

**Informal Interactive Dialogue of the United Nations General Assembly on
the Secretary-General's Report on the Responsibility to Protect
6 September 2017**

Statement by Solomon Islands

Mr. President,

Permit me first to join those who have spoken before me in welcoming our ninth report, but the first of our current Secretary-General, entitled 'the responsibility to protect and accountability for prevention.' In so doing, let me also reaffirm my government's commitment to R2P and the full implementation of all the three pillars of the norm.

Mr. President,

When the Cold War ended, a very worrying trend emerged. When faced with generalized persecution, both at a group and individual level, people have fled *en masse* from their countries of origin often to neighboring countries. In some cases there are often movements to countries far beyond. According to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, 65.6 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide at the end of last year.

And the majority of these 65.6 million displaced people are actually women and children who face particular vulnerabilities. It is the responsibility of states to protect them from sexual and gender based violence and to hold those responsible accountable for their actions and inactions.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons have had and continues to have a heavy toll on civilians in conflict. My own country has its own bloody share of the atrocities of armed conflict thanks to the unregulated availability of small arms and light weapons. Or what former Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, famously referred to as 'weapons of mass destruction in slow motion.' These have to be regulated so that they do not end up in the wrong hands.

Mr. President,

True to the letter and spirit of the *Kigali Principles on the Protection of Civilians*, Solomon Islands is among those countries serving in one of the UN peacekeeping operations that currently has protection of civilians mandate, including the Responsibility to Protect.

I was in fact in Dafur 3 weeks ago visiting our Contingent of 5 Police Officers serving in the United Nations African Mission in Dafur (UNAMID). UNAMID was set up to protect civilians in Dafur where militia groups continue to be active and inter-communal violence still occurs. This is our first contingent to serve not only in UNAMID but also in any UN Peace-keeping Operations.

Work here could be made more effective if the UN's Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes become part and parcel of the pre-deployment and in-theatre training for all peacekeepers. And that the review of Peace Operations must first and foremost be based on protecting civilians.