

Statement delivered by Uruguay – Informal Interactive Dialogue on R2P, 6 September 2017
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First of all, Uruguay would like to congratulate and thank the Pres of GA for calling a meeting on this topic which is of great importance. We'd like to thank you, Moderator, for having facilitated our dialogue. My country recognizes the valuable report from the Secretary-General, analyzing legal, moral and political responsibilities linked to the Responsibility to Protect and suggesting practical measures to strengthen accountability and prevent atrocity crimes.

Moderator,

Our world today is shaken by atrocity crimes where daily violence is carried out against millions of civilians who are innocent. This is perpetrated by armed groups or by states in blatant breach of international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Given this dark international context, Uruguay considers that the Responsibility to Protect does take on its true dimension. There is now no doubt that its proper and effective implementation is necessary. We welcome the proposal of the Secretary-General to prioritize the prevention agenda in order to put an end to atrocity crimes. Uruguay recognizes the three pillars of the Responsibility to Protect. My country believes that the use of force should only be used as a last resort and fulfill all the guarantees within the United Nations Charter, including the expressed resolution of the Security Council. Uruguay privileges pillars one and two as effective ways of addressing the Responsibility to Protect. We advocate for preventative, comprehensive and integral focus based on cooperation and looking at the underlying causes of conflict.

Moderator,

Uruguay supports the recommendations of the Secretary-General in his report. I would like to highlight a few particularly relevant aspects for my country. Firstly, we believe that strengthening accountability would help to implement the Responsibility to Protect, as well as being an act of justice plays an important role in preventing atrocity crimes. Impunity is often a kind of shield for those committing these crimes and helps those who are trying to perpetrate them. The states are those principally responsible for the human rights of their populations being respected, so there must be a guarantee of accountability within their borders and it must be ensured that the perpetrators of these abhorrent crimes, which infringe the basic elements of humanity, are judged and brought to justice.

Secondly, as the Secretary-General's report rightly points out, prevention of atrocities is most effective when national, regional and world actors all work together. Uruguay is part of the Group of Friends of the Responsibility to Protect in New York and in Geneva and has a national focal point for the Global Network of R2P. Uruguay is also part of the Latin American Network for Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention. We believe that through these initiatives, national and regional ability to prevent are being strengthened and we are moving towards promoted and increased confidence in trust between states. Cooperation at regional level is priority and also its

sub-regional level. These organizations are those who best know the realities and risks of each region in the most effective ways to prevent these.

Moderator,

The role of the United Nations is fundamental, too. Therefore, Uruguay supports the inclusion of this topic on the programme of the General Assembly on the prevention of atrocities and the application of the Responsibility to Protect. The Security Council for its part is given the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security in the Charter and it must redouble its efforts and make appropriate measures available to protect the civilian society. Uruguay has advocated as a nonpermanent member of the Security Council for the Council to refer cases to the ICC when necessary. We also believe it's timely to carry out thematic discussions on the Security Council level based on the Responsibility to Protect in order to find the best approaches to address this topic which could lead to effective ways forward and progress.

As a troop contributing country I would also like to stress the usefulness of peace missions as prevention tools and ways of achieving stability. Responsibility to Protect is the basis of many Security Council resolutions and is currently incorporated in one way or another in many peacekeeping operation mandates.

Just to conclude, I would like to express as part of the ACT group and our support for the code of conduct of the Security Council, resolutions whose job is to protect civilians against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and also the declaration of France and Mexico on the voluntary veto restraint by the P5 of the Security Council when mass atrocities are committed.

Thank you.