

Allow me to thank Brazil and H.E. Ambassador Patriota, Minister of External Relations of Brazil, personally for convening this important debate.

Denmark aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

As a strong proponent of the Responsibility to Protect, Denmark is always ready to engage with other countries in order to strengthen R2P and ensure a better common understanding of how we move the R2P agenda forward.

In doing so the starting point should always be the 2005 World Summit Outcome document. The prevention of the R2P crimes and the protection of civilian populations are the guiding values which must be the basis for both our action and our conceptual debates like the one today. Denmark agrees with the Brazilian concept note from November 2011 that R2P should never be used for purposes other than protecting civilian populations. And, likewise, the parameters and conditions for acting under the R2P-doctrine should never be used to block action aimed at protecting civilians, where there is a real need for action. As we are continually reminded of, the risk of inaction in the face of mass atrocities is great; possibly greater than the risk of doing too much.

That brings me to the issue of elaborating criteria, parameters and procedures for the exercise of R2P under Pillar 3. The international community is clearly in a learning process when it comes to developing responses to R2P situations. That is also why this Brazilian initiative to discuss implementation of R2P is so welcome. Denmark, however, wonders whether elaboration of criteria and procedures under Pillar 3 is the right focus now. The UN Charter, the 2005 World Summit Outcome document and international law more broadly lay down the general framework for exercising R2P: when the various actors should step in and what options are available. The particularity and developing challenges in each situation support a case-by-case approach within the boundaries of law. Thus, it is worth noting that R2P is based on the existing international law framework, including international humanitarian law, and that R2P is not changing the rules for the use of force.

This should be combined with a focus on the actual implementation of R2P mandates and policies, and learning lessons from each case. It is important to recognize that prevention is applicable under all three pillars of R2P, that is by the sovereign state itself, by those assisting the sovereign state, and by those exercising their responsibility to react in a “timely and decisive” manner in accordance with the UN Charter.

Denmark has, we believe, a strong record when it comes to protecting civilians. Danish armed forces participated in protection of civilians in the former Yugoslavia

in the early 1990s, in Kosovo in 1999 and in Libya last year. Important and difficult as such operations may be, this should not overshadow that R2P is so much more than coercive military force. Even under Pillar 3, non-military instruments such as ICC referral and sanctions are available and should be utilized. Again, here focus should also be on implementation and follow-up, ensuring for example that Security Council referrals to the ICC are seen through and arrest warrants complied with.

Denmark's present focus within the R2P agenda is on the newly established Network of National Focal Points on R2P. Together with Ghana, Costa Rica and Australia we are seeking ways of making R2P operational and strengthening the capacity of states to identify and react to R2P situations. In cooperation with the Global Centre on R2P we are in the process of developing the National Network of Focal Points who, both internally in their own countries and externally in the international community, will have the task of ensuring that R2P is part of prevention and crisis response mechanisms both nationally, regionally and internationally. This role spans all three pillars of R2P, and states are in the process of mapping out specific action which could be undertaken by focal points. At the end of this week, a preparatory workshop will address the challenges raised during the first National Focal Points meeting in May 2011 and will formulate recommendations for the 2nd National Focal Point meeting later this year.

As noted in the Secretary General's Report on R2P from 2011, it could be useful, if over time, this network could take on a range of communication, learning, policy, capacity building, and mapping functions.

Assisting states and intergovernmental organizations in building institutional capacity to implement R2P is the way forward. It will require long term efforts. We are hoping that as many states as possible will appoint R2P National Focal Points and join the Network and in this way help mobilize capacities for atrocity prevention at the national, regional, and international levels.

Allow me in conclusion to thank again H.E. Ambassador Patriota, Minister of External Relations of Brazil, for hosting this meeting. Denmark looks forward to continued dialogue on this important topic. We are heartened by the strong commitment that so many states have expressed to R2P during this debate. We also wish to thank the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect Mr. Edward Luck for his efforts to assist states.