

**Intervention
by the representative of Ukraine
at the informal, interactive dialogue of the General Assembly on the responsibility
of States to protect their population by preventing genocide, war crimes, ethnic
cleansing and crimes against humanity through appropriate and necessary means**

(New York, 8 September 2014)

Mr. Moderator,

At the beginning let me express our gratitude for convening today's meeting and welcome the Secretary-General's Report, as well as to the distinguished panelists. The main issue of the today's discussion on assessing how a variety of actors, working in partnership, can encourage States to fulfill their primary responsibility to protect; assist them in building capacities that will make them more resilient to the risk factors for atrocity crimes; and add to their protection capacities in situations of emerging or ongoing crisis is topical for my country.

In this regard, I would like to state that the main task of Ukrainian Governmental forces conducting Antiterrorist Operation in some regions of the Donbas, Ukraine, is protection of civilians and restoration of law and order.

Mr. Moderator,

We are of the view that "R2P" proposes clear and moderate standards of the exercise of commitments by a State and international community concerning the gross violations of human rights. "R2P" is set for the international community and all states concerned to assist a State in fulfilling its responsibility to protect and it fully excludes any possibility of covert usage of military factor by one State against another State to serve as a front for protection of population from the pretended threats with the aim to annex foreign territories.

This is why we would like to emphasize that the excessive use of the principles of the responsibility to protect can lead to gross danger for specific states and international community in general.

Among examples are attempts of Russia, who from the moment of creature of the "R2P" expressed concerns of the potential risks of such principle, to use it to rationalize its military actions in the territory of Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014 as obligations to protect so called Russian-speaking population.

We would like to emphasize that artificial application of the principle "R2P" to Crimea and Donbas, used by Russia to obscure military aggression against sovereign Ukraine can not be tolerated, and justified by international law. It was clearly confirmed by the UN Monitoring Mission which strongly rebuffed Russian allegations of any systematic gross violations of rights of minorities in Ukraine.

In conclusion, Mr. Moderator,

I would like to use this opportunity to recall once again that Pillar II of the responsibility to protect, the main issue of the SG's report, is therefore a reminder that the responsibility to protect is intended to reinforce, not undermine, sovereignty. The principle was not designed to create a hierarchical structure in which the international community imposes demands or solutions on States. Rather, it reaffirms the fundamental principle of sovereign equality, expressed in Article 2 of the Charter of the United Nations. As sovereign equals, States have both reciprocal rights and responsibilities and participate, as peers, in the creation and maintenance of international rules, norms and institutions. The responsibility to protect is meant to inspire cooperation among a variety of actors that are equally committed to protecting populations from atrocity crimes.

I thank you.