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**STATEMENT BY
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OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
DURING THE INFORMAL INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE
ON THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORT ENTITLED
"IMPLEMENTING THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT"
28 JULY 2009, NEW YORK**

President

We thank you for convening this timely debate. Through you, my Delegation commends the Secretary-General for his Report entitled "*Implementing the responsibility to protect*". More particularly, we recognize its proactive nature by including various proposals and suggestions which provide a reasonable basis for this sensitive issue to be discussed and debated within its proper context.

Recalling a very successful World Summit in 2005, the Secretary-General rightly notes (and I quote):

"The task ahead is not to reinterpret or renegotiate the conclusions of the World Summit but to find ways of implementing its decisions in a fully faithful and consistent manner" (unquote)...

We support this contention and indeed the Secretary-General in his efforts to flesh out the details of the RtoP through this GA debate and other consultations. However, in lending support we agree with principle that the discussion must be confined and narrowed to the four crimes namely: genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Understandable reservations about RtoP as a concept have been expressed by delegations in differing formulations. Being the most representative organ of the UN system, the GA must give serious consideration to all the reservations expressed in order to garner a broader consensus for RtoP – to do so would allow its better facilitation, consolidation and implementation.

In the NAM statement, which we agree with, the Ambassador of Egypt rightly pointed out that "we should work to reconcile all the divergent concerns and viewpoints through an honest, comprehensive, all inclusive and transparent dialogue."

The robust discussions (especially during the Interactive Panel last week) and through these debates thus far in the GA have engendered a situation where the vision of paragraphs 138 and 139 of the World Summit Outcome document are being realized, we would argue, in a more positive context. However, more work and discussions need to take place in order to further flesh out the concept and thereby give better definition to the implementation process of the RtoP concept.

President

On 30 June this year, we eclipsed the 4th year since the UN Security Council Mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission on Bougainville (UNOMB) in Papua New Guinea was successfully completed. The decade long bloody conflict claimed nearly 20,000, mostly Papua New Guinean lives, on both sides of the conflict. The scars continue to heal with the strengthening of the continuing implementation of the comprehensive Peace Agreement.

Nothing it seems can prepare you for the aftermath of a conflict or war. The truth (or the lack of it) is however always reflected in post-conflict analysis and normally posed within the ambit of the questions such as: why the conflict was not avoided or prevented and as to how factors were allowed to simmer and fester, finally ending in bloody conflict.

It is in the search for the answers to these simple questions that my Delegation finds these debates and discussions on the RtoP of extreme interest. While the conflict itself does not fall within the parameters of RtoP as we are now discussing, the lessons learnt from such a conflict are invaluable.

President

We accept the notion that the 'responsibility to protect' is our primary obligation. However this does not and should not preclude assistance being rendered in situations requiring genuine assistance.

In such a situation, the assistance rendered should not be seen as an abrogation of sovereign responsibility but rather, as eloquently stated on a different occasion, by the Ambassador of Timor-Leste as "... enhancing sovereignty".

President

In the Annex to the Secretary-General's Report, the important area of building early warning and assessment capacities sets out parameters we can build on. Like other delegations, we support the development of an early warning system with a stronger and better monitoring mechanism. There has to be a more effective capacity building process globally with the sharing of best practices.

The concept of 'best practices' is often spoken about in this House but not given the proper and due attention by the UN system. One of the challenges is the need to recognize and respect the proper value of local or indigenous knowledge. To this end the Secretary-General properly notes the tendency for this knowledge "... to receive too little attention from global decision makers." Furthermore and interestingly, is the recognition in the same Annex of women's groups being recognized as potential providers of timely and sensitive information on evolving conflict situations. These examples give us a stark insight into some of the downfalls of pre-conflict assessments where critical message and signals are overlooked because of their 'lowly' source!

If the implementation process of RtoP is going to be effective, we must expect more from the UN Secretariat and the overall UN system to be diligent.

President

There remains much work to be done to further evolve the concept of RtoP to implementation. While paragraphs 138 and 139 of the 2005 World Summit Outcome document give rise to the vision, it is the GA which must deliver on the reality of its implementation.

The phrase '**never again**' in its broader reality has been, as history suggests, somewhat of a sad failure. Nevertheless, as a contemporary international community we have emerging tools to address this failure. In its proper context RtoP can be one of those tools. Inevitably, this debate must continue and my delegation will engage constructively in the realization of the RtoP concept pursuant to the agreed principles in the 2005 World Summit outcome document.

Lastly, we recognize and thank Professor Ed Luck for the work he has done to date on RtoP. We also look forward to working with people like Mr. Gareth Evans, a strong proponent of the RtoP concept, directly in the UN context as these discussions continue.

Thank you.