

General Assembly Debate Statement: Costa Rica

Unofficial Transcription from webcast

Thank you, Chairman.

May I, first and foremost, extend a warm welcome to you, USG Dieng, as Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide and commend the wonderful contributions of the predecessors Francis Deng and Edward Luck, the previous Special Advisors on Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect.

The concept, and above all the commitment of the international community to the Responsibility to Protect against genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity are clearly established ever since 2005 and they are rooted in principles of the responsibilities and obligations stemming from international law, therefore it behooves us to discuss and evaluate how to implement in practice as effectively as possible this commitment and obligation vis-à-vis all human beings. At this conceptual and operational development stage the starting point as various panelists mentioned must be considered the three pillars of the responsibility to protect as a system of connected parts, an interdependent one which is mutually enforcing, if they are isolated or applied as successive, sequential steps they will lose their individual and systematic effectiveness. That is why explicitly or implicitly, to varying extents, elements of the various pillars may be present when any one of them is implemented. For example early prevention requires correct assessment of the situation and the available options, subsequently specific actions or responses vis-à-vis what the SG today called the precursors or forerunners of atrocity, for example, hate-inciting speech. Also the responses in the first phases of atrocities may be understood as preventing the escalation of such phenomenon. And the measures implemented in the context of the third pillar must have the ultimate objective of ensuring that the respective state may reassume its responsibilities to protect.

Nonetheless, we are firmly convinced that preventive and non-coercive measures are always preferable. Therefore together with Ghana, Denmark and Australia, Costa Rica is promoting the creation of national focal points on Responsibility to Protect, in order to facilitate and promote early warning and prevention in the domestic environment. As regards timely and decisive response, which is the focus of this report and debate, we believe that they need a creative, flexible, wide-ranging approach tailored to the specific circumstances of each case with respect to the instruments and tools to be used and the way in which they use and always in accordance with the Charter therefore we do not believe that we should establish a general implementation protocol on the type of measure to be used, rather there should be guides as to more effective implementation under specific circumstances.

In conclusion then, may I say that we consider that the Security Council has huge responsibility in the area of Responsibility to Protect. And as we have proposed in the S5 group, the permanent members should refrain from exercising their veto in decisions intended to prevent or halt genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. We shall place at the disposal of all the delegations our full text. Thank you.