



# Security Council

Sixty-ninth year

*Provisional*

## 7155<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 16 April 2014, 10 a.m.

New York

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*President:* Mrs. Ogwu ..... (Nigeria)

*Members:*

Argentina .....	Mrs. Perceval
Australia .....	Mr. Quinlan
Chad .....	Mr. Cherif
Chile .....	Ms. Sapag Muñoz de la Peña
China .....	Mr. Wang Min
France .....	Mr. Araud
Jordan .....	Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein
Lithuania .....	Ms. Murmokaitė
Luxembourg .....	Ms. Lucas
Republic of Korea .....	Mr. Oh Joon
Russian Federation .....	Mr. Churkin
Rwanda .....	Mr. Gasana
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . .	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
United States of America .....	Ms. Power

## Agenda

Threats to international peace and security

Prevention and fight against genocide

Letter dated 11 April 2014 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2014/265)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda.**

*The agenda was adopted.*

## **Threats to international peace and security**

### **Prevention and fight against genocide**

#### **Letter dated 11 April 2014 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2014/265)**

**The President:** In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Somalia, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo and Turkey to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Ambassador Colin Keating to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2014/270, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the Russian Federation, Rwanda, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2014/265, which contains the text of a letter dated 11 April 2014 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept paper on the item under consideration.

I wish to warmly welcome the Deputy Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Jan Eliasson, to whom I now give the floor.

**The Deputy Secretary-General:** "The genocide in Rwanda is one of the darkest chapters in human history". Those are the words of the Secretary-General — deeply moved — spoken in Kigali last week.

Today we remember the victims and the survivors as we continue to work to achieve justice for them and to prevent genocide and other mass atrocities anywhere in the world. We remember with heavy hearts the collective failure of the international community to recognize and act on the warning signs of genocide.

Twenty years ago, we saw yet again, after the Holocaust, how genocide was not a single event but a process that evolves over time, a process that requires planning and resources. That means that genocide can be prevented, with information and mobilization as well as with courage and political will.

We must continue to build on the lessons learned to improve our ability to protect populations from the most serious international crimes. Positive steps have been taken. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, alongside national trials, has held perpetrators to account. Tribunals and special courts for the former Yugoslavia, Cambodia and Sierra Leone have made similar inroads against impunity. The International Criminal Court has been central in the advance of international criminal law. The Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide now gathers information and sounds the alarm where there is a risk of genocide or other atrocities. Along with the Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect, he and other United Nations officials work on prevention and on helping countries build inclusive institutions and tolerant societies, with a focus on the resolution of grievances and disputes through peaceful means.

More broadly, the United Nations has progressively placed the promotion and protection of human rights at the core of our prevention work. The recently launched Rights Up Front initiative aims to improve our ability to respond to serious violations of human rights, which often are early warning signs of mass atrocities and of conflicts to come. The initiative is meant to generate early action and more active engagement by Member States and by the different entities of the United Nations system. We must be committed to doing our utmost to protect human lives in a very violent world.

The Rwanda genocide had a serious impact on the Great Lakes region. Twenty years later, the region is still seeing and dealing with the consequences. The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) established a Protocol for the Prevention and the Punishment of Genocide, War Crimes, Crimes against Humanity and all Forms of Discrimination. Rwanda now chairs the Regional Committee to implement the Protocol. We count on Rwanda's leadership in the prevention of atrocities. Almost half of the States members of the ICGLR have established national committees on genocide prevention. I commend Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda for doing so.

As we mark the passage of 20 years since the genocide, we also pay special tribute to the impressive work of the Rwandan people for their own recovery and reconciliation. Rwanda has come a long way since 1994, and is one of the few countries that have established a national institution dedicated to the prevention of genocide. We encourage others to follow its lead and institutionalize prevention mechanisms.

Conflicts today, from Syria to South Sudan to the Central African Republic and beyond, sadly, show that the protection of populations from atrocities remains lagging and elusive. Those and other crises have different roots, yet there is a commonality. Across the landscape of conflict we see similar fault lines, divisions based on religion, ethnicity and even language. We see the rise of separatism, extreme nationalism and demonization of "the others": us versus them, our way or no way.

No part of the world is immune to that threat, and all of humankind is diminished by it. That means that all societies should assess their vulnerability and work at every level to build resilience, tolerance and vigilance in detecting early warning signals of crises to come. Let us reaffirm that the primary responsibility lies with States themselves.

Preventing atrocities also means establishing legitimate and accountable national institutions that are inclusive and credible in the eyes of the population. It means ensuring that the rule of law is respected and that all human rights are protected, without discrimination. It means managing diversity, supporting a strong civil society and allowing all peoples' voices to be heard.

In conclusion, we must do more as a community of nations and as global citizens if we are to live up to the promise of "never again" and act upon our collective

responsibility to protect. Let us, in these days of so many acts of blind and brutalizing violence — and I look at the President as I say this and think of the recent atrocities committed in Nigeria — be guided and inspired by the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations, which reaffirms "the dignity and worth of the human person" and by the Charter, which urges us to "live together as good neighbours" in this world.

**The President:** I thank the Deputy Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ambassador Keating.

**Mr. Keating:** I want to thank all of the members of the Security Council for inviting me to participate in this briefing.

Twenty years ago, Madam President, your country, Nigeria, and mine, New Zealand, sat beside one another as members of the Council. I had the dreadful responsibility in April 1994 of presiding over a Council that refused to recognize that genocide was being perpetrated against the Tutsi in Rwanda and failed in its responsibilities to reinforce the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Rwanda in order to protect as many innocent civilians as possible.

My first responsibility today is therefore to remember the victims, the almost 1 million who died, and the survivors. It is good that the Council will today make its own commemoration of the genocide and discuss the need to prevent genocide in the future. This briefing also provides a fitting opportunity, for me in my capacity as former President of the Council in April 1994, to apologize for what we failed to do in 1994 and for that to be formally recorded in the official records of the Security Council.

Secondly, I want to acknowledge those Council members that joined with New Zealand in 1994 and supported our efforts to condemn the genocide and to reinforce the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR). In this regard, Nigeria deserves great credit, as do the Czech Republic and Spain. Two other members that gave support and encouragement were Argentina and Djibouti.

We must also remember those in the field who displayed great courage and did their best to protect civilians. Force Commander General Romeo Dallaire is first among these, as are the brave soldiers from Belgium and Senegal who gave their lives. I want to pay tribute especially to the major contingents from Ghana,

Senegal and Canada, which remained in Rwanda throughout the genocide. While sitting in Amahoro Stadium during the genocide commemoration in Kigali last week, I could not but recall the bravery of the United Nations soldiers who protected many thousands of Tutsi in that stadium during the genocide. I was also reminded that despite what many people believe, the United Nations did not desert Rwanda completely.

I also want to pay tribute to two organizations: the International Committee of the Red Cross and Médecins sans frontières. Both had their people in several locations outside Kigali. As President of the Council, I met with their New York representatives, usually every morning, and was able to update the Council with objective information from the field.

We all know how important the flow of information to the Council can be — especially information during the early stages of an emerging conflict, when there are still options for prevention or deterrence. In March and April 1994, the Council was not getting useful reports from the Secretariat. Even after the genocide had begun, events were being described for several weeks as simply a resurgence of the civil war. The wholesale slaughter of civilians was not being conveyed to the Council. Moreover, the Secretariat had concealed from the Council a critical piece of advice — a cable from the Force Commander in January 1994, which gave graphic early warning of probable genocide. And, in terms of early warning, a vital piece of evidence also existed in the United Nations system in Geneva — a report by a Special Rapporteur to the Commission on Human Rights warning of the likelihood of genocide. It was never drawn to the Council's attention.

