

**Interactive Dialogue of the UN General Assembly during its 69th
session
on the Responsible to Protect (RtoP)**

**Statement delivered by H.E. Mrs. Edita Hrdá, Ambassador, Permanent
Representative of the Czech Republic to the UN**

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The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. We also support the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of Friends on the Responsibility to Protect.

We welcome the latest Report of the Secretary General on the Responsibility to Protect and wish to appreciate the efforts by both the Special Advisors on the RtoP and their Joint Office.

The Czech Republic largely concurs with the Report and its conclusions. Indeed, after a decade of conceptual debates about the principle, the Responsibility to Protect is now at a turning point and we must urgently redirect our attention to issues associated with its practical implementation. The current situations in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and South Sudan remind us of our failures to prevent war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and ethnic cleansing and protect vulnerable groups of people from atrocities.

While noting the fact that 50 countries from all continents have appointed their RtoP Focal Points to date, we encourage those which have not, to do so with no delay and join the Global Network of Focal Points. We commend Rwanda and the EU for appointing their new RtoP Focal Points recently.

We appreciate the deepening institutionalization of the RtoP in the UN as well as numerous references to the principle in a number of resolutions of the Security Council and the Human Rights Council. We appreciate and support the efforts of the Secretary General to mainstream RtoP across the UN system, including e.g. through the Rights Up Front initiative and also reviews on Women, Peace and Security and other related policy documents. We deem this year's 10th anniversary of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document as well as 70th anniversary of the UN to be a good opportunity for the GA to stand behind its 2005 commitment and adopt a resolution reaffirming RtoP and expressing support for its effective implementation.

In order for RtoP to be functional, we need to preserve and make use of all of its three pillars in their mutually interlinked character. We stress that pillar three tools are much wider and are not limited only to the use of force. Still, the fact that coercive measures of Third Pillar of RtoP are placed in hands of the Security Council puts high demands on the ability of its members to act timely and decisively. The Czech Republic supports the initiative of France calling upon Permanent Members of the Security Council to voluntarily refrain from using their veto in situation of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

We believe that prevention is the key mechanism of the Responsibility to Protect and an integral part of all three RtoP pillars. The Czech Republic is a staunch supporter of the idea of international criminal justice and we commend the contribution of the international criminal tribunals, namely the International Criminal Court, to the prevention of atrocity crimes. In this context we support the widest ratification of the Rome Statute and its universal implementation. At the same time, we are aware of the fact that accountability must be primarily ensured by taking measures at the national level and by enhancing international cooperation. As the Secretary General mentions in his Report, accountability at the national and international level contributes to preventing the recurrence of atrocity crimes.

We also welcome the fact that the Secretary General highlights in his Report the role of international human rights bodies. The Czech Republic actively engages in their activities, addresses atrocity crimes risks factors in the universal periodic review process and attaches great attention to human rights situations in all the countries of the world. Due to our own historical experience, the promotion of human rights is a leading principle of our foreign policy.

Similarly important tool for prevention are the UN Peace operations that, i.a. assist States to uphold their responsibility to protect all civilians, including in difficult circumstances. 10 out of 16 United Nations peacekeeping missions are mandated by the Security Council to support host States in protecting their civilian populations.

To conclude, let me reaffirm the commitment of the Czech Republic, as contained in the paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, to the responsibility to protect population from crimes of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, including prevention of such crimes and once again express our full support to all efforts leading to its practical operationalization.