



BOLIVARIAN REPUBLIC OF VENEZUELA  
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR JULIO ESCALONA  
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS

“REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE RESPONSIBILITY TO  
PROTECT: TIMELY AND DECISIVE RESPONSE” (A/66/874)

INFORMAL INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE

66° SESSION OF THE GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

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NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 05<sup>TH</sup>, 2012



**Mr. President,**

In January 2012, after Libya's invasion, the Secretary-General referred to the Responsibility to Protect as "a fundamental principle of human protection". According to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the interventions in Cote d'Ivoire and Libya represented a turning point in the history of international law, which, from now on – and for many centuries to come – would proceed to be guided by the principle of the Responsibility to Protect.

In paragraph 38 of his Report, dated July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2012, which is being considered today, the Secretary-General has once again referred to the Responsibility to Protect as a principle.

**Mr. President,**

In regards to the legality of the United Nations, the Responsibility to Protect is still just a concept. Now, with regards to the illegal acts protected by the use of force, the Responsibility to Protect could only be considered as a barbaric principle originated from the Law of the Jungle. However, centuries of struggle of peoples have led us towards the Charter of the United Nations, which has been drafted to banish that pernicious law.

We should bear in mind that Resolution 1973 did not authorize the overthrow of Gaddafi, much less his murder. NATO went far beyond the mandate of the Security Council of the United Nations, as important members of this General Assembly have hold. The traits of good intentions and dignity that once could have been attributed to the Responsibility to Protect have been muddied by the crimes and the media manipulation that occurred in Libya.

The world suffers the consequences of interventions that have aggravated existing conflicts, which have opened the doors to terrorism in places where it did not exist, and which have increased the cycles of violence and vulnerability of civilian populations.

If there is something we can discuss today, with facts that represent the blood and pain of the victims, is that after the military interventions, carried out on behalf of a so-called Responsibility to Protect, the situation of civilians has worsened, especially for those most vulnerable; particularly children, women and the elderly.

It is not time to discuss only over general principles of law. Now, we must review the experience of various nations and peoples, as a way for honoring and compensating the rights of those physically killed and those whose souls were murdered. This is not only an academic debate; this is also a record of tragedies experienced by mankind.

We cannot ignore the fact that the Responsibility to Protect has been used to justify coercive and interventionist measures in the internal affairs of States, which have nothing to do with the protection of civilians.

**Mr. President,**

The Responsibility to Protect has not reached, as alleged by the Secretary-General in the last paragraph of his Report, the "age of majority". But the fundamental question of this debate must not revolve around the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect but about the kind of organization that we, Member States, really want to have.

In paragraph 45 of his Report, the Secretary-General speaks of the relationship between the Responsibility to Protect and the humanitarian principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality. Such relationship does not exist. When NATO forces indiscriminately bombed cities and facilities pro-Gaddafi, and provided the rebels with sophisticated weapons, in violation of the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council, they acted precisely against neutrality, humanity and impartiality. Are we going to relinquish these principles, basis for the existence of the United Nations?

**Mr. President,**

The 2008 Report of the Independent Panel on the Safety of the United Nations, led by the Algerian diplomat-veteran, Lakhdar Brahimi, said that the increasing attacks

against the personnel and facilities of the United Nations are the result of the lack of neutrality and impartiality in the policies of the Organization.

The Report also notes that there are two facts that have lacerated the reputation and security of the United Nations: first, the growing connection between the actions of the UN and the interests of great powers; and second, the integration of political, military and humanitarian efforts into one sole mission.

Both phenomena, Brahimi argues, have destroyed the image of the United Nations as a humanitarian organization. Instead, a new image of the UN has emerged, in which humanitarian actions are subordinated to the political and military concerns of the great powers. In short, an Organization that has relinquished the principles of neutrality, humanity and impartiality. Is that the United Nations that we want?

Therefore, Mr. President, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela considers that the debate on the Responsibility to Protect and the *raison d'être* of the United Nations is, today, more relevant than ever; and the General Assembly is the right place for such dialogue.

I thank you, Mr. President.

