

General Assembly: 27<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting

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Focus: Reports of ICTR and ICTY

Speaker: Mr. Ebenezer **Appreku** Minister Deputy Permanent Representative of Ghana

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*ICRtoP Unofficial Transcript*

(...) We are pleased to learn of the progress being made concerning the respective completion strategies of the two tribunals. We are commenting on these two reports mindful that an accused person is presumed innocent until proven guilty and bearing in mind the commitment made by the international community to prevent and deter mass atrocities and to bring to justice perpetrators of such heinous crimes. (...)

(...) Perhaps a more durable legacy will be for the international community to draw appropriate lessons from the legacy of cases or jurisprudence in order to enhance the capacity of member states of this organization to undertake preventative action. (...)

(...) Mr. President, the need for prevention cannot be overemphasized. Indeed as a result of the experience of violent civil wars and other violent conflicts that occurred on the continent of Africa...the AU and regional organizations on the continent resolve to take a more proactive stance to prevent conflicts or to take timely and decisive action when prevention fails. Thus for example under the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the AU member states have conferred a treaty right on the Union to intervene at a request of any member state in situations of genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity upon the recommendation of the AU Peace and Security Council. Pursuant to these provisions the African Union has developed the African Standby Forces arrangement and requested logistical and financial support from the international community to ensure that ASF forces can be rapidly deployable for prevention or decisive action on the continent of Africa in accordance with the UN charter.

Mr. President, African countries also joined the consensus in this Assembly when it adopted paragraphs 138, 139, and 140 of the 2005 Summit Outcome document in which world leaders accepted their **responsibility to protect** their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. (...)

(...) To this end the Foreign Ministers of Ghana and Denmark cohosted in NY a side event on 24 September 2010 attended by Foreign Ministers and other ministers from some 25 countries in a cross regional endeavor to explore ways of moving beyond concepts to the effective operationalization of the principle of the **responsibility to protect** populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, and crimes against humanity. This will no doubt complement initiatives of the United Nations Secretary-General and his Special Adviser on RtoP as well as his Special Executive on the Prevention of Genocide. Furthermore...the Ghana government invited to Accra the Special Executive on the Prevention of Genocide to exchange views on measures to address the root causes of conflict thereby preventing genocide and other serious crimes within the ECOWAS region. (...)