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The United Nations General Assembly Plenary Meeting
on
The Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the Prevention of Genocide, War
Crimes, Ethnic Cleansing and Crimes Against Humanity

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Intervention by
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Your Excellency, Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General, dear Colleagues,

At the outset, I would like to thank Australia and Ghana for pushing so hard to put this important topic on the Agenda of the General Assembly and H.E. António Guterres, Secretary General and H.E. Miroslav Lajcak, President of the General Assembly for convening and supporting this crucial formal debate that offers an excellent opportunity to renew and enhance our pledge to build a stronger global partnership for the prevention of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. While we align ourselves with the Statement of the Group of Friends of R2P and the European Union and I wish to add a few observations in my national capacity.

Mr. President,

We welcome the new report of the Secretary General entitled “Responsibility to Protect: From Early Warning to Early Action” and the three-fold strategy for strengthening early action outlined in it. Hungary highly appreciates that after nine years, the principle of Responsibility to Protect (R2P) was accorded its rightful place on the agenda of the UN General Assembly.

We share the growing concerns of the Secretary General about the increased number of victims of atrocity crimes. This is why we have to strengthen the UN’s response by implementing specific measures to improve internal UN coordination in the area of R2P.

Hungary strongly supports the work of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and Secretary General’s decision to appoint a new Special Adviser on Responsibility to Protect. Here, I would like to take the opportunity to thank Mr. Ivan Šimonović for his engagement on raising awareness on R2P at the UN system. This is a step to the right direction to make the world a better place.

It is more important than ever that States put more emphasis on prevention through various measures, including early warning, political mediation, empowering victims of crimes, enhancing domestic and international capacities for ending

impunity and finding new ways for ensuring more effective compliance with the international humanitarian law.

Excellencies,

- As an active member of the Group of Friends of R2P, Hungary is fully dedicated to raise awareness on the issue at national and international level as well. We support the work of the Budapest Center for International Prevention of Genocide and Mass Atrocity that will host a workshop on “Preventing Radicalization in Practice” on June 26th aiming at raising awareness among the security sector in Hungary on the challenges posed by polarization and radicalization.
- In order to enhance visibility of international human rights mechanisms and ensure platform for international dialogue on current human rights issues, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary annually organizes the Budapest Human Rights Forum for ten years by now, bringing together national, international human rights experts, representatives of non-governmental and governmental organizations and the academies.
- In the field of crime prevention, for example a National Crime Prevention Strategy for 2013-2023 has been adopted. We provide different trainings for professionals working with youth, including mediation trainings to handle conflicts in school. Regarding the domain of human rights, the Government established a Human Rights Working Group in 2012 with the purpose to monitor the respect of human rights in Hungary in compliance with the recommendations of the UN, the Human Rights Council, or the Universal Periodic Review Working Group.

Mr. President,

We believe that actions should be taken not only on national, but on the international level as well. Therefore, we support the work of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism (IIIM), which assists the investigation and

prosecution of the most serious crimes, thus the Hungarian Government decided to make voluntary contributions both in 2017 and in 2018, for its functioning.

Hungary is an active member of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) Group supporting the efforts aimed at making the Security Council more efficient, inclusive and legitimate. We advocate for refraining voluntarily from the use of veto in case of mass atrocities and we encourage all Member States who have not done so yet to sign the Code of Conduct elaborated by the ACT Group to strengthen cooperation within the UN framework.

The role of the International Criminal Court (ICC) is also vital to end impunity and bring perpetrators to justice when national criminal accountability mechanisms are not available. That is why we stand by the ICC and pledged our full support to the values it defends.

In conclusion, our eventual goal should be to ensure the peaceful and secure living conditions for everyone in their homelands without any possibility of being victim of atrocity crimes. However, this can be only achieved by tackling the root causes of conflicts and dealing with transnational risks, such as violent extremism, terrorism, human trafficking, modern day slavery, climate change and water scarcity, as part of our broader prevention efforts.

I thank you Mr. President.