

**Statement by Ambassador Hahn Choonghee  
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea  
to the United Nations**

**General Assembly informal interactive dialogue on the Report  
of the Secretary General on the Responsibility to Protect: The  
responsibility to protect and accountability for prevention**

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Mr. Moderator,

At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for convening this year's informal interactive dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect.

I also thank the Secretary-General for his personal commitment and conviction to this principle and welcome his first report on the responsibility to protect with a focus on prevention. As he highlighted in the report, prevention is the paradigm-shifting new approach that closes the gap between commitment and reality, and is the direction commonly underscored by the reviews on Peace Operations, on the Peacebuilding Architecture, and on Women, Peace and Security.

In this context, I would like to highlight three points with regard to prevention of mass atrocity crimes, bearing in mind the recommendations from the Secretary-General's report.

First, I fully agree with the Secretary-General that strengthening accountability is one of the principal ways to prevent atrocity crimes. We have to ensure that violators are held accountable for their crimes through prosecution in national and international

criminal justice systems, including the International Criminal Court. We must also stamp out impunity in every corner of the world to help prevent future violations and a relapse into violence.

Second, we also have to make the most of existing mechanisms of early warning and action to make atrocity prevention a practical programme. As the Secretary-General's report suggests, the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) can help identify possible risks early and facilitate relevant actions by national governments as well as the international community. We need to pay attention to former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's Human Rights Up Front initiative, too. This is aimed at bringing the UN system together in a mutually supportive way to help identify serious human rights violations at an early stage to prevent mass atrocity crimes. Regional and sub-regional arrangements can be another effective tool to help prevent atrocity crimes. These include the Latin American Network on Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.

Third, we need a more comprehensive and coordinated approach to further mainstream the responsibility to protect across the entire UN system, and to establish greater synergy among the three pillars of the UN.

We are well aware that the Security Council has a specific responsibility to respond to risks in a timely and decisive manner, but has sometimes failed to do. In this regard, my Government, as a supporter of Code of Conduct by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) Group and Political Declaration by France and Mexico, is of the view that the use of the veto should be limited in situations that require immediate action in response to mass atrocities.

The General Assembly also can play a more prominent role in advancing the responsibility to protect given that it creates space for all Member States to proactively participate in discussions. In this context, the Republic of Korea welcomes the recommendation by the Secretary-General and supports the request by Australia and Ghana for inclusion of an item dealing with atrocity crimes prevention and the implementation of the responsibility to protect in the General Assembly's agenda.

Additionally, the Republic of Korea feels that the Human Rights Council needs to scale-up its engagement in the implementation of the responsibility to protect, and hopes that the Special Advisers of the Secretary-General on Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect can help further bridge New York and Geneva in this regard.

Mr. Moderator,

In closing, I take this opportunity to reaffirm the Republic of Korea's commitment to the responsibility to protect. I look forward to continuing to work with other Member States with a view towards helping to protect vulnerable people from acts that the international community, as a whole, has condemned as the most egregious crimes.

Thank you.