All this confirms that there are many lessons about information, about early warning and about how to use information that I believe are still relevant today. I know there are hesitations among some here about the value of horizon-scanning, but if they want to take prevention seriously, then some creative alternative is desperately needed.

I need to explain what led the Council in April to downsize UNAMIR. Some months earlier, a permanent member was seeking to reduce the number of peacekeeping missions. It selected UNAMIR as a target for a special attention because of the slow progress in the peace negotiations in Arusha. It pushed for UNAMIR to be put on a very short leash. Accordingly, resolution 909 (1994) scheduled a review

of the mandate for mid-May. Clear signals were given in consultations that there would be no agreement to renew the UNAMIR mandate if there were further obstacles in the Arusha peace process.

In hindsight, we can see that this was a naïve gift to the genocidaires in Kigali. Their ambassador was sitting as a member of the Council. They were privy to all the discussions in the informal consultations. They knew that the mandate was at risk. They had every reason to believe that all they had to do was to create conditions of chaos in Rwanda for the UNAMIR mandate to be terminated.

Against this background, all Council members will appreciate the political difficulties for those of us who were arguing for a reinforcement of UNAMIR. To reinforce UNAMIR required a new formal decision, but it was absolutely clear from the negotiations that a draft resolution to strengthen the force would meet with a veto. The task became even more difficult once some major troop contributors decided unilaterally to withdraw. Belgium had suffered serious losses; it believed all its troops were at risk and it began lobbying the Council and other troop contributors to evacuate. Some contingents, especially those that were lightly armed and lacked protective equipment, also feared for the safety of their personnel and wanted to leave. Thus, another challenge at that time was how to maintain the morale and confidence of the troop-contributing countries (TCCs).

To that end, I organized daily informal meetings between the President and the TCCs, and at the same time with Nigeria and others, seeking to negotiate the best possible compromise on the future of UNAMIR. But that compromise inevitably had to be a downsizing rather than reinforcement. For me, the bottom line was to keep UNAMIR in existence and to retain as many of the most effective troops as possible, because we knew that the Force Commander would use whatever capacity he had to protect as many civilians as he could, and we hoped that this would be a foundation for the early reinforcement of UNAMIR.

Perhaps this history demonstrates some lessons about the important and necessary interaction between the Council and troop contributors that I think are probably still relevant today.

I will now turn to the efforts of New Zealand and the Czech Republic, with the support of Argentina and Spain, to name and condemn the genocide. Despite

improved briefings by the Secretariat and the flow of information I was relaying to the Council from non-governmental organizations in the field, most of the permanent members were objecting. Their reasons varied, but the net result was that several members were blocking a draft presidential statement.

As the days wore on and the end of the month approached, New Zealand put in blue a draft resolution condemning the genocide. The words were drawn exactly from the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. As President, I announced that unless there were agreement on a presidential statement based on the exact language of the Genocide Convention, I would convene an open meeting of the Council at 11.55 p.m. on Saturday 30 April and put the draft resolution to the vote. Ultimately, presidential statement S/PRST/1994/21 was agreed, condemning the atrocities in Rwanda, using all of the language that we had proposed from the Genocide Convention, but at the insistence of some permanent members, the specific word "genocide" was removed.

In early May, New Zealand and Nigeria each introduced draft resolutions to reinforce the number of troops and to give the operation a formal mandate for the protection of civilians. But it took until 8 June before resolution 925 (1994) was adopted. Even then, the resolution was equivocal and did not allow full deployment. Ultimately, the genocide stopped only when the forces of the Rwandan Patriotic Front took control of the whole country.

That is the tragic history of April, May and June 1994. Time does not permit a detailed discussion of events in the following months, such as the mistaken decision of the Council to authorize Operation Turquoise or the events leading up to the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. But please permit me to make some brief final observations.

My first observation is a message of hope. I think it is very important to contrast the failure in 1994 regarding Rwanda with what the Council did in 2010 concerning Côte d'Ivoire. On Côte d'Ivoire, the Council members knew that there was a serious risk of ethnically based mass atrocities. They had good information from the Secretariat. They had put in place a proper protection mandate. The United Nations had properly resourced the Mission. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, through its Capstone Project, had in place a useful set of doctrines. The TCCs showed courage

and determination, and they were well supported by the United Nations. Most importantly, Council members were fully agreed on the need for limited robust action to ensure protection.

I would like to add that the development of the principle of responsibility to protect, which is referenced so clearly in the draft resolution before the Council today, gives further reason for hope. Recent Council practice in Mali and the Central African Republic and with the Force Intervention Brigade in the Democratic Republic of the Congo further demonstrates that some important lessons have been learned.

My second observation relates to the belief in 1994 that the international community did not have the means to intervene in Rwanda; but it was false. In early April, just after the genocide began, a number of countries mounted a major unilateral military intervention in Rwanda. That was done to protect and extract foreign nationals, but those forces then departed. They left the Tutsi to their fate. Again in 1995, when the *genocidaires* and much of the civilian population had fled to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a further major intervention was launched, this time in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. Ironically, that was to help those who had undertaken the genocide. The truth is that there was no lack of capacity. What was missing, both in Rwanda in 1994 and again in 1995 when the Council failed to act to establish security in the camps in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was political will.

My third observation relates to the cascade of tragedy that can occur when there is a failure of political will, such as in 1994. The Deputy Secretary-General has already touched on this. A toxic accumulation of events unfolded and eventually embroiled the whole region. Twenty years later, we are still dealing with the consequences in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The failure in Rwanda in 1994 not only caused genocide, but also led to an appalling humanitarian catastrophe in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo in 1995. That led directly to the civil wars in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to human tragedy on an even more massive scale. Some estimates suggest that up to 5 million may have died. Major instability has afflicted the whole region.

If we truly want prevention to work, then we need better political, operational and financial mechanisms for the Council and the wider United Nations system to

achieve better outcomes. I believe that this means new mechanisms for improved early warning, better systems for briefing and presenting options to the Council at the early stages of potential crises, enhanced preventive diplomacy, more effective use of Chapter VI tools of the Charter of the United Nations, quick preventive deployment, and, if all else fails, robust deterrence. I suggest that the costs of investing in such mechanisms would be insignificant when set alongside the dreadful human, political and financial costs of inaction that flowed from our collective failure in 1994 to respond to the genocide in Rwanda.

**The President:** I thank Ambassador Keating for his briefing.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

*A vote was taken by show of hands.*

*In favour:*

Argentina, Australia, Chad, Chile, China, France, Jordan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Nigeria, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Rwanda, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America

**The President:** There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2150 (2014).

I now give the floor to members of the Security Council.

**Mr. Gasana (Rwanda):** Madam President, I thank you for organizing this important briefing as one of the events for the twentieth commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

Our briefers today have undoubtedly an extensive array of experience on the topic of the prevention of and fight against genocide. I welcome Ambassador Colin Keating of New Zealand, a man who, as a President of the Security Council in April 1994, witnessed a lurid moment of weakness of this organ 20 years ago, when he was calling for help for our people. I also acknowledge the presence of Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson, a man who has rallied the United Nations system to learn from its failure in Rwanda in 1994 and who has played an important role in the liberation and promotion of our responsibility to protect. I thank both gentlemen, or let me say dear friends, for their briefings today.

