

**EXCERPTED STATEMENTS ON THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT  
AT  
THE SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE  
ON  
THE PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS IN ARMED CONFLICT**

**Algeria**

**Mr. Baali** (*spoke in French*):

My delegation has considered with great interest the report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (*S/2005/740*), which refers to, *inter alia*, the responsibility to protect. We would like to be quite clear and transparent about this. We recall that the September summit mandated the General Assembly to continue the debate on that concept — a concept about which there is still no unanimity within the international community and whose parameters still need to be rigorously defined. Furthermore, we believe that it is important, when it comes to the humanitarian dimension of the item before us today, to await the outcome of the ongoing analysis of the United Nations humanitarian response capacity.

Finally, we can never overemphasize the importance of complying, everywhere and in all circumstances, with the principles of the Charter and those that underpin international relations.

**Argentina**

**Mr. Mayoral** (*spoke in Spanish*):

In the broad context of this debate, it seems to us opportune to recall the agreement reached at the recent High-level Plenary Meeting with respect to the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, taking into consideration the individual responsibility of States and the international community as a whole to act in those cases through the United Nations, including the Security Council.

**Benin**

**Mr. Idohou** (*spoke in French*):

It would be a good idea if the Council could promptly reach a consensus concerning proposed measures with regard to strengthening the normative framework and operational protection and assistance activities. In that connection, we fully support reaffirmation of the major responsibility of the international community, acting through the Security

Council, to ensure effective and efficient civilian protection when public authorities are unable or unwilling to provide it.

We do that even more easily when we recognize that that same collective responsibility to protect is the basis of the creation of the African Union and its structures concerned with the maintenance of peace and security. We also support the approach of giving peacekeeping operations adequate mandates that enable them to fully carry out the duty to protect threatened civilian populations.

**Brazil**

**Mr. Sardenberg**:

As for the responsibility to protect, the Foreign Minister of Brazil, Mr. Amorim, reminded us at the opening of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly that, while the concept does merit an adequate place in our system,

“The United Nations was not created to disseminate the notion that order should be imposed by force. That extreme expedient can be considered only when all other efforts have been exhausted and peaceful solutions have proved not to be viable.” (*A/60/PV.9, p. 5 and 6*)

Furthermore, the World Summit Outcome stresses that the General Assembly should examine the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity and assess all its ramifications, bearing in mind the United Nations Charter. At the same time, in the section on the use of force under the Charter of the United Nations, the Summit Outcome reaffirms that the relevant provisions of the Charter are sufficient to address the full range of threats to international peace and security.

**Canada** (on behalf of Canada, Australia and New Zealand)

**Mr. Rock**:

In resolution 1265 (1999) the Council committed itself to respond to situations where civilians were being targeted or where assistance to them was deliberately obstructed. Our delegations firmly believe that, where such a response is justified, the Council's engagement must be timely, its monitoring must be vigilant and its political will must be sustained so that it can draw upon the full range of measures at its disposal in support of civilian protection, including, ultimately and as a last resort, the use of force where diplomatic efforts have proven futile and where States are not able to meet and discharge their responsibility to protect their own populations.

Indeed, the United Nations Charter confers on the Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. This is why our leaders made a strong commitment at the world summit to respond, through the Council, to fulfil the collective responsibility to protect. As such, we urge Council members to take up the mandate conferred by the world leaders, especially as the Council looks to adopt a new resolution on civilian protection. Our delegations believe that a resolution should not only reinforce the Council's commitments under resolution 1265 (1999), but should also further clarify the Council's resolve to act, including through enforcement action under Chapter VII, in response to serious violations of international humanitarian law, including genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, should peaceful means be inadequate and should national authorities manifestly fail to protect their populations.

#### **China**

**Mr. Zhang Yishan** (*spoke in Chinese*):

First, efforts to protect civilians should be in line with the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant provisions of international law. Individual States have the primary responsibility to protect their own citizens.

In accordance with the Charter and the provisions of international law, parties to a conflict should provide effective protection to affected civilians. All activities pertaining to protection, be they security guarantees or humanitarian assistance, should not violate the principles enshrined in the Charter; nor should they infringe upon the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Member States.

(...)

