

REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF
BOTSWANA TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT BY

**H.E MR. CHARLES T. NTWAAGAE
AMBASSADOR AND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

DURING THE

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY "INFORMAL INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE ON
THE RESPONSIBILITY OF STATES TO PROTECT THEIR
POPULATIONS BY PREVENTING
GENOCIDE, WAR CRIMES, ETHNIC CLEANSING AND CRIMES
AGAINST HUMANITY"**

**08th SEPTEMBER, 2015
NEW YORK**

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Mr. President,

1. I thank you for giving me the floor.
2. The Botswana delegation aligns itself with the Statement delivered earlier on behalf of the Group of Friends on the Responsibility to Protect, of which Botswana is a member.
3. We also take this opportunity to express our deepest appreciation to you for having convened this extremely important meeting which affords us an opportunity to deliberate an issue of fundamental import to the protection and promotion of human rights, democracy, inclusive governance and the rule of law, as well as international peace and security. We further wish to commend the Secretary General's continued commitment and contribution to the promotion of the R2P norm.
4. The Informal Interactive Dialogue on R2P remains particularly relevant in the face of the unimaginable violence and gross violations of international human rights and humanitarian law in many parts of the world. It is indeed reproachable that despite having witnessed mass atrocities that shocked our human conscience in Rwanda and Srebrenica, amongst others, and having vowed to never again allow the same, we continue to see populations endure untold suffering and lose their lives without reason.
5. This dialogue therefore gives Member States a very necessary platform to take stock of the progress and challenges encountered in upholding their individual and collective responsibility towards their populations and beyond their borders.

Mr. President,

6. In 2005 at the World Summit, when Member States adopted the R2P principle, it was clear that States bear the primary responsibility to protect their populations from all forms of human rights violations including the worst kind such as genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Over the years since, we have noted a growing consensus across world regions on the need for the full assumption of that responsibility by Member States.
7. We note that this has translated into the R2P principle gaining significant traction within the UN as evidenced by the increasing number of resolutions which are premised on the norm in the General Assembly, the Security Council and Human Rights Council.
8. Furthermore, the Secretary-General's initiatives to improve the UN's capacity to address violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, particularly those which could result in mass atrocity crimes such as the establishment of the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, the Human Rights Up Front Initiatives, the reviews on the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security are only some of the developments which serve to advance the mainstreaming of R2P at the State and global levels.
9. Botswana remains fully supportive to these initiatives and takes this opportunity to once again reaffirm her steadfast commitment to the ongoing efforts as well as to the very principle of R2P as articulated in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document.

10. It is from the strength of this conviction that Botswana deemed it an imperative to appoint a National Focal Point for R2P and subsequently welcomed the opportunity to co-host, with the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, the Fourth Annual Meeting of the Global Network of R2P Focal Points in Gaborone, Botswana last year June. It is my Government's considered view that with more countries appointing focal points, both national and international capacity to prevent mass atrocities would be strengthened from their continuous engagement and sharing of experiences, ultimately leading to a more robust and effective response mechanism.

Mr President,

11. 2015 marks the 10th Anniversary of the adoption of the R2P norm, and yet in spite of our declarations to assume our responsibility as States to protect our populations, there is manifest failure by some to ensure even the barest minimum, particularly in conflict situations.
12. Perpetrators of such heinous crimes still escape the full wrath of the law, whilst civilian populations become double victims of both the crime and failure of the delivery of justice. Needless to say, more must be done to ensure full accountability for the crimes, committed lest we acquiesce to being judged by history as participants in the destruction of humanity.
13. In this regard, Botswana believes that the Secretary General's six priorities for the next decade outlined in his latest report, must guide and strengthen our resolve to ensure timely and effective responses to advance R2P in the coming years. Botswana remains resolute and eager, Mr President, to continue her active engagement with the international community to play her part.

14. It is our duty and moral obligation as responsible members of the international community to guarantee the full enjoyment of universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of our populations, as well as our future generations.

15. I thank you