I take the opportunity to thank all members of the Council for adopting unanimously resolution 2150 (2014) on the prevention and fight against genocide on the occasion of the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, during which Hutus and others were also killed. I also particularly thank all States Members of the United Nations that sponsored the resolution. It is our hope that the resolution will serve as a wake-up call and make a contribution, small as it may be, to preventing and fighting against future genocides.

In April 1994, more than a million people were slaughtered in Rwanda during the 100 days between April and July 1994. That is 10,000 people every day for the sole crime of being born Tutsi. Others — Hutus, Twas and foreign citizens — were also killed for opposing the genocide and for carrying out their obligation to protect their fellow humans. The systemic slaughter of men, women and children was perpetrated in full view of the international community. The genocide against the Tutsi highlighted the extent to which methods of prevention at the United Nations failed utterly. In that regard, my Minister for Foreign Affairs, Louise Mushikiwabo, at the launch of the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary in Rwanda back in January, raised a pertinent question that I believe the Security Council should endeavour to respond to in the years ahead. Her question was that today, if the international community had at its disposal the information and capacity to prevent a humanitarian catastrophe, as it did in 1994, would it act differently?

In 1994, the issue was not a lack of information about the true picture of what was happening in Rwanda. It was not a lack of a legal characterization of the crimes that were committed. It was not a lack of budgets or funding. As Ambassador Keating wrote, it was simply a lack of political will. A lack of political will on the part of permanent members of the Council, who held veto power; a lack of political will on the part of the United Nations Secretariat, which deliberately gave erroneous information in the Secretary-General's reports that contradicted the true information coming from the United Nations Force Commander; a lack of political will on the part of the troop-contributing countries that pulled out their troops, leaving those who had run to them for protection at the mercy of Interhamwe militias. As President Paul Kagame said on 7 April, "genocide prevention demands historical clarity of all of us".

It is therefore our duty to recall that genocide was carried out in Rwanda owing to complete systemic indifference between and during the tragedy. Twenty years later, we should ask if the broader international community, and the United Nations in particular, is capable of being any better at preventing a repeat of Rwanda in 1994 from happening elsewhere. On this issue, President Kagame clearly stated, in the same speech on 7 April, that

“[n]o country, in Africa or anywhere else, ever needs to become another Rwanda. But if a people’s choices are not informed by historical clarity, the danger is ever present”.

The horrific scenes coming from the Central African Republic, Syria and South Sudan will in some cases convince many that the United Nations is still struggling to match its normative principles with realities on the ground, and that the prevention of mass atrocities still has a long way to go. This was evident in the fact that the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda materialized in spite of the adoption four decades earlier of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and despite the inherent responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

Since the tragedy that occurred in Rwanda, the Organization has deployed efforts to prevent genocide and mass atrocities by improving the capacity of the United Nations system, mobilizing the political will of key Member States and trying to learn lessons from the failures of the recent past — without, however, reaching their full potential. Those efforts range from endorsement in 2005 at the World Summit of the concept of the responsibility to protect; the enhancement of the agenda on the protection of civilians through normative frameworks; the creation of the Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide; and, in relation to the responsibility to protect, the implementation of the Rights Up Front action plan as a tool for the United Nations to improve prevention by instituting a due-diligence policy on human rights to help enforce United Nations purposes and principles as set out in the Charter.

With the work and jurisprudence of the United Nations criminal tribunals, including the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and the special mixed tribunal in Sierra Leone and other international

criminal mechanisms, the importance of accountability for perpetrators has been highlighted. It was our hope that the combination of all those efforts would result in a robust and effective architecture. As the concept note (S/2014/265, annex) puts it, the key question today is whether such capacity is adequate, or if there are areas that need sustained improvement. Without going into detail, anyone in this Chamber would agree that sustained improvement is required.

It is regrettable that some of the initiatives adopted in good faith in the United Nations by Member States and aimed at preventing and fighting genocide have encountered various challenges in their implementation and created controversies among States. Today, some of the viable initiatives, such as the International Criminal Court, are prone to political manipulation and abuses, which in turn contradict the original intentions in creating such mechanisms. Other initiatives are still ill equipped and without sufficient capacity to discharge their functions, which in the long run hinders the translation of normative frameworks into practical preventive tools that match the realities on the ground. As a result, some of those efforts may not amount to much, and the pledges of “never again” will sound just as hollow today as they were after the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

It is true that the severity of the challenges that must be overcome for preventive action to be timely and effective are immense. On any given day, not just at the level of the United Nations but also within Member States, policymakers are grappling with many pressing tasks relating to crises unfolding somewhere in the world. Focusing on a problem that has not yet surfaced is clearly very difficult, but we believe that this is the task that this Organization should have mastered by now, over the nearly seven decades of its existence. It requires immense effort and willpower to overcome the many political, financial and operational obstacles.

We believe that more emphasis should be placed on reducing the risk of genocide and mass atrocities in order to reduce the need for crisis response. Investing in the areas that address the root causes of conflicts, such as improving the quality of democratic governance and human rights, establishing strong institutions, promoting economic performance, reducing poverty and inequality, and ensuring national reconciliation will, over time, lower that risk. We also believe that more effort should be put into United Nations crisis preparedness as opposed to crisis improvisation.

In that context, operational capacities should be developed well ahead in order to manage commonly recurring situations and to improve institutional responsiveness. In other words, the United Nations should have the capacity to deploy quickly rather than mobilizing for that deployment when a crisis erupts. That can be harnessed to regional and subregional arrangements, most of which are in the process of creating standby brigades. It is also very important that the international community invest greatly in strengthening the capacity of local and regional actors, given their higher incentive to respond to conflicts and crises in their proximity.

In that regard, we welcome the statement delivered by the Secretary-General in Kigali on 7 April during the twentieth commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi, which we believe is a paradigm shift of the Organization:

“I have sent my own signal to United Nations representatives around the world. My message to them is simply this: when you see people at risk of atrocity crimes, do not wait for instructions from afar; speak up, even if it may offend. Act. Our first duty must always be to protect people — to protect human beings in need and distress.”

So let the entire United Nations system put in place the infrastructure to implement such a shift in policy. It is a priority.

Before I conclude, let me say that Rwanda is grateful to the Security Council that resolution 2150 (2014) condemns without reservation any denial of the genocide in Rwanda. We therefore reiterate our call on all Member States to support the fight against the denial of the genocide, which is a denial of the right to memory, healing and reconciliation, and the obligation to learn lessons from the past.

In conclusion, I would like to quote Ambassador María Cristina Perceval of Argentina, who stated the following at a meeting of Security Council members with President Kagame, held on 7 October 2013 in Kigali.

“When I hear you, Mr. President, I remember the history of my country. I came here to see, to learn and to understand, not to point fingers. Genocide is not a slogan; it is in our body, and the shadow of the past is the light of tomorrow.”

Let us learn from that bitter past of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in order to better prevent and fight against future genocide and mass atrocities. Again, a special thanks to all my colleagues on the Security Council, who not only voted for the resolution but also all of whom, exceptionally, co-sponsored it.

**Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Husseini (Jordan):** This morning, we make statements in remembrance of those who suffered so cruelly and in such great numbers 20 years ago in Rwanda. But, as so many before us have said, on other such sombre occasions, can statements ever meet the needs of a moment such as that, when more than 800,000 lost souls, still 20 years later, must be asking: Well? Have the 15 members of the Security Council, particularly the permanent members, learned anything from our slaughter after we were beaten, carved up by machetes or shot over the course of 100 days?

