in the way we envision the third pillar, in particular, and Libya is the obvious example and the issue that cannot be swept under the carpet. And why is this so? Because a high moral standard was raised in defense of military intervention to protect civilians, but this intervention has actually made the situation for civilians much worse than it was before. So, the "Do no harm" precept was not observed in Libya. And there is something of a questionable morality about this, which we must address as we go forward, otherwise we will not be able to go forward.

The other point is that we talk a lot about prevention, but there are very simple ways of demonstrating our commitment to prevention that are not taking place at this very moment. I think a very good place to start with prevention would be to concentrate on Israel/Palestine, and I was surprised and I was surprised not to hear the word "Palestine" by any of the panelists this morning. This would go a long way to helping prevent violent extremism that conduces to terrorism, and other tensions in the Middle East, and the Arab world broadly speaking.

Another modest contribution to prevention would be to contribute to the peacebuilding fund, for example. And we are very struck in the discussions for the peacebuilding architecture, to see the level of resistance to and assessed contributions fund of even very modest proportions in that context. So I find that those who express some skepticism with respect to the original design of RtoP, should not be dismissed as enemies of the protection of civilians. I think there is a debate here about preserving the highest possible moral standard for UN action and strategies at a time that civilians seemed to be especially under stress. And I would also argue that those fleeing conflict, and they are directly fleeing the effect of the RtoP crimes, should also be protected and treated with humanity. So it would be inconsistent to assume or uphold a collective Responsibility to Protect civilians when they are in their own country, threatened by these crimes, but to turn their backs on these refugees and migrants when they knock on your door. So the debate is quite wide, it has become more complex, and I am actually pleased that we are having a dialogue and not a monologue.

Thank you.