REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

GLOBAL CENTRE
FOR THE RESPONSIBILITY
TO PROTECT

# Regional R2P National Focal Points Meeting for Europe
# Ljubljana, 10 - 11 April 2013

## CHAIRMAN'S SUMMARY

The Government of the Republic of Slovenia hosted the first Regional R2P National Focal Points Meeting for Europe in Ljubljana, in association with the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. The meeting brought together national Focal Points and representatives from 31 countries, delegates from international (UN, ICC, ICMPD) and regional organizations (EU, OSCE) as well as nongovernmental organizations (ICRtoP, GCR2P, Stanley Foundation). We were particularly honored by the presence of Mr Adama Dieng, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide.

In 2005 at the United Nations World Summit, states unanimously committed to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity by adopting the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). R2P affirms an individual state's primary responsibility to protect its population from these four crimes along with the collective international responsibility to take appropriate measures to help protect populations at risk.

To make the promise of R2P a reality, institutional capacities need to be developed at national, regional and international levels to prevent and halt mass atrocities. An important step that governments can take to improve intra-governmental and inter-governmental efforts to prevent and halt mass atrocities is the appointment of a R2P Focal Point. This senior level official is responsible for the promotion of R2P at the national level and to support international cooperation on the issue through participating in a global network. Appointment of a Focal Point is a step that can be implemented by governments with differing levels of capacity in mass atrocity prevention to demonstrate their commitment to R2P.

The R2P Focal Points initiative was launched in September 2010 by the governments of Denmark and Ghana in collaboration with the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect. Since then the governments of Australia and Costa Rica have joined the organizing group. At the present time 28 countries representing all regions of the world have appointed a R2P Focal Points within their governments. Two meetings of the global network of R2P Focal Points have taken place in New York in 2011 and 2012.

The first European Regional meeting of the R2P National Focal Points was convened with the aim to enable a broader discussion on R2P in the European context with a focus on pillars 1 and 2, and the role of the R2P Focal Points in implementing R2P.
The meeting also enabled consultation process with the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and European States' in preparation of the 2013 United Nations Secretary-General report on the responsibility to protect: "Prevention and State Responsibility", focusing on the primary responsibility of States to protect their populations by preventing mass atrocity crimes and their incitement. While continuous efforts are needed with respect to improving implementation of Pillar 3 mechanisms, greater focus should be placed on Pillars 1 and 2, essentially preventative pillars. It is also in this respect that participants were particularly pleased with this years' focus of the Secretary General's report on R2P on Pillar 1.

Moreover, the meeting affirmed the importance of the involvement of civil society in R2P discussions. It was with this awareness that the second day of our meeting took place at a Faculty of Law in Ljubljana, where we engaged in a dialogue with academia and general public.

The Chairman's Summary provides an overview of main evaluations and findings that resulted from discussion and suggests recommendations. In particular, the meeting stressed the importance of the role of the national R2P Focal Points, the need to enhance cooperation on R2P at national, regional and international levels, strengthen capacities and build consensus on R2P.

## I. The role of the national R2P Focal Points

- Participants affirmed the importance of the role of National Focal Points for R2P (NFP) in implementation of the R2P concept.
- The meeting was a good opportunity for exchanging our experience regarding the establishment of the R2P NFP and the role Focal Points can and should play.
- National Focal Points can play a key role in embedding and mainstreaming the R2P into national policy architecture, where adoption of national R2P action plans can be an important step. A particular challenge still lies in engaging and coordinating efforts of all the relevant national institutions, making the exchange of best practices particularly beneficial. In addition to a broad set of responsibilities internally, ranging from awareness raising and coordination of R2P aspects, monitoring and analyzing information, and mobilizing governments around particular objectives, internationally NFP should engage with counterparts in the capitals, help with outreach activities, enhance public diplomacy and mainstream R2P beyond NY. It was stressed that NFP could also have a role in bringing R2P outside the diplomatic corridors.
- At the present time 28 countries representing all regions of the world have appointed a R2P Focal Points within their governments. States that have not yet done so were invited to join the Global R2P Focal Points initiative.
- Moreover, many participants called for appointment of R2P representatives by regional and sub-regional organizations, including the EU. This could importantly strengthen cooperation between States and organisations and improve exchange of information and risks assessment.
- It was suggested that combining the efforts of R2P national Focal Points and existing networks for genocide prevention should be considered.
- In order to further develop the potential of the Global R2P Focal Points initiative Focal Points should:
    - Meet on a regular basis at regional and international level
    - Conduct periodic assessments of what States have done to operationalize the Responsibility to Protect
    - Foster a range of communication, learning, policy and capacity-building activities, including a mapping exercise of the capacities of various Member States
    - Envisage a possible common plan for action

## II. Enhancing cooperation on R2P at national, regional and international levels

- The role of intra-regional and inter-regional collaboration in the implementation and furtherance of R2P is of pivotal importance. Here, the Joint EU-Africa strategy was emphasised as a good example of such cooperation. Regions possess the best knowledge on local affairs and can potentially act in a timely and efficient manner. It was stressed that the European region is

particularly well placed to contribute substantially to this end, both bilaterally and in multilateral fora. Focusing on the first two pillars, the EU provides a good example of best practices and lessons learned. In particular, regional integration has proven a very successful tool for the advancement of good governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights. Regional cooperation also provides solid ground for economic development and social stability. Moreover, it offers mechanisms that can monitor potential instabilities and resolve disputes by peaceful means.

