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STATEMENT

by H.E. Ms. Ivana Pajević

Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of Montenegro to the United Nations  
*Informal interactive dialogue on the Report of the Secretary-General on the  
Responsibility to Protect*  
8 September 2014

*Please check against delivery*

Mr. President,

Allow me to join others in thanking you for organizing today's important debate. Let me also thank Secretary-General for his report on the subject. I express my appreciation to panelists for their useful presentations.

Mr. President,

I would like to focus my intervention around four points.

First is prevention. Secretary-General's report rightfully states that, I quote, "the range of acute protection challenges confronting the international community today, including those related to the rise of extremist groups, highlights the urgent need to provide earlier and more effective forms of support to States to prevent the slide into systemic violence and atrocity crimes", end of quote. Preventive measures have to take priority in form of providing international assistance to States. I come back to the Secretary-General report, because what is mentioned in para 18 can't be emphasized enough. "Acting early not only increases the likelihood of being able to address latent risks before they escalate, but is also more cost-effective." Everyone is fully aware of this, but times and again we see examples of international community responses only when the crisis develops, or at the brink of crisis.

Mediation in this sense represents an important tool at the disposal of the UN and international community to prevent atrocities. Yet we still struggle to recognize the full scope of benefits and impact that mediation has to offer. Therefore it is necessary to strengthen our efforts so that mediation can truly be

established as a core function of the UN, as prescribed in Article 33 of the Charter. Being such a cost-effective tool for prevention and peaceful resolution of conflict that has largely been under-utilized, mediation rightfully deserves increased attention and resources of the UN system and UN membership as a whole and Montenegro will remain steadfast in ensuring this becomes possible.

As a member of Group of Friends of Mediation, just few days ago we had an opportunity to listen to reflections of Standby team of mediation experts in the Mediation Support Unit of DPA on their work in assisting States in dispute resolution. What is striking is to hear the kind of valuable work a handful of experts, who are always in high demand, do to help States overcome their difficulties and defuse tensions. I only imagine what kind of difference and contribution having more of those experts would make for the world. Therefore, we have to make concerted effort to invest more in preventive tools, particularly in mediation and early detection and warning.

Second. Within the scope of encouragement, as one of the three categories of assistance under pillar II, let me point to Human Rights Council and its universal periodic review process, which can help states in the form of raising awareness and concerns about human rights violations that could risk escalating into atrocity crimes, and also by conveying recommendations for coercive action. This is a very useful mechanism available to states, and as such it needs to be recognized, accepted and utilized. By way of example, Montenegro received total of 124 recommendations arising from its last year's UPR, and we accepted 121. By committing to realize almost all of given recommendations, we have demonstrated serious determination to improve national human rights infrastructure, so to better protect and serve all citizens. Allow me to stress that the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights also plays vital role in encouraging states to meet their protection responsibilities.

Third. The adoption, by the General Assembly, of the Arms Trade Treaty represents significant milestone in making sure the perpetrators are denied the means to commit atrocity crimes. In accordance with the ATT, states should not knowingly provide arms that could be used for atrocity crimes. Montenegro has just recently become 44<sup>th</sup> state to ratify the ATT, which is our contribution towards the entry into force of this historic Treaty as well as illustration of our firm commitment to the responsible arms trade. We expect that this instrument will be decisive in putting an end to uncontrolled arms trade which fuels armed conflicts, thus making the real difference in the protection of lives, livelihoods and human rights of millions of people worldwide.

Fourth. Montenegro welcomes French initiative on a "Code of conduct" on the use of veto in situations of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and

ethnic cleansing. We remain keen in operationalization of this proposal, as we are of the view that it could substantially contribute to future prevention of mass crimes. We firmly believe that, in the spirit of constructiveness, dialogue and high regard for multilateralism, with UN at its center, the solution among the permanent five members will materialize.

Permit me to also refer to seven categories of capacities, as stated in the SG report, that contribute to the development of effective, legitimate and inclusive national institutions and also to mitigating atrocity crime risks.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm Montenegro's strong commitment to the Responsibility to Protect as a matter of national priority. We will continue to support the work of Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect and encourage their office to continue to mainstream R2P within UN activities.

Thank you.