Mr. Chairman, Minister Patriota,

Thank you for giving me the floor. Also thank you and your co-Chair, my colleague, Edward Luck, for your opening remarks, which have set a positive tone for the discussion.

Within the three minutes allotted me, I intend to comment on three points:
- The prioritization of prevention
- Managing diversity as a strategy of prevention
- Whether RwP is a new concept or a principle of implementing RtoP.

First, the importance of prevention, which the Brazilian concept paper highlights, has been widely recognized. As the paper states, and you, Mr. Minister, reiterated, “prevention is always the best policy; it is the emphasis on preventive diplomacy that reduces the risk of armed conflict and the human costs associated with it.” It is noteworthy that in his statement at the Stanley Foundation’s Conference on RtoP, the Secretary-General proposed 2012 as the year of prevention, as you, Mr. Minister, noted.

My second point relates to developing an appropriate strategy for prevention. This calls for understanding the nature of the problem and the root causes of the conflicts that usually generate mass atrocity crimes. It is my view that these conflicts usually result from gross mismanagement of diversity, often manifested in intolerance of differences and stratifying groups defined by nationality, race, ethnicity or religion, the factors specified in the 1948 Genocide Convention, or by such other factors as political differences. As I have often said, it is not the differences per se that generate conflicts, but the implications of those differences reflected in discrimination, marginalization, exclusion, dehumanization and denial of fundamental rights.

If that is the root cause of the problem, then the appropriate strategy for structural prevention should be constructive management of diversity toward inclusivity, equality and respect for fundamental rights and civil liberties. This is essentially a function of good governance under the first two pillars of RtoP, and within the normative framework of “Sovereignty as Responsibility”.

My third point raises the question of whether RwP is a new concept or a principle for the implementation of RtoP. Over the last two years, consideration of RtoP has moved from debates over the concept to specific aspects of its implementation, such as assessment and early warning, the role of regional and sub-regional organizations, and
the expected discussion of various tools under the third pillar, as my colleague, Edward Luck, and other speakers, noted.

Recent Security Council decisions in response to developments in Cote d’Ivoire and Libya and the on-going discussions of the situation in Syria also show that debates now focus on the manner of response in implementation of RtoP rather than on the concept itself.

There is no doubt that there has generally been a positive response to the proposed RwP. The issue then would be the implications of taking RwP as a new concept or using it to fine-tune the debate over how to implement it. Discussing it as a new concept might have the effect of generating a debate parallel to and detracting from that on RtoP. Approaching it as a strategy for implementing RtoP on the other hand would sharpen the debate on how best to respond to RtoP situations. And as you, Mr. Minister, and other speakers have explained, this would be a way of advancing the consideration of various issues related to the operationalization of the RtoP concept. Over all, there is no doubt that the proposed RwP is an important contribution to the consideration of RtoP.

By way of a concluding comment, while the challenges facing the United Nations and the international community in its response to RtoP situations will continue to generate controversy, it is fair to say that the concept has become widely recognized, and established. Progress will undoubtedly mean addressing the genuine concerns behind the controversy with the view to broadening and deepening global consensus on RtoP. As I understand it, this is what the Brazilian proposal aims at achieving.