

**Tanzania's Statement at the 2016 UN General Assembly Thematic Panel Discussion,  
From Commitment to Implementation: Ten Years of Responsibility to Protect  
[Transcribed]**

26 February 2016

Thank you, Mr. Moderator, and I think it's important that we're having this discussion. This tone is also welcome. Its tone suggests its importance not only to the international community, but to the humanity we all share.

Mr. Moderator, the adoption of the 2005 outcome document and the recognition of the Responsibility to Protect was an important landmark, and therefore celebrating its 10 year anniversary is an invaluable moment for reflection and recommitment.

I trust our panelists, especially Gareth Evans, will vouch to the claim often times made that RtoP captures a simple and powerful idea. That the primary Responsibility to Protect people from mass atrocity crimes lies primarily with the states. The states' sovereignty implies a responsibility, not a license to kill, but when a state is unable or unwilling to prevent such atrocities, the international community has a collective responsibility to intervene. Yes, a simple and powerful idea, nonetheless, let the truth be told. 10 years down, it stands that the simplest of ideas is not so simple. This is why we wish to make two observations.

First, it is only right that we continue to focus on the General Assembly as we seek to enhance national and global capabilities in combating impunity, and human rights violations. There are bound to be frustrations and disappointments, clearly evidenced in this room, on the manner we proceed in implementing RtoP. It is also evident that the General Assembly has an important role for states to strengthen their prevention capabilities. Ironically, in many countries including our own, national institutions, such in our case the Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance, are less likely to obtain support from sources who only want to work with non-governmental actors. That is not to say those non-governmental agencies do not have a roll, they do. The truth is, as a tool for prevention, education is vital in nurturing norms and practices for promoting good governance and law. Consequently, agencies with broader and wider national reach deserve support as a framework of instilling norms, values, and principles. We must focus on prevention of violations before they happen. It is pointless to adopt a resolution that supports and reaffirms, but falls short of providing concrete and effective support for measures for strengthening national capabilities for prevention. There is no substitute for investing in education of prevention.

Secondly, and finally, it is equally imperative that we must equally focus on the decision-making processes in the Security Council. In this regard, the decisions of the Council cannot escape scrutiny. To date, it remains difficult to find justification for the council's decision to intervene in Libya in 2011 and its content with nothing less than regime change, while remaining a spectator in situations where the moral imperative for action was equally beyond doubt. RtoP should not

only be a guiding document in how sovereign governments treat their people, it should also be about how the international community ought to respond. Convenience and appropriateness should not be part of the equation. Our idealism should not cloud the failings taking place in the Council that inhibit the full realization of what is otherwise an ideal principle. And those in the council who can make a difference should perhaps renew their rhetoric hypocrisy about RtoP. Regrettably, most the depressing and distressing reality has been our failure to overcome complications that are driven by political considerations. This is the reality we must confront. "Never again" must not be an empty rhetoric.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.