



STATEMENT

by

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to the United Nations**

**Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Responsibility to Protect and the
prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity**

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-Check against delivery-

Mr President,

First, I express my sincere thanks to you, President of the General Assembly Miroslav Lajčák and to Secretary-General António Guterres and for your introductory words.

At the outset, Slovakia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the European Union, as well as with the statement made on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Responsibility to Protect.

Mr President,

Last year, Slovakia firmly supported the inclusion of the item *Responsibility to Protect and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity* on the agenda of the 72nd session of the General Assembly. A formal debate is clearly the appropriate forum for discussions on R2P. We hope that today's debate will not remain an exception in the row of informal interactive dialogues, and therefore we support the inclusion of R2P as a standing item on the agenda of the General Assembly.

Slovakia highly appreciates the recently published report of the Secretary-General on R2P. We fully subscribe to the view, whereby Responsibility to Protect forms an integral part of the broader prevention agenda. Focusing on the issue of implementation of the Responsibility to Protect can show, on the one hand, the practical gains flowing from this concept in specific situations. On the other hand, doubts over the concept can be better diluted this way than by having a general theoretical discussion.

Mr President,

The three pillars of the Responsibility to Protect are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. No-one questions the primary responsibility of the State to protect its own population from atrocity crimes. However, the assistance provided by the international community – with the consent of the host State and preferably upon its own request – can significantly assist the efforts of individual States.

Building national capacities and resilient institutions is not only essential for fulfilling national obligations to prevent mass atrocities, but also significantly contributes to a better a more sustainable life of people. Good governance, the rule of law and effective judicial and security institutions are indispensable for thriving societies that respect and guarantee the human rights and freedoms of all individuals.

Slovakia as a Co-Chair of the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform (SSR) considers SSR to be a very important part of successful and just societies. Security institutions are the ones that can make the biggest interferences into the rights of persons. Quality training, a strictly Rule of Law-based approach and effective oversight are indispensable for the correct assumption of their duties. SSR is also indispensable for the overall stabilization and reconstruction in transitional societies.

In spite of the efforts of the international community, atrocity crimes, sadly enough, still get committed. It is at this point where accountability mechanisms become the most visible. In

this respect, the role of the International Criminal Court as an independent and impartial judicial body prosecuting situations, where national jurisdictions are unable or unwilling to address the issue of accountability, is indispensable. We call on all UN Member States who have not yet done so to ratify the Rome Statute and its amendments and thus help achieve its universality. We also express our support for other international accountability mechanisms like the IIM or the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals.

To conclude, Mr President,

Slovakia is firmly convinced of the value of the full implementation of Responsibility to Protect. Only sincere and effective action can safeguard humanity and dignity on our planet.

Thank you, Mr President.