



Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic
to the United Nations

**Interactive Dialogue of the UN General Assembly
on the Responsibility to Protect
New York, 11 September 2013**

Statement by Mr. Petr Válek,

**Director of International Law Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic,
National Focal Point for Responsibility to Protect**

The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement delivered previously on behalf of the European Union.

Let me begin by commending the continuing efforts of the UN Secretary-General in promotion and implementation of the Responsibility to Protect, especially the rules and principles which stand behind this consensual concept.

The Czech Republic warmly welcomes this year's report of the UN Secretary-General on State responsibility and prevention to which the Czech Republic also contributed. While expressing support for the Joint Office, we would like to thank Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, Mr. Adama Dieng, for his valuable work and congratulate Professor Jennifer Welsh to her appointment as Special Adviser on Responsibility to Protect.

The Czech Republic also notes with appreciation the increased efforts in the implementation of RtoP by States and civil society, especially the establishment of national focal points for RtoP in more than 30 countries and their successful meetings which took place in Slovenia and Ghana this year. The Czech Republic has established its RtoP focal point nearly two years ago, is a State party to all RtoP relevant international legal instruments and is an active and constructive participant in the UN human rights monitoring mechanisms, including UPR.

As the RtoP is not exclusively a "UN matter" and became the subject of interest of civil society, academia and various think tanks, we would like to draw the attention of the UN membership to the recent paper written by Madeleine Albright and Richard Williamson called "The United States and R2P" that provides some new perspectives of this concept. The Czech Republic particularly endorses their thoughts on enforcing the law at national and international levels and on the International Criminal Court.

A lot of work towards the operationalization of RtoP, however, needs to be done. Unfortunately, even today we are witnessing terrible human suffering of local populations caused by irresponsible governments of several States. Among these, the most serious case is Syria. In spite

of this, the international community has at its disposal a comprehensive toolkit in the existing framework of international law to prevent such atrocities. History shows us how inability to act could lead to Auschwitz or Srebrenica. In this context, the Czech Republic calls on Secretary General in his future effort to synchronize already existing knowledge and mechanisms within the UN system and on other stakeholders to work with the UN in a coherent manner with the aim to achieve effective and timely solution for each arising RtoP situation.

The Czech Republic believes that prevention is the key mechanism of the Responsibility to Protect and, at the same time, an integral part of all three RtoP pillars. Reactive measures can also be preventive in general sense. The preventive measures of the RtoP crimes on national level are based on the combination of the following principles: first, promotion and protection of human rights, second, strict adherence to the rule of law and third, promotion of sustainable social and economic development.

The concrete policy option on how to implement RtoP depends on the situation of each individual State. Some States find themselves in a higher risk than others, but no State is entirely immune to the RtoP crimes. The Czech Republic aims for the effective implementation of the RtoP in accordance with the above-stated three principles. In recent years, our focus has been – within the first principle requiring promotion of human rights – on education and commemoration of RtoP-related historical events, e.g., through establishment of the European Shoah Legacy Institute in Terezín.

Finally, regarding future dialogues, the Czech Republic proposes to focus on the relationship between the RtoP and the rule of law. Following the first high-level meeting on the rule of law held here at the UN last year, where the Declaration on the Rule of Law at National and International Levels was adopted, we see many linkages and overlaps between those two concepts, in particular when it comes to ending impunity for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. In fact, we believe that there cannot be rule of law without RtoP and vice versa, so the next debates could further explore this issue.