



CZECH REPUBLIC

Statement by

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**Deputy Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic
to the United Nations**

**at the Interactive dialogue of the General Assembly
on “Early warning, assessment and
the responsibility to protect”**

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Madame President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Czech Republic would like to align itself with the statement delivered previously on behalf of the European Union.

Let me begin by commending the continuing efforts of the UN Secretary General towards the implementation of the emerging norm of the responsibility to protect. In this respect, the Czech Republic warmly welcomes the recent report of the UN Secretary General on Early warning, assessment and the responsibility to protect (A/64/864). We truly value the work done so far by the UN Secretary General and his Special Adviser on Responsibility to Protect, Dr. Edward Luck, to put the concept into practice. Today's interactive dialogue presents another important step in the process, whose ultimate objective is to prevent and halt genocide and mass atrocities. Therefore, the Czech Republic, as a Member State of the Group of Friends, welcomes the initiative of the President of the General Assembly to convene this interactive dialogue, focusing on early warning and assessment. Clearly, this is another important initiative along the lines of article 139 of the World Summit Outcome, which emphasizes "the need for the UN General Assembly to continue consideration of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity."

Five years have passed since the 2005 World Summit, which adopted the concept of responsibility to protect. Last year witnessed several important events, critical for its implementation. First, the UN Secretary General submitted his report on implementing responsibility to protect. Consequently, in July 2009, the UN General Assembly held a debate on responsibility to protect, in which the UN Member States demonstrated a strong support for the implementation. Finally, in September 2009, the UN General Assembly adopted by consensus the resolution 63/308 which, similarly as the preceding debate, endorses the determination of the UN Member States to move forward. Our commitment voiced in paragraphs 138 and 139 of the World Summit Outcome Document requires that we do not miss this momentum and translate it into action.

Madame President,

Allow me to inform you that in July this year, Mr. Karel Kovanda, who represented the Czech Republic on the UN Security Council in 1994 – 95, was awarded by the Rwandan President Paul Kagame the Umurinzi Rwanda's Campaign against Genocide Medal for his efforts to bring attention of the world to the genocide that was taking place in Rwanda in 1994. In this respect I would like to use this opportunity to reiterate that Czech Republic remains strongly committed to

support the implementation of the responsibility to protect, including the ongoing efforts to improve the early warning and assessment capacity of the UN system to help prevent future mass atrocities like those in Rwanda 16 years ago.

A prerequisite for an effective prevention is a timely identification and correct assessment of situations which have the potential to develop into mass atrocities, so that concrete policy prescriptions can follow. As pointed out in the recent report by the SG, the real challenge we are facing today is not a lack of information, but the lack of ability to assess it. The Czech Republic appreciates and supports the efforts of the UN Secretary General to address these shortcomings and to seek possibilities for centralizing information on early warning, coming from different sources. In this regard, my country appreciates that the Secretary General in his report invites the UN Member States to “consider ways to institutionalize the collaboration” between the Special Advisor on the Prevention of Genocide and the Special Advisor for Responsibility to Protect, “including options for a joint office”, and encourages the UN Secretariat to submit concrete proposals which would fill the existing gaps.

We are all well aware that the credibility of the United Nations may be significantly enhanced by its ability to act effectively to prevent and halt genocide and mass atrocities. The accomplishment of this difficult, though crucial, task requires coordination and strengthening of the capacity of all relevant UN Secretariat departments, funds and programs. Essential is also a greater involvement of regional and sub-regional organizations, which often have an intimate local knowledge and are equipped with their own early warning mechanisms, as they can raise attention to situations which could result in a mass atrocity. Two important steps to enhance coordination have already been done: the establishment of the mandate of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and of the mandate of the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect. The Czech Republic would like to encourage all further steps to implement the responsibility to protect, including further consideration in the UN General Assembly, p. e. in the form of an interactive dialogue on the role of regional and sub-regional organizations in the implementation process.

Thank you, Madame President.