What words would we, the current members of the Security Council, use? What words would be immune to the inevitable mockery and cynical laughter of the people of the Central African Republic, whose relatives have been killed or who have fled their homes in huge numbers. Once we strip away the obvious differences between the Rwanda of 1994 and the Central African Republic of 2014, even with the welcome early African and French deployments to that country and the adoption of resolution 2149 (2014), other aspects of the way in which the United Nations confronts such crises have, regrettably, remained the same. The long deployment time lag is still there, as are the concerns over securing troop contributors in sufficient numbers. Financial constraints also apply and, ultimately, are we not too late again? We all care — yes, maybe — but it is equally clear that we still do not care enough to act immediately and overwhelmingly in those cases where an intervention is needed.

We do not care enough because the labels by which we identify ourselves and others still hide from view the obvious crucial point. While those who were killed 20 years ago met a sudden and brutal death because they were Tutsis or moderate Hutus who opposed the genocide, it is not because of who they were, Tutsi or moderate Hutu, that we mourn them. We honour and remember them today because they were people, humans, like us. Our very categorization of humans according to race, nationality, religion, ethnicity and circumstances of birth still overwhelmingly defines how we see each other. The inevitable stacking is then



there, whereby many of us dangerously view ourselves, and are viewed, as more important than others. That has been humanity's principal curse. Our tendency towards classification, based on only one point of reference, is the foundation for ethnic extremism and ethnic nationalism. Those, in turn, abuse and corrupt victimhood.

The alarming fact is that most of the killers in Rwanda were not raving sadists or psychopaths. Most of the killers were ordinary people. If our historical understanding of genocides and mass killings tells us anything, it is that ordinary people in very specific circumstances will behave with a cruelty never thought imaginable to them, let alone their victims. Even after they commit such horrific crimes, few are able to express remorse without some offer of a quid pro quo, for they can almost not believe it themselves. Of all the representatives sitting here in the Chamber, more than we would ever dare imagine could potentially commit mass atrocities in extreme and unusual conditions. Whether we would be one of them, we would never know unless, to our great misfortune, we found ourselves enveloped by that toxin we call mass atrocity. That is what our understanding of genocide tells us.

Part of what makes it possible for ordinary people to become something else entirely is fear. It is as if fear switches off the higher cerebral functions one by one and, as it balloons in the mind, it finally extinguishes empathy. Whatever capacity for thought is left in that shrunken mind falls into a self-reinforcing closed loop, where the killing, even of children, has been rationalized as just. After the atrocities, those beings become human again. Yet their guilt has been edited so heavily by their returning reason that it becomes distorted: Was it not, after all, an understandable case of preventive self-defence, they rationalize. If we had not tried to kill all of them, they eventually would have killed us all. It is simple.

Fear, based on lies and fed by extreme ideologies, grinds the morality in many individuals down to nothing, leaving only the primitive shell of a being. Fear is the fuel of genocide. It also creates hesitation in those who could intervene to stop it. The events in Somalia in 1993 shaped the international response to Rwanda in 1994, as Ambassador Keating has analysed thoughtfully in his writings. It did not help that Rwanda was then on the Council, which made the Secretariat hesitate in sharing more broadly General Dallaire's

cable of 11 January. Hesitation produces the excuses and the very rationality for cowardice.

If fear is our enemy then courage must be our friend, and not one that is rarely seen, but one that will be with us when needed most. We, the individual members of the Council, need the courage to contribute more to United Nations peacekeeping, not just to order it and shape it, or even to finance it, but to share in the danger and to participate in it with vigour. The Secretariat needs the courage to give us the unedited truth; we need the courage to recognize it; and they, the peacekeepers, need the courage to protect civilians in extreme circumstances, with or without a mandate. In such circumstances, what would mandates matter anyway?

In addition, we need the courage to understand that our methods of work in the Council generate a sense of routine that is deadening and dangerous. And we need the courage to confront the basic fact that, whatever its remaining weaknesses, there is no alternative to the International Criminal Court. The sooner we all strengthen it and adhere to it, the sooner it will fulfil its stated mission to end impunity for all such crimes.

And finally, on courage, my delegation will submit a draft resolution for adoption in due course by the Council, with the aim of instituting a distinctive United Nations medal for extreme bravery. The Secretary-General would award it to those military and civilian United Nations personnel who demonstrate outrageous courage in the face of the most incredible and continuous danger when saving or rescuing people from almost certain death, in the service of humankind and the United Nations. And it must be called the Mbaye Diagne medal for exceptional courage in honour of the greatest hero the United Nations has ever had.

Captain Mbaye Diagne of Senegal was killed after he had saved hundreds of, perhaps even a thousand, Rwandans from death. That he did so unarmed and practically on his own at a time when the Tutsis and moderate Hutus of Rwanda were disowned shamefully by almost the entire international community makes Diagne's feat all the more humane and distinguished. And I urge the members to see or listen to a moving BBC TV and radio documentary called "A Good Man in Rwanda".

There were others too, like General Romeo Dallaire and his Deputy, General Henry Anyidoho, as well as United Nations military observers, humanitarian aid

workers and journalists who, working together with many courageous Rwandans, behaved honourably in the impossible circumstances of 20 years ago.

The draft resolution will propose that the Secretary-General establish a team to design the Diagne medal and to create an external committee comprising a diverse and select group of former peacekeepers to review all proposals and to confirm all submissions to guard against unwarranted recognition. The General Assembly should also consider creating a special fund to help families of those meriting the award. The medal would have to be presented by the Secretary-General to the recipient or next of kin in a formal ceremony witnessed by the full membership of the Security Council.

Now is the right time for the Security Council to recognize those who labour on its behalf and whose humanity and courage in theatres of war far exceeds our own by a very considerable amount. And we need to inspire ourselves and all United Nations personnel serving in the field to be like them, if we are ever to end the wickedness we refer to as genocide permanently. Only then, can we utter to the souls of those who were murdered in Rwanda 20 years ago, “Yes, we, the members of the Security Council, have learned; we have changed.”

**Mr. Churkin** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to thank Mr. Jan Eliasson and Mr. Keating for their briefings. We listened with great emotion and attention to the statement made by the representative of Rwanda.

Today we remember the tragic events of 1994 in Rwanda, which for the past 20 years have evoked in the international community not only a feeling of horror, but also a deep sense of guilt for the slaughter that took place at end of the twentieth century — events that could and should have been prevented. The history of the last century, and especially the terrible lessons of the Second World War, should have taught us that signs of genocide must be fought with resolve and without pandering to those who espouse a xenophobic ideology for short-term political goals. The Russian people, some of whom were sentenced by the Nazis, like many other peoples were, to physical annihilation, paid a ghastly price — the lives of tens of millions of fallen soldiers and civilians, women, the elderly and children.

It seems that humankind has not learned the bloody lessons of history. Nazi criminals were tried and, as

a result of the victory over fascism, we established a new international system. The 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the 1968 Convention on the Non-Applicability of Statutory Limitations to War Crimes and Crimes against Humanity were adopted. They have allowed certain actions to be qualified as genocide and ensured that there is legal accountability for them.