Thirdly, the concept of the responsibility to protect should be the subject of further comprehensive and in-depth discussions. The summit outcome document clearly referred to "the responsibility to protect ... populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity" (*General Assembly resolution 60/1, para. 138*). The outcome document went on to develop the concept at length, owing to the sensitivity and complexity of the issue.

The consensus opinion of the international community, as well as its justifiable demand, is that swift steps must be taken to mitigate and put an end to large-scale humanitarian crises and gross violations of human rights. The Security Council should make its own assessment of situations in accordance with reality on the ground, and should act accordingly. At the same time, we cannot lose sight of the fact that all conflicts are generally caused by a host of complex factors. A cautious approach should be taken in determining whether a Government is able or willing to protect its citizens. Arbitrary and hasty intervention should be avoided, as that may complicate situations and result in greater harm to innocent civilians.

#### **Denmark**

**Ms. Løj:**

However, the [Secretary-General's] report also provides a number of valuable recommendations for measures and actions that the Security Council can take to strengthen and improve its response to the protection needs of civilians in armed conflict. Denmark fully supports those recommendations. Allow me in that regard to address two key points of particular importance to the future work of the Security Council and the United Nations system as a whole: the "responsibility to protect" and the fight against impunity.

The 2005 world summit outcome underlined that each individual State has the responsibility to protect its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. That is not an obligation to be taken lightly.

Unfortunately, recent history demonstrates that national authorities sometimes are either unwilling or unable to provide the required protection. Should the international community, confronted with such

manifest failings, just sit back and allow a new Srebrenica or Rwanda to unfold before our eyes? The answer to that question is obvious and was fully addressed by our heads of State and Government at the summit.

One of the keystones in the fulfilment of the purposes of the United Nations is for the international community to take appropriate action to protect civilian populations. The United Nations Charter provides a clear framework for our response. We have a responsibility to use all peaceful means to provide sufficient protection, but if those means fail, it is our responsibility to use all necessary and available means — including collective action in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter — to put an end to ongoing acts of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. It is not just something we can consider doing — it is something we must do.

## **Egypt**

### **Mr. Abdelaziz:**

First, the Security Council should limit itself to the cases of the protection of civilians in armed conflict as defined by the items on its agenda. The Council should not expand its authority by establishing general policies for dealing with humanitarian issues and human rights. The elaboration of such general policies falls within the mandates of the General Assembly and its Main Committees. Thus, we are concerned at the mention in the report and the draft resolution of the possible role of the Security Council in legislating and taking action under the so-called responsibility to protect. Of even greater concern is the fact that the General Assembly, which has been mandated by the Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1) to continue its consideration of that issue in all its aspects, has not yet begun that consideration.

## **France**

### **Mr. Duclos** (*spoke in French*):

My first point concerns the responsibility to protect. Because that is something that has emerged since our 2000 resolution — namely, at the September summit — I have noted some misunderstandings about it in certain statements by previous speakers. I believe that what the British presidency proposes is not a reopening of the debate on that subject; we all agree that the concept will be refined, as agreed at the summit, within the framework of the General

Assembly.

That said, the Security Council is not exempted from taking into account the major political and philosophical progress represented at the meeting of heads of State or Government: a basic agreement on a balanced vision of what is now called the responsibility to protect. We believe that it would not be unusual for the Security Council to refer to that notion, because it commanded a consensus among our heads of State or Government. Of course it is a notion that should guide the work of the Council, particularly in its role in the protection of populations.

## **Germany**

### **Mr. Pleuger:**

We appreciate in particular that the draft resolution recalls in no uncertain terms the primary responsibility of States to protect civilian populations from war crimes, genocide, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. It is also clear, however, that the international community has an obligation to help, through all means available under the Charter, in rendering such protection effective. Germany therefore strongly supports the inclusion of a reference in the text to that important concept, as recently outlined in the Summit Outcome document.

## **Greece**

### **Mr. Vassilakis:**

The early prevention of atrocities against civilians is an obligation of the State concerned. However, if that State is unwilling or unable to protect its civilians from such crimes, we believe that the Security Council has the political and moral obligation to take effective action and alleviate the human suffering. In this respect, we would like to underline the importance of the relevant paragraphs of the World Summit Outcome document concerning the responsibility of the international community to protect populations from genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing. The draft resolution should reflect these developments. In this respect, we want to emphasize the importance of early warning mechanisms in preventing the commission of such crimes.

