

**Statement by H.E. Andrej Logar,  
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Slovenia to the UN**  
*at an informal interactive dialogue of the General Assembly on the Report of the  
Secretary-General on the responsibility of protect*

**Monday, 8 September 2014**

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all today's speakers for providing interesting insights on the topic of our collective responsibility – international assistance and the R2P, which would also help to build the common global understanding of what R2P is and is not.

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union. Slovenia as a strong supporter of the R2P is also a member of Group of Friends of the R2P. Due to time constraints my intervention will be shortened but we will provide the secretariat with the full statement.

Although we are discussing the relevance of the responsibility to protect at an informal meeting of the General Assembly, it is important that today's dialogue is taking place, since no matter how many times we reiterate that the failures to protect human beings from mass atrocities and systemic violations of human rights should not be repeated, we still witness events that shock our human conscience time and time again.

It is our firm belief that collective responsibility of international community under Pillar 2 should be by no means understood as contrary to the principle of sovereignty. International community helps individual states to exercise their primary responsibility to protect their populations from mass atrocities and from gross and systemic violations of human rights. The concept of sovereignty in the contemporary form does not only entail rights of states but also places obligations on them. The assistance of international community in the sense of Pillar 2 should thus be perceived as the implication of the well accepted principle of cooperation among equally sovereign states. Furthermore, it's not a new obligation of states, as common Art 1 of the Geneva Conventions obliges all states to respect and ensure respect of all conventions.

We have to strengthen our efforts to ensure timely, well-coordinated and coherent international assistance. Wide array of actors can provide Pillar 2 assistance to states, like international and regional organizations with their bodies, including ICC, civil society and the private sector.

The Rome Statute, which is based on the principle of complementarity, offers an important legal framework for national legal systems and acts as a deterrent to most heinous crimes. Individual criminal accountability is a crucial element for breaking the famous circle of impunity. The ICC assistance can be significant also with the respect to reparations as well as psycho-physical and legal assistance the Court grants to the victims.

Slovenia will continue to advocate for the universality of the Rome Statute and the Kampala amendments.

The ICC's potential could be further strengthened through the improvement of cooperation within the UN framework, including by refraining from the use of veto in cases of atrocity crimes. Therefore we encourage the P5 to continue deliberations about much needed self-imposed restriction on the veto right.

To close some of the gaps regarding the effective exercise of the principle of complementarity in the international legal framework, Slovenia, together with Belgium, the Netherlands, Argentina and Senegal, advocates for opening negotiations on a Multilateral Treaty for Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition in Domestic Prosecution of Atrocity Crimes.

In the last month Security Council's open debate on conflict prevention it was widely recognized that more effective prevention is needed in today's changing nature of conflicts. Prevention and the protection of people are at the heart of the R2P concept. We need to get prevention right, learn early warning signs (like human rights violations), and act appropriately. The sooner we can assist states in coping with internal difficulties and helping them to get back on track with international norms and standards, the lesser the cost, both in human lives and infrastructural (and financial) damage.

Therefore we welcome Secretary-General's 'Rights up Front' initiative as a right step and effort toward being better alert and effective early on. In this vein call for more effective UN system-wide consultations (at HQ and field level, early on including all relevant actors, like OHCHR and both SG's special advisers, Dieng and Welsh) to embed atrocity prevention and R2P into the core operations of the UN.

Slovenia pays particular attention to the use of mediation as part of a larger toolbox for preventing and resolving conflicts and achieving sustainable peace. Mediation can help facilitate a political solution, end violence and prevent conflicts from escalating into violence. By doing so, it can help implement the R2P concept.

As celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the concept next year, and taking stock on the efforts to implement the R2P, we would welcome a General Assembly resolution or high level event in this respect. As marking the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide in July 2015, the Security Council should also reaffirm the commitment to the R2P, as it did with the passing of Resolution 2150 during the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda.

We think it is a right time to include the R2P debate in the formal agenda of the UNGA. Not to reopen the concept as such and as universally affirmed in 2005 but rather to further develop our common understanding on how best to implement the R2P in practice.

We would like to encourage member states to commit to national prevention and to share information within the Global network of R2P Focal Points.

Slovenia intends to host an event next year that can also contribute to turn the Rights up Front initiative into a living reality.