



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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Madam President,

First, I would like to thank you for convening us today and for your introductory remarks.

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.

Madam President,

Slovakia welcomes the 11th report of the Secretary-General which comes at a time when the actions of the international community and Member States fall short of fully deterring atrocity crimes. There is a much-needed shift from reaction to preventive actions. Slovakia fully supports the views and recommendations of the Secretary-General aimed at strengthening preventive efforts. After all, prevention is inherently incorporated within the pillars of Responsibility to Protect. R2P should be perceived as an opportunity to anticipate and act early to prevent atrocity crimes. Addressing the root causes of these crimes needs to be a priority because the best way to protect is to prevent.

Madam President,

In 2005, all Member States made a commitment to the Responsibility to Protect. This commitment binds Member States to act as primary protectors of their own populations and shield them from mass atrocities. In this pursuit – with the consent of the host State and preferably upon its own request – the international community can extend a helping hand to assist the efforts of individual States.

Anchoring protection of individuals and groups against discrimination and exclusion serves as an essential step which must be accompanied by universal access to justice and non-selective accountability.

In this context, it is vital to reiterate the role of the International Criminal Court as an independent and impartial judicial body stepping in where national jurisdictions are unable or unwilling to address the issue of accountability. In this capacity, it serves as a deterrent and a guarantor of non-recurrence of mass atrocities. Therefore, 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 and bolster preventive efforts.

Lastly, Madam President,

Slovakia as a Co-Chair of the Group of Friends of Security Sector Reform (SSR) believes that fostering SSR can contribute to a secure and just environment and provide guarantees of non-recurrence. Effective security institutions with a system based on the rule of law can ensure that the rights of individuals are respected and perpetrators are brought to justice. The enhancement of national capacities and the building of strong institutions is key in the pursuit for resilient systems and, by extension, for early action to prevent atrocities. Strengthening SSR in the aftermath of violence can act as a catalyst of change for the overall stabilization and reconstruction in transitional societies.

To conclude, Madam President,

Slovakia is firmly committed to the implementation of all pillars of the Responsibility to Protect. Only united action can effectively prevent atrocities and protect the innocent.

Thank you, Madam President.