

Statement delivered by the Delegation of Slovenia to the United Nations, at the United Nations General Assembly Thematic Panel Discussion on "From commitment to implementation: Ten years of the Responsibility to Protect," convened by the President of the General Assembly [Unofficial Transcription]

26 February 2016

Mr. Moderator,

Let me start by thanking the President of the General Assembly for convening this important meeting and also all panelists for very insightful presentations for which we are very thankful.

As a member of the cross-regional group of countries that prepare this draft General Assembly resolution on RtoP, which was formally presented yesterday, we received very mixed reactions. We listened to everyone. Everyone was not only listened to, but also heard. Slovenia calls on all member states to actively engage in negotiations that will lead to strong and hopefully consensual adoption of a resolution, which will pave the way to better implementation of the concept in the years to come.

In our opinion, and many panelists have expressed their position on that, the key element of RtoP is prevention. It is imperative for us to consolidate the efforts at the national, regional, and global levels in order to protect populations against genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and ethnic cleansing. We also believe that we have to better use available preventive tools at our disposal. When I say available tools I mean political, diplomatic, humanitarian, economic, and legal, both in cooperative and coercive ways. No situation is identical and every situation requires a tailor-made approach. Systematic human rights education, we believe, is an effective mode to respect the rights of all peoples, which is itself a very important element of prevention.

True prevention can only happen with the political will of the countries involved. In this regard we call on all current and future members of the Security Council not to block credible actions aimed at preventing the most heinous and atrocious crimes. Slovenia supports the ACT Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity and of course we applaud the French-Mexican Initiative on voluntary restraint of the use of the veto in mass atrocity situations. In this context, I would like to reiterate, Slovenia's strong support and continued support for the Secretary-General Initiative, Human Rights up Front, as well as support to the Special Advisers for Genocide and RtoP, as well as, of course, civil society organizations engaged in prevention action.

To conclude, Mr. Moderator, Slovenia encourages and also invites all member states not yet parties to the international conventions, and especially the Rome Statute of the ICC that sets out the legal framework for the prevention and punishment of mass atrocity crimes, to become party as soon as possible. This can give a very clear signal that mass atrocities are not acceptable and will not be tolerated and there will be no safe haven anywhere for perpetrators of mass atrocities.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.