Nevertheless, in the late twentieth century, the international community was able neither to recognize in time the signs of distress coming from a small African country, nor to rescue its people. One of the most horrifying instances of genocide occurred before our eyes with almost complete inaction on the part of the United Nations. How was that possible? In 1994, there was already a United Nations peacekeeping Mission in Rwanda. Why was it powerless in the face of the horrific bloodshed that led to the genocide?

We believe that the answer to those questions lies in the conclusions of the report of the commission to carry out an independent inquiry into the actions of the United Nations during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda (see S/1999/1257, annex), which was created in the wake of the Rwandan tragedy. The commission came to the conclusion that the main reason for the United Nations total failure to prevent the genocide was that States, and even the itself Organization itself, lacked sufficient political will for decisive action, even though all the necessary instruments and the legal basis required for making decisions already existed.

However, somebody raised the issue of protecting staff in the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda or helping to save their compatriots who were in the country. Someone thought first and foremost about their internal political needs and someone thought about maintaining their political influence in the country. And someone simply did not pay sufficient attention to the horrifying news coming from Kigali, attributing it instead to the particularities of the African continent. Indeed, the United Nations betrayed Rwanda and the cost of that betrayal was approximately 1 million human lives.

What conclusion can we draw today as we commemorate such a tragic anniversary? We must continue the work being carried out by the United Nations to correct our mistakes. Yet such mistakes continue to be made, as evidenced by what is being proposed by several Security Council members with

regard to the establishment of a United Nations mission in Syria, which would somehow supposedly stop the violence and give the Security Council more objective information on what is going on there.

It is important to stop using political forces that preach nationalistic and sometimes extremist ideas for short-term goals. It is important to understand once and for all that a policy of accommodating such forces can lead to the most tragic and destructive results. It was no surprise that the need to protect and promote the fundamental rights of minorities, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, race or religion, was raised yet again at the recent International Conference on Genocide Prevention in Brussels. Similarly, the importance of measures to prevent incitement to violence based on ethnic or religious hatred was also underscored.

We call on all countries to effectively strengthen international and regional cooperation to achieve those goals in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. That should be the focus of the Secretariat, particularly of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide. In that context, determining genuine priorities and appropriate goals is highly important. Theoretical research, when truly necessary, should be fully integrated into the framework of existing international legal foundations.

Today as we mourn with the people of Rwanda, we should remember that our fragile world requires our joint efforts in order to meet its current challenges.

**Mr. Wang Min** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation thanks the Nigerian presidency for convening this meeting. I thank Deputy Secretary-General Eliasson for his briefing. I also listened attentively to Mr. Keating's statement.

Twenty years ago, the people of Rwanda were subjected to unprecedented carnage in which hundreds of thousands of civilians were killed. That was a dark page in the annals of humankind and should be remembered forever. Over the past 20 years, the Government and people of Rwanda have spared no effort in promoting national reconciliation, safeguarding national stability and restoring economic and social development. Remarkable results have been achieved. China expresses sincere best wishes to the Government and people of Rwanda for continuing to achieve new results on the path of national reconstruction.

Over the past 20 years, the international community has continued to reflect on the lessons learned from

the Rwandan genocide and has spared no effort in preventing the recurrence of a similar tragedy. As the core mechanism for collective security, the Security Council has engaged actively in recent years in various actions to prevent and resolve conflicts, and played an important positive role in the maintenance of regional peace and security.

Regarding ways to promptly prevent and effectively respond to various conflicts and potential crises involving new situations so as to prevent the recurrence of genocide, I wish to stress the following three points.

First, preventing and containing conflicts is the most effective fundamental manner by which to prevent genocide. Ethnic and religious disputes, lack of development and weak capacities, among other factors, can potentially generate ethnic tensions, aggravate social conflicts and even lead to bloody conflict. In order to contain and eliminate the root causes of conflict, it is necessary to take integrated measures to treat symptoms and root causes alike by promoting inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation and creating a peaceful environment that is conducive to ethnic harmony and unity. In a pluralistic society of diverse ethnicities and religions, it is all the more necessary to promote dialogue among different ethnic groups, advocate peace, harmony and inclusiveness, strengthen social cohesion, enhance understanding and trust, and prevent discrimination and confrontation.

Secondly, in order to effectively prevent genocide, countries and their Governments should fulfil their duties and obligations. Governments bear the primary responsibility in protecting their civilians. Governments and parties to conflicts should all abide by international humanitarian law and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, among other international obligations, and spare no effort to protect civilians from genocide.

The international community should respect the lead role of the countries concerned and, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, provide constructive support. Regional organizations have a deeper understanding of the situation on the ground and the root causes of conflicts and tensions. They also enjoy closer ties with the parties concerned. The United Nations and regional organizations should strengthen coordination and cooperation in order to take full advantage of synergies aimed at actively supporting the efforts of the countries concerned in the protection of civilians. The legal

systems of the countries concerned should constitute the main channels for ensuring due process and justice for the victims of genocide, based on full respect for their legal traditions and genuine needs.

Thirdly, the international community should prioritize assistance to the countries concerned in achieving economic growth and social progress in order to eliminate economic and social causes of conflict. The international community should use dialogue, good offices and mediation, among other tools, to promote the settlement of disputes and differences to prevent and contain the escalation of conflict and halt genocide and other crimes against humanity at the source.

In parallel, the international financial institutions and development agencies should strengthen their efforts in African and other developing countries to fulfil all of their commitments in terms of assistance and debt reduction and in raising the resources necessary for Africa's comprehensive development, strengthening capacity-building and providing political, financial and technical support.

The events of the past should be recalled as lessons for the future. The tragedy of Rwanda 20 years ago has left a permanent scar on the memory of humankind. The international community should draw profound lessons from those events and dedicate itself to maintaining peace, enhancing common development, eliminating the root causes of conflict, promoting harmony and coexistence among various ethnic groups, and pool their efforts in building a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.

**Ms. Power** (United States of America): I thank the Government of Nigeria for organizing this important meeting. I thank the Deputy Secretary-General for his remarks and his commitment, and that of the United Nations to doing better. My appreciation goes as well to Ambassador Keating for sharing with us his experience and many insights. All who are privileged to serve on the Security Council must learn from what the world let happen in 1994. Ambassador Keating has helped us to do that.

Nigeria, New Zealand, Spain and the Czech Republic were given special praise last week by the Rwandan Government for their efforts during the genocide. Now, thanks to Ambassador Keating, we can add Argentina and Djibouti to that short list of those that were up-standers — not bystanders — during the worst horrors to occur since the Holocaust.

Nine days ago, I had the privilege to join representatives from across the globe in Kigali to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide. We bowed our heads in remembrance of the more than 800,000 men, women and children who were so ruthlessly deprived of life. We rededicated ourselves to assisting in the still-unfinished task of recovery, reconciliation and reintegration and joined with President Kagame in saluting the unbreakable Rwandan spirit, as he put it, that has enabled the people of that beautiful land to build a better future without forgetting the past.

As dignitaries sat solemnly at the ceremony, however, we began to hear the screams and wails of Rwandan women — mothers, wives, daughters and sisters — who gave haunting voice to what every survivor must feel, and not just on anniversaries. Every single day the people of Rwanda, including many at the Rwandan Mission here in New York, and their families live without those who matter most to them. Two hundred people had to be carried out of Amahoro Stadium last week, convulsed by grief. Millions more live with that daily despair.

The stadium itself where we sat was the stadium that during the genocide sheltered 12,000 people who lived in complete squalor under the eye of General Dallaire's dwindling force. The stadium itself will always be a reminder of what the United Nations might have been able to accomplish if its top officials and the United States and other leading Member States had sent United Nations reinforcements rather than extracting most of the peacekeepers on the ground.