## **Italy**

### **Mr. Mantica** (*spoke in French*):

Italy is deeply convinced of the urgent need to guarantee the physical safety of displaced populations and other

more vulnerable groups — particularly women and children — who are too often the objects of atrocious forms of abuse and violence. Therefore, helping to create a safe environment for endangered populations and groups, particularly in the most high-risk areas, must be a fundamental objective of peacekeeping operations. This is an issue that Italy has followed closely for a long time.

Thus there is a need for another Security Council resolution on the protection of civilians in armed conflict that takes into account, inter alia, the outcome of the recent United Nations summit with respect to the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity, which Italy fully concurs with and supports resolutely.

#### **Japan**

##### **Mr. Oshima:**

The outcome document endorsed by world leaders in September (General Assembly resolution 60/1) also contains significant agreements and concepts to advance the humanitarian agenda. We regard as especially important the reference to women and children in armed conflict, the acknowledgement — for the first time at the head-of-State level — of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the clear enunciation of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. We should anchor our discussion in the Council on those milestone agreements. The proposal to review and expand the Central Emergency Revolving Fund also requires careful consideration.

#### **Korea, Republic of**

##### **Mr. Choi Young-jin:**

Secondly, we note that violence against civilians in a given country directly affects the surrounding region as a result of refugee flows, environmental degradation and the proliferation of illicit arms trading. Meanwhile, the role of neighbouring countries is crucial to ensuring humanitarian access to civilians in regions of conflict. The protection of civilians in armed conflict therefore requires the further strengthening of regional cooperation. We welcome the efforts of regional organizations such as the African Union to protect civilians while peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts are ongoing. Regional organizations should be further supported to facilitate such efforts.

In this regard, we welcome the inclusion of the concept of the responsibility to protect in the outcome document of the 2005 world summit (General Assembly resolution 60/1). The United Nations should continue to discuss ways to put it into practice. It goes without saying that national authorities have the primary responsibility to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. But when national authorities fail to exercise their responsibility to protect, the international community should use various means to help them to meet those responsibilities, including through measures taken by the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter.

#### **Liechtenstein**

##### **Mr. Ritter:**

The world summit made it clear yet again that the protection of civilians in armed conflict is a major challenge for and concern of the international community. Several important decisions were taken by our leaders at that summit and are reflected in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1). They range from the affirmation of the responsibility to protect and a particular emphasis on the pressing need to adequately address all forms of violence against women and children, to the resolve to increase the protection of internally displaced persons and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian actors to populations in need.

(...)

The recognition of the responsibility of the international community to protect civilian populations when their Governments fail to do so constitutes a major breakthrough in our common endeavour to prevent genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The main obligation for its implementation naturally falls on the Security Council. The Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide can play an important role in that respect. The Council must ensure that disgraceful inaction, as was seen in the case of the genocide in Rwanda, cannot occur again.

That responsibility leads almost inevitably to the conclusion that collective action to prevent and respond to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes must not be made impossible by a nonconcurring vote of one of the permanent members of

the Council. That principle was proposed by the Highlevel Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change and has been taken up in a draft resolution on the working methods of the Security Council prepared by a group of countries including Liechtenstein.

The rest of the membership also has responsibility in this respect, in that it can bring situations to the attention of the Security Council in open debates and by other means. In particular, article 8 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which was adopted on this day in 1948, allows any contracting party to call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take appropriate action.

The achievement concerning the responsibility to protect makes the absence of a reference to the issue of impunity in the World Summit Outcome even more anachronistic...

#### **Mexico**

**Mr. Berruga** (*spoke in Spanish*):

When we speak of the civilian victims of armed conflicts, including refugees and internally displaced persons, we are mainly and essentially speaking of women, children and older people. We are talking about violent rapes and abuse, sexual exploitation and violence against women and the forced recruitment of children. Such acts must no longer be viewed with indifference by the international community. Mexico is convinced, therefore, that once peaceful solutions have been exhausted — and acting exclusively under the authority of the Security Council — the international community must take all measures that are necessary to protect civilians from genocide and crimes against humanity including — among others — serious violations of international law, human rights and international humanitarian law.

For that reason, we are gratified by the meaningful progress achieved in the context of the 2005 world summit and we are prepared to continue the discussion on implementation within the General Assembly, as the Assembly is the best forum to promote codification and further development.

