

Statement by Charge d'Affaires, a.i, Jeanne d'Arc Byaje, at the informal dialogue on R2P
8 September 2016

Thank you Moderator,

Excellencies, ladies and Gentlemen,

From the outset, I would like to thank Secretary-General for his annual Report on the Responsibility to Protect. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate you Mr Chair, for your appointment as Special Advisor on the Responsibility to Protect. We commend the work done by your predecessor Ms Jennifer Welsh, and it is our hope that you will capitalize on the current progress in mainstreaming R2P in the daily work of the United Nations.

Rwanda associates itself with the statement delivered by Netherlands on behalf of the Group of Friends of R2P

The eighth report of the Secretary takes stock of status of progress in implementation of R2P since the adoption of the World summit document in 2005, in global efforts to prevent genocide and mass atrocity crimes.

Looking back 11 years down the road, we agree with the Secretary General that although important strides were made both at the UN and the individual member states level, the Responsibility to Protect remains the source of contestation. Despite important conceptual progress and consensus built around R2P, implementation of the 2005 political commitment by member states, regional organizations and the UN itself has been woefully inadequate in the face of a number of current crises where populations face mass atrocity crimes

Claims about the status of R2P a new 'norm' of international conduct have been strongly resisted; and commission of mass atrocities are not only widespread, but reoccurring in many parts of the World. Today, responsibility to protect has more support in principle but is far from being put into practice.

We believe that action to prevent future genocide and mass atrocities involves broad areas of activity, including Preventing armed conflict, protecting civilians in armed conflict, ending impunity, ensuring early, and clear warning and taking swift and decisive action. The Kigali Principles that are now endorsed by 35 member states present a framework for effective protection of civilians in armed conflicts.

However, Prevention is better than protection. It is of utmost importance that governments, regional organizations and the international community focus their attention on addressing the underlying causes of conflict.

We believe that instead of spending time in conceptual and ideological debate, the international community should invest much in the development of strong institutions that establish the

foundations of good governance based on the rule of law, democratic principles and values, and accountability to contribute in building societies resilient to atrocity crimes and contribute to the promotion and protection of Human Rights.

Regional and sub-regional organizations must also develop the capacity to streamline and implement their efforts to intervene when civilians are endangered, including the ability to recognize and disseminate the signs of impending or potential genocide.

Finally, we look forward to the recommendations from this interactive dialogue, including consideration of R2P as a formal agenda item by the General Assembly. Like other previous speakers, we are also encouraged by the growing number of countries who appointed the National Focal points on R2P; and we hope more would do so in the near future.

I thank you