As President Clinton has said many times, the failure of the United States to act during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda is his greatest regret. All of us, whether we were in Government or not, in the Security Council or not, must look inward to consider what more we might have done.

Today we consider again the paramount question of lessons learned — learned not just in theory or on paper but truly understood, felt and applied in practice. In so doing, we benefit from instruments that did not exist two decades ago, including the Office of the United Nations Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Criminal Court, the responsibility to protect doctrine, improvements in regional peacekeeping capabilities — and in that regard I would note in particular the participation of

Rwandan peacekeepers who perform exceptionally and admirably in the cause of atrocity prevention in the Central African Republic and elsewhere — more nimble deployment of accountability mechanisms, and a welcome surge within civil society of anti-genocide awareness and activism.

I mention that last dimension in particular because during the genocide in Rwanda, while 800,000 people were killed, one American Member of Congress, Patricia Schroeder, explained the United States response by noting that her home state of Colorado was home to a research organization that studied Rwanda's imperilled gorilla population. As she puzzled publicly over the United States response and described United States citizen engagement, she said

“there are some groups terribly concerned about the gorillas. But — it sounds terrible — people just do not know what can be done about the people”.

All of the political pressures cut in favour of avoiding action rather than creatively responding to help a people in desperate need. Political calculus should not dictate our response. As a global community, we recognize that mass atrocities may emerge from a variety of scenarios. We have begun to identify telltale patterns and indicators. We have agreed on the value of vigilance to prevent unstable situations from unravelling. We have affirmed — all of us — the duty of each Government to protect its citizens from mass atrocities. We have stated our preparedness under the Charter of the United Nations to respond when States require help in fulfilling that duty.

In some cases, from Timor-Leste and Liberia to Sierra Leone, Libya, Kenya and Côte d'Ivoire, we have joined with local partners to end or deter violence. Recently, we made progress in assisting the Democratic Republic of the Congo and strengthening the United Nations in their fight against those militia who continue to attack and rape civilians. We have intensified diplomatic efforts to restore peace in South Sudan, and the United Nations there has not only provided emergency supplies to populations displaced by recent fighting but it has importantly opened its doors in an unprecedented way, allowing its bases to become islands of protection. The Africans and French deployed to try to prevent mass atrocities in the Central African Republic. We quickly authorized a commission of inquiry, and now we have authorized a United Nations peace operation to address the unfolding catastrophe there. We must get African, European and United Nations forces deployed urgently.

Overall, however, it is both fair and profoundly unsatisfying to admit that our successes have been partial and that the crimes against humanity that persist are devastating. Yesterday, many of us attended an Arria formula meeting in which we saw graphic photographs taken in Syrian prisons showing systematic, industrial-style slaughter and forced starvation killings of approximately 11,000 detainees. Those photos were taken in just three of the 50 Syrian-run detention centres in Syria. To that, we can add the Syrian victims of chemical weapons attacks, the children felled by barrel bombs and those being starved to death in besieged towns and villages or those executed by terrorist groups. Twenty years from now, how will we reflect on the Security Council's failure to help those people? How will we explain Council disunity on Syria 20 years after Rwanda?

Too often we have done too little, waited too long or been caught unprepared by events that should not have surprised us. Moving forward, we have to do a better job of confronting and defeating the practitioners of hate. Part of protecting against mass atrocities is preventing the conditions that allow them — rampant discrimination, denial of human dignity and the codification of bigotry. No one should be targeted for violence simply because of who are they or what they believe.

In our collective effort to prevent mass atrocities, we must make creative use of every tool we have — human rights monitoring, diplomatic missions, technical assistance, arms embargoes, smart sanctions, peace operations, judicial inquiries, truth commissions, courts and other measures designed to influence the calculations of perpetrators who every day are deciding how far they are going to go. Every day they are doing a cost-benefit analysis in their heads about whether the costs of moving forward exceed the benefits they see in their often warped perspective.

We must also be innovative in taking advantage of new technology, like the unmanned aerial vehicles now being deployed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and even text messaging, which is being used to raise alarms, track the movements of outlaw groups, gather evidence of criminal violations, and naturally we must always deliver aid to those in desperate need.

We must also remember that preventing mass atrocities is a global responsibility requiring robust contributions from all. In particular, we need to train and equip peacekeepers who head into harm's

way. More countries should do their share, whether through soldiers, civilians, enablers or other forms of contribution. I echo my Rwandan colleague's point that, 20 years after the Rwandan genocide, we should have moved further beyond what he called "crisis improvisation". Further, we must enhance the bonds of trust between us. Historic differences within or between regional groups must neither lessen our capabilities nor diminish our willingness to act as one.

Finally, we must ask every State to consider whether there is more that it can do to remove the political roadblocks that impede effective action. Again, with thousands of lives at stake in Syria and elsewhere, obstruction is untenable and cooperation is a moral and strategic imperative. Tomorrow afternoon we will also have a chance to shine a spotlight on the horrors going on in the darkness of North Korea.

Our task is as straightforward as it is vital — to ensure that when our successors gather in this Chamber two decades from now they will not speak of more lost opportunities and failures. Instead, their words will be of respect — respect for the comprehensive anti-atrocity steps we took together. Let them say in their time that we in our time moved beyond deadlock to unity, beyond remembrance to mobilization and beyond mere promises to the kind of bold and concrete actions that end wars and stop genocide before the searing pain it causes can be heard in the cries of those left behind.

**Mr. Oh Joon** (Republic of Korea): First of all, the Republic of Korea joins Rwanda and the international community in commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide. The reverberation of what happened 20 years ago is still echoing in our thoughts and conscience. We thank you, Madam President, for providing this timely opportunity to remember and to build on the lessons of that tragic event. Our appreciation also goes to Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Colin Keating, whose briefings help us to renew our commitment to "never again".

Based on the lessons of the Rwanda genocide, the United Nations and Member States have worked together to prevent another terrible humanitarian ordeal. We have made efforts to strengthen the institutional capacities of the international community to address grave crimes against humanity through international and national criminal justice systems. The establishment of the Human Rights Council is significant in that it can play an important early-

warning role by maintaining vigilance over any grave violations of human rights and crimes of mass atrocity. Empowering various United Nations peacekeeping missions throughout the world with a clearer mandate to protect civilians is also an important step in the right direction. The Secretary-General's calls, including the Rights Up Front initiative and the open-gate policy, have been playing a catalysing role to boost the moral authority and operational reach of the United Nations. However, there are still challenges to face before we can claim that past lessons have been fully acted upon.

For one thing, there is work to be done to narrow the gap between the desperation of people in dire situations and the aspiration of the international community to help them. Formulating an international contingency plan that can be promptly invoked in a serious humanitarian crisis may be one way to address these challenges. Promoting regional cooperation and partnerships with non-governmental organizations in this field, such as the recent Brussels International Conference on Genocide Prevention, is a path that should be explored further.

How to deal with the culture of impunity is another big challenge. In that regard, we appreciate the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). The international community needs to continue support to the ICTR in order that it can conclude its work in accordance with the completion strategy.

In a broader context, international cooperation to bring all fugitives to justice should be strengthened. We call for more support for the International Criminal Court, the only permanent international criminal justice mechanism.

The responsibility of States to protect their own people should be given more attention, and the discussions on the responsibility to protect should produce more tangible results.