#### **Nepal**

**Mr. Acharya:**

The safety, security and well-being of civilian populations who are badly affected by terrorism, armed conflict and violence are our common interest. We

share the view that national Governments should take primary responsibility for the protection of their civilian populations from violence and terrorist activities. Only recently, our leaders have agreed to devise methods of taking responsibility to protect innocent civilians from genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. Protection of civilians, including women and children, in armed conflicts, especially from the threats of non-State actors, remains the primary challenge for us to address effectively. The Security Council should remain engaged as to how such violations by non-State actors can be brought under control through international justice.

I would like to make a few comments with regard to references to Nepal in the Secretary-General's report.

His Majesty's Government is committed to taking the necessary measures to protect the lives and livelihoods of innocent civilians who are the victims of terrorist and disruptive activities. The Government is fully conscious of its responsibility to protect civilians, even in the face of difficult circumstances. The security forces have exercised the utmost restraint in the security operations that are carried out to protect innocent civilians from terrorist and disruptive activities.

#### **Norway**

**Mr. Løvald:**

Norway strongly welcomed the 2005 World Summit Outcome (*General Assembly resolution 60/1*), which explicitly sets out our common responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Once again, we underline the great importance of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in that respect, serving as a final safety net provided by the international community for cases where there is no effective national mechanism to counter impunity.

A new Security Council resolution on protection of civilians must bring us closer to an effective international protection regime. It is our firm belief that the resolution must include a clear and unambiguous reference to the responsibility to protect. Furthermore, the particular role of the ICC in ending impunity and securing justice should be underlined in the resolution.

## **Peru**

**Mr. De Rivero** (*spoke in Spanish*):

The primary responsibility to protect populations — as was noted earlier; we could not agree more — from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity lies with each State, and cooperation is necessary to ensure that this is the case. In armed conflicts, the protection of civilians is also the responsibility of the parties to the conflict, be they States or armed groups.

The United Nations has a responsibility to protect populations from serious and systematic violations of international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Conventions. Cases of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or ethnic cleansing should meet with an immediate and firm response by the Security Council.

The responsibility to protect must be viewed as a concept that guarantees the achievement of the ultimate goal of State sovereignty, which is none other than safeguarding the human rights of a State's own citizens and promoting respect for the human dignity of its own people — a fundamental element of its own definition as a civilized State. That was the understanding reached last September by our heads of State and Government, who forged a new consensus so that action could be taken to avoid any recurrence of genocide such as took place in Rwanda and in Srebrenica.

The United Nations must never abdicate its ethical responsibility to safeguard and defend the human rights of individuals throughout the world. Human rights are of concern to all States in the international system, and respect for such rights is a sine qua non for the legitimate exercise of national sovereignty. Accordingly, it is important to ensure access to humanitarian assistance for civilian populations affected by conflict, with full respect for humanitarian work and for internationally agreed principles on humanitarian assistance, and to protect humanitarian personnel and civilian populations, particularly its vulnerable segments, such as women, children, refugees and internally displaced persons.

The reality is that, in various situations of conflict throughout the world, the United Nations has often been unable to prevent genocide, massacres and ethnic cleansing. Against that backdrop, Peru has

stressed the importance of an ongoing focus by the Council on the concept of the responsibility to protect. That concept involves three basic responsibilities: first, to prevent the causes of domestic conflict; secondly, to respond — and this could include coercive measures, sanctions and, in extreme cases, the use of force; and thirdly, to reconcile the population and to rebuild the country that has collapsed.

An important measure to strengthen the credibility of the Council's efforts to protect civilians could be to have the permanent members of the Council reach a gentleman's agreement not to use the veto when crimes against humanity are involved such as ethnic cleansing, genocide or grave and massive violations of human rights. That could deter those who might be planning to perpetrate atrocities. If such atrocities were committed, however, there could then be rapid action on the part of the Security Council. Moreover, that would be a coherent and consistent way of implementing the World Summit Outcome.

Acceptance of the concept of the "responsibility to protect" and its effective implementation by the Security Council are now extremely important for enhancing the credibility of the United Nations.