- In order to improve cooperation and learning process, regular dialogues on implementation of R2P among regional and sub-regional organisations should take place. It was suggested that cooperation between the EU, Council of Europe and OSCE could be further improved with the aim to reinforce their efforts.
- At the operational level, cooperation among experts and exchange of information should be enhanced. The establishment of national Focal Points network is an important contribution to that end.
- In order to improve coordination and exchange of best practices national R2P Focal Points should consider close cooperation and possible joint meetings with other similar group of experts, such as the genocide prevention network, experts in mediation, etc.
- Civil society networks play increasingly important role in reminding of the States' obligation to prevent mass atrocities. Civil society should consider how to better assist states in fulfilling their responsibilities; in particular develop strategies that can be adopted by states to address R2P situations. Civil society can also assist states in finding common understandings and solutions for joint international action.

## III. Strengthening capacities for atrocity crimes prevention

While the European region's potential in the protection of civilians from mass atrocity crimes has been recognized, the assessment of existing structures and capacities for the implementation of R2P in Europe helped identify additional improvements that should be taken:

- More field-based research is needed to understand fully what works where and why. Regional research networks should be supported in seeking to gain a better understanding, case by case, of why some States have taken one path and others a different one. Moreover, greater understanding of risk factors is required.
- Mass atrocity prevention should be mainstreamed into the foreign policy making on national and regional levels.
- Regional and sub-regional arrangements play a critical role in assuring the accurate and timely flow of information and analysis from the country level to global decision-makers, while lessening the risk of misinterpretation and misinformation. Europe's expertise and warning-response systems should be improved.
- Structural prevention, such as assistance programmes, as well as direct prevention should be better directed to build specific capacities within societies and help prevent mass atrocity crimes. This would require better coordination, analysis and comprehensive policy planning with respect to mass atrocity prevention. Further prevention should be streamlined into development assistance, where appropriate.
- Europe should further strengthen its capacities in: (a) conflict-sensitive development analysis; (b) indigenous mediation capacity; (c) consensus and dialogue; (d) local dispute resolution capacity; (e) capacity to replicate.

- The EU was considered a good example of a regional capacity-building structure with broad variety of tools available for warning and responding to mass atrocities. The EEAS has established Conflict Prevention Board which includes peace-building and mediation instruments. Two new tools were being developed: Early Warning Risk Matrix (EWRM) and the Country Conflict Assessment (CCA) Format. It was, however, stressed that improvements should be considered how to move from early warning to early action. A proposal was made to consider appointing an EU R2P Focal Point as internal convener concerning R2P matters.
- Moreover, other international organizations, such as the OSCE, in particular the Office of the High Commissioner on National Minorities, the ICC, and the ICMPD have important role to play in implementing R2P. They should develop policies that will streamline their activities related to R2P and coordinate them with relevant states.

## IV. Consensus building

- To achieve full operationalization and effective implementation of R2P it is crucial to continue contributing to the institutionalization of R2P, foster dialogue and exchange of best practices at national, regional and cross regional and international levels. High-Level events to foster dialogue of world leaders would be recommended.
- It was stressed that the R2P concept is composed of three pillars. However, most of international discussion is based on Pillar 3, and in particular on military intervention, which is last and most controversial tool available. Focus should move to Pillar 1 and 2 – prevention: capacity building and international cooperation. States must strengthen dialogue with a view to finding a viable strategy for common action. Dialogue should focus on areas of common interest and achievable goals. International intervention can be debated in the framework of the Brazilian proposal RwP which should be discussed further.

## V. Plan for Common Action

- States should consider appointing a national R2P Focal Point in order to foster international dialogue and state-to-state cooperation concerning R2P situations.
- Regions/regional organizations should also consider appointing regional R2P focal points in order to enable better regional assistance and cooperation, including region-to-region cooperation.
- States should continue convening high-level events on the R2P with a view to enhance political dialogue and re-establish consensus on the R2P concept.
- States and regional organizations should convene on a regular basis a European-wide R2P meeting in order to assess possible R2P situations as regions obtain the best knowledge and information on regional developments.
- Civil society should assist States in developing their strategies concerning capacity building and prevention activities of mass atrocities.
- International Community should gather best practices and share them with regional organizations and individual States.

Done at Ljubljana on 11 April 2013