As we learned the hard way, successful efforts to stop the most egregious humanitarian crimes require our collective wisdom and close cooperation. We should join forces and do everything we can so that our commitment to "never again" does not slip into another agonizing resignation of "again and again".

**Mrs. Perceval** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, Madam President, I would like to convey the solidarity of the people and the Government of Argentina to the people and the Government of your country, Nigeria. Humankind has no right to suffer.

Argentina does not sponsor draft resolutions for reasons of technical or timely factors that may or may not be present in a given draft resolution. As in this case, we do so when the goal of the draft resolution entails reaffirming the absolute validity and unquestionable force of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, in particular the promotion and protection of human rights and the individual freedoms of all without distinction of any sort. We also do so because that is State policy in our country. We do so when, as in this case, we have no doubt that the international community must set aside its feint-heartedness to raise its voice in the certainty that only memory, truth, justice and reparations will prevent the repetition of massive crimes of atrocity such as the genocide that took place in Rwanda in 1994 — and not just in Rwanda, but throughout the entire world. We do so when not doing so would run counter to the legal and moral imperative we have as Members of the Organization and of the Security Council, but especially as men and women who share a common humanity.

In the face of the horror he faced, an Argentine thinker said that genocide was the context in which, with dark and monstrous evidence, one could see the absolute evil that naked power was able to do to other human beings. All genocide raises the most important of questions: where lies the ever-present, dark abyss of humankind, wherein the roots of our own society are found? At the same time, we know that all human tragedy is, collectively and individually, an impetus for a new beginning. Rwanda knows that, as do we peoples who have suffered genocide, State terrorism, massacres and mass killings. We know that tragedy means a new beginning. It demands one. It is an opportunity to think anew about what it means for us to build a society. We know that transitions are not easy or the same, nor do we undergo them in the same way. Here, too, one cannot impose on a people that it build memory in a single way. One question leads to another and it seems there are no definitive answers. Like victims, memory is unique. Memory is creative.

That is why remembering genocide does not mean shedding light on a set of fragmentary experiences or a list of horrors and random events. It would be obscene to do so. Remembering genocide is to seek meaning, for there exists a horrendous abyss within society as well as within ourselves. That abyss separates us from the past that horrifies us and the idea that the future demands that we think, believe and trust that the life to which we want to do justice and the world we deserve

to live in can be different. We need to make the world different, beginning today. We can do so with truth, memory, justice and reparations, because for our people the future means the present that exists in our memory.

As has been pointed out, Argentina was a member of the Security Council in 1994. On 16 May of that year, following the introduction of the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Rwanda (S/1994/565), we had no hesitation in saying (see S/PV.3377) that, since the events of 6 April — the atrocious violence, abuse and systematic slaughter that had been unleashed — Rwanda had found itself plunged into a humanitarian crisis of enormous proportions and a situation of horror for which there was no justification whatever. At that time, Argentina claimed that systematic and widespread violations of humanitarian law in Rwanda, as well as all human rights violations that had stunned the world, should be thoroughly investigated. In July of that same year, when mass slaughter of communities and families — not only majority Tutsi, but also Hutu and others who had denounced the violence and horror — confirmed that the atrocities committed in Rwanda qualified as crimes of genocide, Argentina unequivocally affirmed that crimes of such magnitude must not be covered up or minimized, or enjoy impunity.

In that context, and in the memory of the victims, this commemoration represents a valuable opportunity to reflect on the three dimensions that we must bear in mind when we speak of genocide.

First, the protection of populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity — including incitement to hatred — has only one name: prevention.

Secondly, we must strengthen human rights norms and international humanitarian law, democratic institutions and a social culture in which the recognition and respect for differences and diversity alienate us definitively from an ideology of hatred that is not of the left, right or centre. The ideology of hatred is the ideology of hatred, in which hell is other people. We must therefore strengthen not only substantive law but our ethical conscience and the legitimate foundations of national and international democratic society.

Thirdly, with respect to the fight against impunity, I recall that my mother used to cite Saint Theresa, saying that more tears have been shed over prayers that have been heard than over those that have not. We live

with that reality every day. Every single day, we hear the prayers being said and we see the tears being shed. What matters is our decision to listen, because these are the voices of the victims. It is not only a question of having a good normative architecture or solid and just legal institutions. We need to fundamentally change the concept of power that is still hegemonistic. We need to change social practices that are still discriminatory. We need to change political cultures that are still based on humiliation.

Yesterday, I noted that many need to see to believe, as Saint Thomas said. But in the case of genocide, we need to believe in order to see. We can come here time and time again with our prayers and our tears, we can point to the suffering of the victims, but people may not believe that these things constitute genocide. They may believe that no massacre has occurred. That is why we feel that reality is based on a genuine consciousness. When we truly feel abhorrence towards violence as a means of resolving conflict; when we rebel peacefully against the overwhelming use of power to resolve conflict with weapons or through economic means of humiliation, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide will not only be an excellent legal text, compelling and committing us to act, but also a reality for all humankind.

Among the three dimensions of prevention, the strengthening of norms and the culture of human rights and international humanitarian law, and the fight against impunity, I wish to stress that of prevention. The Secretary-General and Mr. Eliasson, whom I thank for his presence at this meeting, have convened us under a theme that is not a slogan; it is a call to place rights up front. Since it is not a slogan and these are not just words, we must heed this call. To put rights up front is a synonym; it is the antonym of placing disputes over power first. It is to place the human rights of all human beings first.

To prevent is to assume responsibility to protect. To prevent is to listen to individuals, regional organizations and the people of every nation State who can give voice to their experience and not to papers issued from ivory towers that merely imagine what others may be going through. To prevent is to continue to strengthen international human rights law. To prevent is to ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, which we drafted with France. To prevent is to recognize the right to truth as a right. To prevent is to strengthen, not to

destroy, the International Criminal Court so that it is fairer, more consistent and more effective.

I should like to conclude by emphasizing prevention in societies that have experienced genocide. What can we do in its aftermath? How do we imagine the future? How can we believe in the future? How does a society — not individuals, but society as a whole — emerge from this once it has fallen victim? Does it survive by exacting further punishment or by enforcing more human rights? Through more repression or more freedom? Through more discrimination or more equality?

If the prevention of the recurrence of genocide in all societies that have lived through it is based on a political and social scenario in which the culture of fear persists and is perpetuated by the mass media, and in which we are overwhelmed by a culture of suspicion against the dark-skinned, the young, the poor or the immigrant, it may be that punitive tendencies will flourish and massacres recur. Let us look at the populations of the prisons in all our countries and how they got there. To the extent that repression is a response to what we perceive as a potential threat, we may be justifying new genocides.

Chesterton says in one passage that policemen should be philosophers. It is not just a matter of looking for criminals in their hideouts, he says; it is not a matter simply of arresting thieves so as to live in peace. One must go into the elegant halls to detect the pessimists. Who are the pessimists? Those who entertain the frightful thoughts that lead to fanaticism, intolerance and the conviction that hell is others. There is no useful moral relativity when we speak about human rights. It is only on the basis of human rights that we can talk about cultural relativism. There can be no impunity when we speak of violations of human rights, because they are not a matter of opinion. We have talked about this often.

Allow me a gesture in commemoration of the genocide in Rwanda and in thanks to the Ambassador of Rwanda. I have brought for the Ambassador and for the people of Rwanda, on behalf of human rights organizations and of my country and Government, a symbol of our fight against the pessimists, because therein lies our hope. I have here a handkerchief of the mothers and grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo. But it is not really a handkerchief; it was the diaper of the babies who had been kidnapped or who were born in the concentration camps.



