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Open Debate Security Council

**Statement on behalf of The Group of Friends on the Responsibility to
Protect at the UN General Assembly Informal Interactive on the
Responsibility to Protect**

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Mr. President,

I have the honor of delivering this statement on behalf of the 49 Members of the Group of Friends of the Responsibility to Protect, co-chaired by the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the Republic of Rwanda.

The Group of Friends thanks the President of the General Assembly for convening this Informal Interactive Dialogue on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). We also commend the Secretary-General for his deep personal commitment to the principle.

Mr. President, we note that the adoption of R2P at the United Nations (UN) World Summit ten years ago was an historic commitment to prevent and protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

In keeping with the 10th anniversary of the 2005 World Summit and the 70th anniversary of the UN, we reaffirm our enduring commitment to paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document on the Responsibility to Protect.

We welcome the considerable and undeniable progress that has been made since 2005. From the establishment of the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and R2P to the development of the Human Rights Up Front Initiative, the UN Secretariat has taken important steps to enhance its capacity to address atrocity crimes. We also note the considerable steps taken by many Member States, as well as the progress made by many regional and sub-regional organizations, to further advance R2P.

Furthermore, we take note that the Security Council has adopted over 30 resolutions referencing R2P, while the Human Rights Council has adopted 13 such resolutions. We stress that it is important for the General Assembly to fully consider R2P, including by adopting a resolution marking the 10th anniversary and reaffirming its commitment to the principle that the international community should never submit to the politics of indifference and inaction. We also call for R2P to be moved onto the formal agenda of the General Assembly.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report and we strongly encourage Member States to take stock of efforts to implement R2P, as well as to assess their own capacities and strategies to uphold the principle. We reiterate our intent to strengthen our political commitment to the principle's objectives, to invest in prevention, and to ensure more timely and decisive response to early warning signs, consistent with the priorities identified in the Secretary-General's report.

The report gives welcome attention to the threat of non-state armed groups and the challenges they pose for the implementation of R2P. We recall that, while groups that commit atrocity crimes are ultimately responsible for their heinous acts, we must remember that each state bears the primary responsibility to protect its populations from such crimes.

Mr. President, we take this opportunity to reaffirm our full support for the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect, Mr. Adama Dieng and Dr. Jennifer Welsh. We strongly encourage Member States to continue supporting their work and that of their Office.

The Framework of Analysis for Atrocity Crimes can be a useful guide for assessing the risk of atrocity crimes, and could serve as an important tool for mainstreaming atrocity prevention in the UN as well as assisting Member States to strengthen their own capacities and strategies. We encourage Member States to make use of the Framework and support that it be integrated into training for relevant UN Peace Operations.

We welcome the important reviews on UN Peace Operations, the UN Peacebuilding Architecture, and on Women, Peace and Security and Resolution 1325, and we reaffirm the links between these cross-cutting agenda items with efforts to prevent atrocity crimes and uphold R2P.

The Group of Friends reiterates the significance of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and strongly encourages States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so as a matter of high priority. We encourage consideration by Member States to ratify other relevant

international legal treaties, and further reaffirm our commitment to ensure accountability for genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

We welcome the holding of the 5th Annual Meeting of the Global Network of R2P Focal Points in Spain in June 2015. We commend the 50 Member States of the UN that have appointed a National R2P Focal Point, and we encourage all Member States and regional organizations to heed the Secretary-General's call for an expansion of atrocity prevention networks.

Finally, we recognize the important role of civil society in supporting the advancement of R2P.

As we look to the 70th anniversary of the UN next month, we pledge to take determined action to meet the priorities identified by the Secretary-General in his report. We further call for the full and effective implementation of all three pillars of R2P, and we recommit ourselves to the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

Mr. President, I conclude by encouraging all Members of the United Nations to do the same.

I thank you, Mr. President.