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STATEMENT
by H.E. Ms. Ivana Pajević
Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative at the
Interactive Dialogue on Responsibility to Protect
6 September 2017

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Excellences,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to address you today on behalf of my country Montenegro, country with proud and turbulent history that is strongly committed to Responsibility to Protect.

The challenges we face today are real and serious - the effects of the evolving nature of contemporary conflicts, mass atrocity crimes and more complex security landscape will be felt for years to come. But the progress achieved in the year behind us in advancing and institutionalizing R2P offers hope and an opportunity for making substantial changes for the common good. The 2017 report of the Secretary General and a new approach to international peace and security is vital to our work with valuable measures for improving our response to changing global security environment.

We fully agree that there is a pressing need to place greater emphasis on prevention in the context of R2P. We should renew our efforts to prevent mass atrocity crimes in every country and every community and therefore related key international treaties and protocols should be signed; ratified and implemented, and criminalization of mass atrocity crimes ensured on national level.

In the era of accountability, perpetrators of crimes against humanity should not go unpunished. Every act of violence that goes unpunished or uninvestigated is

an open invitation for further violence. Therefore, states should ensure that there are adequate and effective mechanisms to bring to justice those responsible for related crimes as acts of violation of international law and in that way to strengthen resilience. We underline the important role of the ICC and national judicial authorities to respond to genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity as they occur. The responsibility of the SC for referring cases of crime against humanity to ICC remains indispensable.

We all need to demonstrate strong commitment to the rule of law, respect for human rights and freedoms, democracy and non-use of force in settling disputes. Montenegro strongly believes that human right mechanisms could significantly support identifying risks and preventing atrocity crimes and increase engagement between the Security Council and the HRC including its special procedure mandate holders and UPR mechanism. Believing that veto must not be used when there is a clear responsibility to protect, Montenegro endorsed the French-Mexican initiative on voluntary restraint of veto use in cases of mass atrocities, as well as the ACT Groups Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, war crimes or crimes against humanity and we call on all countries to do so.

Mr. President,

Preventing social exclusion and reducing disparities within our society through economic and social development is a priority of Montenegrin Government. We believe that with strong political will the implementation in practice of cooperation with all human rights mechanisms across all states will be substantially improved. Protecting women, men and children from crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide, ensuring that they live free of violence, have equal access to education, healthcare, political and economic opportunities, we will have healthier, more prosperous and more peaceful societies. It is our joint commitment to champion human rights and prevention agenda around the world and Montenegro, as one of the first countries that appointed focal point reaffirm its commitment to all three R2P pillars and stands ready to be fully engaged in this regard.