

Statement delivered on behalf of the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations

General Assembly informal, interactive dialogue on the “Responsibility to Protect: State Responsibility and Prevention”

11 September 2013

(UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTION)

Thank you Mr. President,

I would like to thank you for convening this interactive dialogue and also I like to take this opportunity to welcome Dr. Jennifer Welsh and congratulate her on being appointed as Special Representative for the Responsibility to Protect.

We have a commitment to preventing and halting of genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity wherever they may rise. States have a solemn duty defend the vulnerable, challenge aggressors, protect and promote human rights and human dignity both at home and abroad.

Mr. President, this function starts with prevention. Although prevention strategies need to be adapted according to international context, several common elements are crucial. Societies that have a respect for diversity, a respect for religious minorities, who hold perpetrators of crimes legally responsible and who resolve disputes in a democratic fashion and seek reconciliation, are less likely to be subject to atrocities. It is important to have a commitment from governments to promote the rule of law and the rights of people.

The Secretary-Generals recent report provides guidance on implementing specific prevention measures including safeguards, effective legislation, accountability mechanisms and national capacity building in key sectors. Regional and sub-regional organizations have an important role to play in sharing lessons and providing technical assistance. I can assure you, Mr. Chairman, that Canada will continue to work with key-partners, and that we look to the UN system to implement atrocity prevention as part of its core commitment. To reaffirming what is stated in the UN-Charter, and I quote “faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women”.

Thank you Mr. President.