

RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT OPEN DEBATE ORGANIZED BY SG ON JULY 14 2011:
“R2P AND REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS”, STATEMENT BY
COSTA RICA, DENMARK AND GHANA

(USUAL GREETINGS AND THANKS)

1. I make this statement on behalf of Denmark, Ghana and Costa Rica. Our three countries have joined forces to launch the development of an informal network of National Focal Points for the Responsibility to Protect. This initiative bears in mind that R2P is an approach to address manifestations of mass atrocities that still requires a lot of educating and capacity building at all levels, but which is rapidly gaining ground. In this respect, our first acknowledgment goes to the SG and the Joint Office for their consistency, determination and comprehensive work in advancing this idea and its corresponding tools.
2. At this important occasion, we deem convenient and timely to present some reflections on why there shouldn't be misgivings or worries on the part of governments and nations which uphold and are committed to the noble principles of this organization, as far as R2P is concerned.
3. In his report from 2009 the Secretary-General underlined that the Responsibility to Protect is a 3 pillar based process. Pillar One makes clear that each State has the responsibility to protect its citizens. Pillar Two stresses the need for the international society to assist the State and finally, Pillar Three deals with the international community's commitment to timely and decisive response. It is only when a State cannot or does not want to tackle and prevent the commission of such despicable crimes as ethnic cleansing, genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, that the international community, through Regional Organizations or the UN itself, may intervene as a way to protect civilians.
4. No country that adequately develops the first two pillars has to fear or have misgivings about any risk to its sovereignty.
5. The Secretary General has clearly expressed his wish to help develop an R2P system compatible with the full exercise of a national responsible sovereignty. Our debate today bears testimony to the intention to see a collaboration between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations in developing the R2P system. These organizations, which reflect the association of countries with closer geographic, historic and cultural features, constitute an additional guarantee against any preconception or prejudice of arbitrary

foreign or international intervention, while at the same time strengthen the decision and capacity to work effectively against mass atrocities.

6. The world has seen too many mass atrocities. As members of the UN, we must make our utmost efforts to prevent another Holocaust, another Rwanda, another Cambodia or another wave of repression like the ones that took place on the Latin American continent in the 70s and 80s. We cannot turn a blind eye to hate campaigns, human rights violations or other early warnings of mass atrocities. This is where education that teaches respect for the other, the different, the stranger, is so essential and a fundamental component of the edifice of Responsibility to Protect.
7. Finally, we want to share with the UN Community and beyond, that our 3 countries are engaged in a systematic and concerted effort to help develop a network of National R2P Focal Points who may reach out within their regions or cooperate globally. We are delighted that this initiative is mentioned in the Secretary-General's report. The main purpose of the initiative is to build, together with the UN, the capacity on the ground, to educate, train, and spread the essential elements of R2P and to strengthen and coordinate efforts to prevent mass atrocity crimes. Together we hope to achieve that each country develops the capacity to detect, monitor and confront social phenomena that may grow into genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes or crimes against humanity. This effort demands great commitment from those involved and entails close cooperation with the UN in all humanitarian and Human Rights areas. We aim for a growing and expanding network that will be developing on a voluntary and gradual basis.