

**General Assembly informal interactive dialogue  
on the Report of the Secretary-General on the  
Responsibility to Protect**

**Statement by Brian Flynn  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland to  
the United Nations  
6 September 2017—New York**

Mr. President,

Thank you for organizing today's debate, which offers an opportunity to reaffirm our strong support for the Responsibility to Protect and recall the spirit of common endeavor that underpinned its adoption by consensus in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document.

My delegation, which aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union, also thanks the Secretary-General for his address this morning and for his substantive report, which explores the legal, political and moral accountability inherent in the three pillars of the Responsibility to Protect.

Responsibility can be defined as being accountable for commitments made. Regretfully, in the twelve years which have passed since the 2005 World Summit, we have regularly been confronted by obstacles to preventing or responding effectively as an international community to the commission of mass atrocities and in upholding international humanitarian law. As the Secretary General's report makes clear, too often our actions do not live up to our words.

Ireland strongly supports the Secretary-General's placing of conflict prevention at the core of his mandate. This means exploring all aspects of prevention across the work of the UN. His report before us today addresses an important element of conflict prevention – accountability and the need to move towards tangible implementation of the Responsibility to Protect.

We therefore welcome his recommendations on how the UN can improve its work by enhancing coordination across the system and ensuring the Responsibility to Protect is fully included in the integrated prevention platform. We support the call for a specific item on atrocity crimes prevention and the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect to be placed on the agenda of the UN General Assembly.

We also welcome the Secretary General's call for the Security Council to make better use of available tools and to be ready to act more effectively on atrocity prevention. In this regard we reaffirm our strong commitment to the ACT code of conduct on mass atrocity crime.

The shift towards implementation and accountability means engagement not just with this Assembly or the Security Council however. The Secretary General's report rightly identifies the Human Rights Council, the UPR and the entities and agencies of the UN as having an important role to play. Coherence and clarity of approach can lead to transparency. Engagement across the

UN can also build capacity and understanding across member states, thus bolstering our collective efforts and commitments under Pillar 2.

Mr. President,

Ireland is grateful for the opportunity today to reaffirm its strong support for the principles which underpin the Responsibility to Protect; principles which are at the core of what the UN stands for.

As a longstanding contributor to UN peacekeeping missions Ireland was happy to endorse the Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians last year. In addition, in furtherance of our commitment to international criminal justice, earlier this year Ireland supported the establishment of the international Impartial and Independent Mechanism for Syria.

Mr. President,

The Secretary-General has set out clearly the tasks ahead of all of us if we are to close the gap between actions and words. Responsibility and accountability are essential tools in developing a coherent approach to prevention. As the Secretary General said here this morning, we have to do more and better.

It is the responsibility of each of us to ensure that all avenues to sustaining peace are fully explored.

Thank you.