

The Asia Pacific Centre for R2P congratulates the Secretary General for his first Report on the Responsibility to Protect, which is a timely and relevant report on atrocities prevention that focused on accountability. Our Centre fully supports the recommendations made in the report, especially in encouraging Member States in deepening and strengthening their commitment to the implementation of the principle, particularly under Pillar 1. Indeed, it cannot be overemphasized that many Member States, including those in the Asia Pacific region, should work seriously in incorporating atrocities prevention in their policies and strengthen accountability mechanisms not just at the UN level but more importantly at the domestic level.

Our Centre has been working very hard since its creation to promote and deepen the understanding of the R2P principle in our region and how Pillar 1 is the key to its implementation. Specifically, our engagement in the Asia Pacific through various country programs and regional diplomacy has over the years increased awareness about the principle, specifically through the creation of various networks that would help states commit to its implementation. For example, the creation of Friends of R2P in Cambodia, which was launched in December 2016, is testimony to the commitment of domestic stakeholders and partners in that country to deepen the understanding of the principle, including the government, and more importantly in implementing it. Following the appointment of a Cambodia national focal point, we continue to endeavor in working with our partners in translating relevant documents, such as the UN Framework of Analysis on the risk factors for atrocity crimes, into the local language, which could enable local champions of R2P with a useful mechanism for monitoring existing risk factors faced by the country. It is through national dialogues and regional engagements on atrocities prevention that countries in our part of the world are being encouraged to give priority to developing mechanisms that would help enhance the capability of states to prevent atrocities.

Notwithstanding the continuing challenges in our region in implementing R2P and promoting atrocities prevention, especially in addressing the root causes of risk factors, we believe that it is only through continuing engagement, dialogues, and partnership with stakeholders at the domestic, regional, and international levels that atrocities prevention and accountability could be realized. Norms such as R2P do not automatically cascade into the domestic and regional spheres and we need champions who will commit to implementing the principle through national and regional dialogues, creation of a network of atrocities prevention advocates, and development of a national action plan of which accountability is an important component. This will take some time, but the key is for stakeholders to remain committed to preventing future atrocities.

Thank you for your attention.