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DEBATE ON
“THE RESPONSIBILITY WHILE PROTECTING”

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As we have seen in this debate, it is clear that there are divergent, and even contradictory, opinions on the “responsibility to protect”. India has talked about the manipulation of Resolution 1973 of the Security Council on Libya, and Guatemala has referred to the discredit of the notion of the “responsibility to protect”, as a result of the implementation of the aforementioned resolution.

We recognize that several countries that comprise this forum, including the Federative Republic of Brazil, advocate, in good faith, for the “responsibility to protect”, sincerely concerned about the acts of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

Venezuela always looks forward to the initiatives promoted by the brother country of Brazil, and greets the appearance, in this event, of the distinguished Foreign Affair Minister, H.E. Antonio de Aguiar Patriot.

Certainly, there are crimes that lacerate the consciousness of humanity.

Who could remain indifferent to such horrors as those that occurred in Rwanda? Venezuela adds itself to this concern.

But who guarantees that there will not be a selective implementation of the “responsibility to protect”?

Who guarantees that the “responsibility to protect” will not be used as an excuse for imperial powers to conduct interventions in weak countries, for political and economic motivations?

The “responsibility to protect” is only intended to be applied to militarily weak countries, in order to invade developing countries.

Why isn’t the “responsibility to protect” mentioned when the Palestinian people is slaughtered? Why isn’t the “responsibility to protect” mentioned when imperial powers assassinate, with impunity, Iraqis, Afghans and Pakistanis?

The mandate from the Final Document of the 2005 World Summit is for that the “General Assembly continues examining the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity and its implications, bearing in mind the principles of the Charter and international law”.

However, no formal intergovernmental process for its discussion or implementation in the United Nations currently exists, and no monitoring mechanism has been established in the General Assembly on this issue. Discussions on this matter have taken place exclusively in informal meetings, such as this one that brings us together today.

As a result, we are concerned that UN officials use resources of the institution to implement the “responsibility to protect”. The best proof that there is no consensus on this issue and its implementation is the discussion that we are having today. We emphasize: until today, there is no consensus on the scope and nature of the responsibility to protect

Therefore, it is valuable to continue the discussion. For the sake of transparency, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela supports the formal discussion of the matter within the General Assembly. We are sure that in that body the purposes and principles of the Charter will be reaffirmed, particularly the respect for sovereignty and nonintervention. Let’s not allow the concept of the “responsibility to protect” to be used to invade developing countries, and cause more deaths than what are claimed to be protected.

Peaceful means and political and diplomatic dialogue should always prevail in resolving conflicts. Consequently, we support the peace proposal elaborated by the African Union in the case of Libya. Unfortunately, this proposal was rejected by those who wanted war, rather than peace. President Chávez had raised a similar peace initiative.

We would like to thank Brazil for its contribution to this debate.