

PHILIPPINE STATEMENT (Reading Copy)

Responsibility to Protect: 6th Annual Interactive Dialogue on the Secretary-General's Report

08 September 2014

Mr President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The debate on R2P has progressed a lot since it was introduced in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document.

The Philippines upholds the rule of law as the basis for both the legitimacy of a state and the civilized conduct of relations among nations.

We join other Member States in affirming their fundamental duty to protect their own people from atrocity crimes.

We subscribe to our shared responsibility of encouraging and lawfully assisting other states in helping them prevent these crimes.

Our long-standing respect for the sanctity of human life and fundamental human rights and freedoms is a cornerstone of national policy.

Our obligation to prevent atrocity crimes does not invite ways and means that are outside the ambit of the Charter of the United Nations. The principle of state sovereignty is sacrosanct; it is the building block of international law and the conduct of international relations. We thank the Secretary-General for his report in recognizing this overriding principle.

We also agree that assistance and capacity-building in the economic, political and humanitarian spheres should be based on a clear understanding of the nature of atrocity crimes. In addition to States, international and regional organizations, civil society and the private sector, have a lot to contribute in this regard.

Mr President, how often have we heard it said that, in the full range of developmental issues, "no one size fits all"? That there is a need for "flexibility"?

We believe that so it is in the debate on R2P, as some States have expressed.

On the other hand, since 2009 up to the present, some States have also taken the view that R2P to be accepted as a norm should be consistently and uniformly applied.

The challenge is that we want the consistency and predictability that the rule of law prescribes, while at the same time situations that may implicate R2P need to be examined on a case-to-case basis.

The Philippines supports the continued dialogue on R2P in the General Assembly as the appropriate forum to discuss the matter. It highlights the priority we give to human rights and fundamental freedoms, particularly the right to life.

We should also continuously examine and strengthen our institutions, from the domestic level, to regional organizations, and multilateral institutions. Working methods and procedure – including the use of the veto by the Security Council P5 on R2P situations – must continuously be assessed and critiqued.

Preventive diplomacy should be exhausted and enhanced. We need to more seriously discuss and interphase R2P with mediation, dialogue, negotiation, targeted sanctions and referral to the ICC, and those tools mentioned in the UN Charter.

Finally, the Philippines believes that education is key to arresting atrocity crimes and nipping them in the bud. It cannot be stressed enough that education and shared values and cultures, in all its diversity, should be promoted and ingrained at all levels of education.

Thank you for your kind attention.