Sixth Annual Ministerial Meeting on the Responsibility to Protect: Enhancing Preventive Strategies for RtoP Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect 27 September 2013   This morning, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, H.E. Mr. Frans Timmermans, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, H.E. Professor Viola Onwuliri, in association with the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect, co-hosted a ministerial breakfast meeting on: Enhancing Preventive Strategies for the Responsibility to Protect.

Ministers representing 11 governments from across the globe participated in the discussion while 20 other governments attended as observers. The United Nations Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Mr. Adama Dieng, also participated in the meeting.

The principle of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) has come a long way since 2005. The commitment to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing has now become an operational reality. The advocacy of ministers from all regions of the world has been vital in shifting the debate on R2P from a question of principle to meaningful application.

The aim of this year's Ministerial Roundtable was to discuss how preventive measures can reduce the risk of mass atrocity crimes. Participants at this morning's meeting discussed the full range of preventive options, including protection of human rights, establishment of good governance, promotion of socioeconomic development and appointment of national R2P Focal Points. Short-term components of prevention were also considered, including early warning and preventive diplomacy.

Those in attendance also acknowledged the tragedy of the failure to adequately prevent mass atrocity crimes. The situation in Syria was highlighted as an example of the grave consequences of not protecting vulnerable populations from the developing threat of atrocities in a timely and decisive manner.

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