



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY
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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS**

**PLENARY MEETING ON “THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT AND
THE PREVENTION OF GENOCIDE, WAR CRIMES, ETHNIC
CLEANSING AND CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY”
GENERAL ASSEMBLY HALL, UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS
NEW YORK, 25 JUNE 2018**

Mr. President,

First and foremost, I wish to thank you for convening this plenary meeting, which enables all Member States to deliberate and exchange frank views on the Report of the Secretary-General on the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) as contained in document A/72/884. As agreed by the General Assembly last year, the inclusion of R2P in the Assembly’s agenda underlines the principled commitment of the United Nations to the prevention of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

2. The Secretary-General’s report stated that the number of people killed in conflicts has risen tenfold since the 2005 World Summit. Such negative trends pose a serious threat to international peace and security, as situations involving atrocity crimes can generate lasting instability, both within and across borders. My delegation shares the views of the

Secretary-General that it is important for us to continue building a world based on the rule of law with strong multilateral institutions, which could protect its people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. My delegation also joins other Member States in acknowledging the noble intentions that the concept of R2P intends to accomplish; namely, to ensure that unspeakable tragedies such as those currently happening in various parts of the world, will never recur.

Mr. President,

3. Malaysia has been closely following the deliberations on the issue of R2P and the follow-up dialogue sessions after the World Summit in 2005. My delegation notes that divergence of opinions continues to persist among Member States on the concept, understanding and implementation of R2P, especially those that concern state sovereignty and international mandate to act. Malaysia sincerely hopes that we could quickly resolve this disagreement to respond effectively to atrocities and prevent more genocides.

Mr. President,

4. Malaysia believes that non-military solutions should always be the first option because military interventions would only cause further human catastrophe. Malaysia will continue to support the utilization of various non-military measures in efforts to respond to or prevent the escalation of atrocity crimes, including mediation, monitoring and observer missions, fact-finding missions, commissions of inquiry, and public advocacy by international officials.

5. Nevertheless, in addressing the atrocity crimes committed by non-state armed groups, we acknowledge the emergence of new challenges, particularly those related to the impact of new technologies. As such, some modifications in the preventive and protective strategies by all stakeholders may be required, and Malaysia stands ready to work closely with other Member States, regional organizations and civil societies in addressing, anticipating, preventing and responding to these emerging threats and challenges.

6. My delegation notes that the international community's capacity for early warning and assessment of atrocity crimes risks has significantly improved over the past few years. Malaysia also sees merits in the Secretary-General's report, outlining the three-strategies for strengthening early action/warning, which include reviewing and strengthening existing preventive capacities; promoting accountability; and innovating through expanding civilian action for atrocity prevention.

7. In this context, my delegation supports the idea that prevention must become the rule, rather than the exception. The Security Council, General Assembly, Human Rights Council, Peacebuilding Commission, regional and sub-regional organisations can all enhance their contributions for the prevention of atrocity crimes by demonstrating greater willingness to consider and respond to the earliest signs of risk.

8. In this respect, we join others in calling for a restraint in the use of veto powers at the Security Council, especially in cases of atrocity crimes. For practical reasons, Malaysia is of the view that the exercise of veto

should be regulated so as to allow the international community to promptly act in saving the lives of innocent people from brutal atrocities.

Mr. President,

9. In principle, Malaysia welcomes the noble intentions that R2P intends to accomplish. Nevertheless, my delegation wishes to reiterate that R2P requires continued and in-depth discussions to enable the international community to clearly define its understanding, applications, implementations and effects on States on both international and internal dimensions. We believe that only through complete understanding and systematic application to all Member States, can we truly accept R2P as an international norm. To this end, Malaysia stands ready to work closely with the UN and its member states in the development of options to strengthen civilian action to prevent atrocity crimes.

Thank you, Mr. President.