## **Philippines**

**Mr. Gatan:**

In conclusion, the Secretary-General, in his report, also recommends the possible intervention by the Security Council in situations of systematic and widespread breaches of international humanitarian and human rights law. My delegation, right up to this last stage of its term in the Council and as a member of the General Assembly, will continue to engage actively on the issue to ensure that the United Nations efforts aimed at protecting civilians are implemented in ways that balance effectiveness in achieving the desired results against possible adverse consequences. We therefore look forward to the adoption of the Council's next resolution on the issue and will remain committed to its objectives.

## **Russian Federation**

**Mr. Rogachev** (*spoke in Russian*):

We were struck by the report's findings with regard to the responsibility to protect. We believe that it is clearly premature to advance that concept in Security Council documents. We all remember well the complex compromise that was required to reflect that

issue in the 2005 Summit Outcome document. In that connection — and the outcome document states this — we need to have a detailed discussion in the General Assembly of the issue of the responsibility to protect before we can discuss its implementation.

## **Rwanda**

### **Mr. Kamanzi:**

It is imperative to underline that the protection of civilian populations in armed conflict is strictly mandatory for all States and all parties concerned in a situation of armed conflict. A higher threshold in that respect, however, should be contemplated in those situations where populations are at risk of genocide or other large-scale atrocities. One most important and far-reaching development in this regard is the commitment made by heads of State or Government at September's world summit to protect civilians from genocide, ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity and war crimes. My Government wishes to seize this opportunity to reiterate its sincere gratitude to all delegations for their solemn adherence to that commitment.

My Government is of the view that the agreement and the settlement by our heads of State and Government in the world summit was a recognition that collective action is the only way forward if we are to free humanity once and for all of such grave violations, which have been recurrent in recent decades in many parts of the world. It was recognition that business as usual is inadequate and can no longer prevail.

We firmly believe that the responsibility for protecting populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity lies first and foremost with the State itself, as articulated in the World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1). Yet we also contend that collective responsibility is needed, and we support all courses of action envisaged in the outcome resolution, including with regard to the international community being prepared to act in a timely and decisive manner through the Security Council in accordance with the Charter, including Chapter VII, where a State is manifestly failing to protect its populations from those atrocities, whenever necessary and appropriate.

Given that reference to the undeniable role of the Security Council in that respect, we believe it is

appropriate for the Council to support this important development on the agenda for the protection of civilian populations. We urge the Council to seriously consider including in the draft resolution under consideration an expression of its willingness to discharge its mandate and to act accordingly by endorsing the commitment set out in the outcome resolution of the world summit regarding the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes and ethnic cleansing.

The safety of civilian populations in all circumstances, let alone situations of armed conflict, is the very foundation of the legitimacy of the nations in the name of which we stand. The claim of the principle of national sovereignty will be fully valid only when all our nations, individually or collectively, will have turned their commitment into effective action and when they will have set up appropriate preventative and protective mechanisms to uphold that safety. Empowering relevant bodies such as the Security Council to take up that challenge is the first step forward, which we cannot afford to overlook.

## **Slovakia**

### **Mr. Burian:**

The establishment of a culture of protection, which Secretary-General Kofi Annan called for a few years ago, should become a reality. The implementation of the principle of the responsibility to protect, which was outlined during the World Summit this past September, into the international legal system is without doubt a major step in that direction. Further development and enactment of the principle of the responsibility to protect should also be continued through a new Security Council resolution on the protection of civilians.

In the World Summit Outcome, world leaders agreed that, as appropriate, the international community should encourage and help States to exercise their responsibilities and support the efforts of the United Nations to establish an early warning capability. Those commitments must be reflected in practical measures. In that regard, we welcome the activities of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs undertaken as part of its advocacy and dissemination work with regard to the protection of civilians in armed conflict. That work has been organized with the support of the Security Council and interested Member States and has included

a series of regional workshops on the protection of civilians, in an effort to broaden the audience for protection policies and mainstream them into the decision-making processes of Member States.

On the other hand, as the organ with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council has a special role to play in addressing the issue and in strengthening the response capabilities of the international community. It must ensure an immediate, decisive and rapid reaction to emerging situations of massive attacks on civilians and their livelihoods. Political questions or selfish national interests should not be obstacles to the international community's taking action through the Security Council, including through the application of the principle of the responsibility to protect, especially in situations when governmental institutions are unable or unwilling to implement feasible measures for the protection of civilians. Of course, the international community must be equipped with credible and effective legal and coercive instruments.

