

Thank you, Mr Moderator.

And thank you for your efforts, including in relation to the preparation of the Secretary-General's Report on R2P. The Report provides some excellent suggestions on what we need to do to help close the gap between our stated commitment to prevent genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, and the reality that populations face in crisis situations around the world.

The Report, the panellists' presentations, and the discussion already here today, have raised many issues on which Australia, as a strong supporter of R2P, would like to offer views. It is difficult, however, to move beyond high level generalities in a three minute intervention. Which is one of the reasons why, together with Ghana, Australia has requested the inclusion in the agenda of the GA this year of an item on R2P and the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document asked the GA to continue its consideration of R2P. And yet, to date, there has been just one debate, back in 2009. While the GA adopted a resolution the same year, in which it decided to continue its consideration of R2P, eight years have now past without the Assembly having had any further discussion.

In our view, this is stifling our ability to translate the sentiment of 'never again' into meaningful preventive action. As the Secretary-General said in recommending a GA debate in his Report, this 'requires continuous, frank and inclusive dialogue'.

Over the last few years, we've heard a significant number of States, particularly those with concerns, call for the GA to engage on R2P. We agree that more dialogue is needed to help us find more common ground. While we very much value this annual Informal Interactive Dialogue, a GA debate provides

opportunities that no informal meeting can, including allowing for all Member States to speak and for Member States' views to be formally recorded, enabling everyone to have a say.

The time for a GA debate is now. The Secretary-General has made clear that R2P is a key element of his prevention agenda. As the UN pivots to focus on prevention, we need, as a priority, to share experiences and to highlight prevention success stories in order to identify prevention strategies that are effective. Through dialogue, we can address concerns and build confidence to enable Member States to identify challenges to the responsibility to protect when they face them, and ask for assistance when they need it.

For these reasons, Mr Moderator, we urge all Member States to support the request for an R2P agenda item made by Australia and Ghana, and to commit to helping us build consensus on what we need to do to prevent genocide, to prevent war crimes, to prevent ethnic cleansing and to prevent crimes against humanity.