Only a few days ago, on 7 December, in the region of western Darfur, armed militia forces attacked the town of Kongo Harasa and destroyed all water wells built by humanitarian workers. That is another example of the kinds of atrocities committed against civilians. We are convinced that attacks on basic infrastructure necessary for survival, such as sources of drinking water and crops, should also be considered as direct attacks against civilians, and should therefore be addressed by international criminal and humanitarian law. The international community should not only condemn attacks that target the very livelihoods of people, but also prosecute those who perpetrate such inhuman acts.

I wish to assure you, Mr. President, that Slovakia, as an incoming non-permanent member of the Security Council, considers the issue of the protection of civilians as one of its priorities, and will devote increased attention to that question during its tenure.

#### **South Africa**

##### **Mr. Mabhongo:**

Thirdly, the international community agreed, during the 2005 world summit, that each individual State has the responsibility for the protection of its populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic

cleansing and crimes against humanity. It was also agreed that, where appropriate, Member States would be helped to build the necessary capacity to enable them to fulfill their protection mandate.

It is from that perspective that we welcome the report of the Secretary-General as well as this open debate in the Security Council. We wish to emphasize, however, that the 2005 world summit also called for continued consideration within the General Assembly of the issue of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

#### **Spain**

##### **Mr. Yañez-Barnuevo** (*spoke in Spanish*):

Let us recall that the main responsibility for the protection of civilian populations, including internally displaced persons, lies with national authorities. But where the State in question is unable to protect civilian populations on its territory it is incumbent on the international community to shoulder the responsibility, making use of appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other peaceful means, in accordance with Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter, or when appropriate making use of enforcement measures pursuant to Chapter VII, to help to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The outcome document of September's General Assembly summit (General Assembly resolution 60/1) set this concept out as a major advance in the action of the international community, and we cannot fail to welcome this.

#### **Switzerland**

##### **Mr. Maurer** (*spoke in French*):

Finally, to conclude, Switzerland welcomes the references to the responsibility to protect, contained in the draft resolution under review.

#### **Tanzania, United Republic of**

##### **Mr. Mahiga:**

The protection of civilians is the primary responsibility of Governments. When Governments fail or are unable to offer such protection, we should have a collective responsibility to protect humanity.

Governments must ensure respect for the rule of law, human rights and democracy. (...)

In that regard, we need to further develop the concept of the responsibility to protect. Our stance on that responsibility is inspired by the following

statement by the President of Tanzania, His Excellency Benjamin Mkapa:

“States must firmly be placed on notice that the humanity we all share demands that we should collectively have an interest in its promotion as well as in its protection. Governments must first be held responsible for the life and welfare of their people. But there must also be common agreed rules and benchmarks that would trigger collective action, through our regional organizations and the United Nations, against Governments that commit unacceptable human rights abuses or threaten regional peace and security.”

We thus welcome the affirmation by world leaders of the responsibility to protect civilians from genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing.

(...)

The consensus reached on the responsibility to protect by the world summit this year is a useful basis for the further development and refinement of norms and practices related to the national and international protection of civilians in armed conflict. The African Union has set an example in that direction. For the Security Council, it is part of its responsibility for the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security.

In that regard, Mr. President, we welcome your initiative to present a new draft resolution which is under consideration by the Council.

**United Kingdom** (on behalf of the EU and 10 other countries that have aligned themselves with this statement: Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Croatia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, Iceland and Ukraine.)

**The President of the Security Council:**

At the world summit three months ago, our heads of State and Government reached a historic agreement on the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. My Government and the European Union regarded this outcome, embracing the concept at the highest level, as one of the most important of the

summit. The responsibility to protect is a distinct concept, carefully set out in the World Summit Outcome. But it is clearly relevant to the issue of the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and it is only appropriate that it should be recalled in the draft resolution on which we are working.

**United States of America**

**Mr. Wolf:**

The world continues to be plagued by violent conflicts, with civilians now the major category of casualties of war worldwide. We would like to stress, however, that the primary responsibility for protecting civilians lies with States and their Governments and that international efforts should complement Government efforts rather than assume responsibility for them. Improving the protection of civilians from the devastating effects of armed conflict depends largely not on what we say or do here, but on what Governments do to protect their own people and on how they allow others to assist.