We were never victims; we were never pessimistic. We will always work so that power does not humiliate us and so that the world may be ours.

**Mr. Araud** (France) (*spoke in French*): I thank Rwanda for having organized this moment of gathering and commemoration in honour of the victims of genocide. The briefings of Mr. Eliasson and Mr. Keating will enabled us to draw a lesson from the past in order to improve our actions in the future.

On this day of mourning, France pays tribute to all the victims of the genocide. More than a million innocent people were massacred because they were Tutsi or because they were opposed to the murderous folly of a political ideology and system. Mass atrocities were carried out by militias, armed forces and civilians in violation of the very principle of humanity. The violence was planned; radios disseminated hate speech that will forever echo in our consciences.

I also pay homage to the 15 Blue Helmets of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR) who were killed in the line of duty. The international community was not able to prevent or stop the genocide. The Council acted too late and did not do enough. And yet, the earliest warning signs had already been given, the first of which in a communiqué from General Dallaire of 11 January 1994.

Fourteen years ago, we met in the Security Council to draw lessons from our collective failure. At that time, we asked the Secretary-General to draft an action plan to prevent genocide. Since then, our preventive mechanisms have been strengthened. Like my Argentine colleague, I shall return to this topic, which she addressed with deep emotion and thoughtfulness.

To prevent is first and foremost to warn. One early aspect of progress to that end was the establishment of the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, led by Mr. Adama Dieng. Mandated by resolution 1366 (2001), his Office is acting as an early rapid-warning mechanism for the Secretary-General and the Security Council by bringing to their attention any situation that threatens to deteriorate into genocide. The briefings of Mr. Dieng in the Security Council on the Central African Republic have contributed to raising the awareness of the international community so that it can act urgently to prevent such crimes. We must continue to include him further in our work.

To prevent is also to act. A second note of progress was the adoption in 2005 by the Heads of State and of Government of the concept of responsibility to protect. When a Government cannot or will not assume responsibility to protect, the international community must assume that responsibility, including by taking resolute and timely action. France is currently engaged in Mali and the Central African Republic, at the request of the authorities and under Council mandate, to assist the endangered populations. In those countries and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Council has given the kind of robust protection of civilians mandate that UNAMIR lacked in 1994. That progress should be consolidated. The Council must continue to play its full role in implementing the responsibility to protect. As a member of the Group of Friends on Responsibility to Protect, France is in favour.

To prevent is to bring to justice. Adopted in 1948, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide was a precursor to the International Criminal Court; 58 years later, we finally adopted the Rome Statute. In the meantime, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda advanced justice. It was the first to recognize that acts of sexual violence could be acts of genocide. That jurisprudence has been used since then. It remains an essential factor for memory and reparation in reconciliation processes that can avert the cycle of reprisals. The International Criminal Court is permanent and operational. When atrocities are committed, as they are today in Syria, there is no excuse for inaction. The Council can refer the situation to the International Criminal Court.

In spite of such progress, tragic situations, such as that in Syria today, recall the ongoing need to improve our action. In that regard, I welcome the initiatives of the Secretary-General, including his policy of accelerated diligence and of limited contact with those against whom an arrest warrant or a warrant to appear has been issued by the International Criminal Court.

The Organization must serve as a model. All tools must be mobilized — our human rights mechanisms; the network of focal points for the responsibility to protect, in which we participate; our horizon-scanning meetings in the Security Council, which are integral parts of our preventive diplomacy efforts that would benefit from being organized regularly.

Tragic situations arise despite early warning and preventive action. Crimes against humanity or war

crimes are perpetrated before our very eyes, while the Security Council remains paralysed by the abusive use of the veto. That is why France is working for a voluntary code of conduct for the five permanent members to limit the use of the veto when such crimes are committed. We owe that in particular to the Syrian people.

Rafael Lemkin called 70 years ago for international cooperation to free humankind from an odious scourge whose anomic, immoral and inhumane nature shocks the human conscience. In his lofty statement, my Jordanian colleague tried to attribute this scourge to fear. He may well be right, but the absolute horror of the crime attains a metaphysical level in touching upon the evil that is within each of us. Whether or not we are Christian, it is difficult to not think about the original sin in human nature.

Today, France honours the memory of all victims of genocide, and reiterates its commitment to doing everything possible to ensure that the lessons of the mistakes of the past are heeded and that such atrocities do not recur, because such tragedies are still present and possible.

**Ms. Murmokaitė** (Lithuania): Madam President, I would like to thank you first of all for organizing today's briefing on the prevention of and fight against genocide. I also thank Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Colin Keating for their insightful statements.

As we mark the twentieth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, this briefing is an opportune occasion for all of us to reflect on the lessons we have drawn and applied, or that we have failed to apply, since that horrendous tragedy took place. Reeling from the horrors of the Second World War, the international community adopted the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948. Yet ever since, the gap between the intent and implementation has persisted with tragic consequences. Names like Khmer Rouge, Srebrenica and Rwanda, among others, evoke the shocking failures of the international community to stop genocidal carnage.

Twenty years ago in Rwanda, at least 800,000 people were slaughtered in mere weeks. It is our moral duty as human beings to keep the memory of that tragedy alive for generations to come, in order to educate, prevent and protect. We cannot give life back to the victims of those unspeakable horrors. But we can and must honour

them by learning from past failures and applying the lessons learned in order to preserve the lives of those who can still be saved.

The most fundamental lesson of the Rwanda genocide is that it could have been prevented, as Ambassador Keating testified to so eloquently earlier this morning. There were plenty of early-warning signs of what was about to come, but they were systematically ignored. The necessary action was not taken, or when taken was too little, too late. And so the carnage went ahead, wiping out as much as 20 per cent of Rwanda's total population, and 70 per cent of the Tutsis. A year later, horrendous atrocities took place again, this time in Srebrenica.

Since then, the international community has come a long way. At the World Summit in 2005, Member States embraced the concept of the responsibility to protect. Early-warning offices were set up within the structure of the United Nations. Special Advisers to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect were appointed. We commend the two Special Advisers for the dedication and resolve they have shown in carrying out their lifesaving functions. Furthermore, mediation and preventive-diplomacy capacities have been strengthened, and regional organizations have increased their cooperation with the United Nations to that end. Peacekeeping has continued to evolve, and today the protection of civilians has become an integral part of peacekeeping mandates. The Security Council has expanded its own tools by developing instruments such as horizon-scanning, which, if used systematically, can contribute significantly to early warning and prevention.

The most recent building block of preventive action is the Rights Up Front initiative, aimed at strengthening early response and organizational preparedness in countering human rights violations, which, as we know too well, are a key early-warning sign of conflict and possible atrocities to come. With all those mechanisms and instruments in place, the world today is in a much better position than it was 20 years ago to be able to prevent mass atrocities and genocide. And yet we are all witnesses to the harrowing story of the suffering of Syria's civilian population as the conflict has entered its fourth year. Late last year, the Council had to take urgent action to reinforce protection efforts in South Sudan.

At the same time, a particularly dire humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic was unfolding, reaching new levels of brutality and decimating the country's Muslim population. We welcome the Security Council's decision to establish a United Nations peacekeeping mission there to reinforce the protection efforts undertaken by the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic and by Operation Sangaris. If only they could — those brutally hacked or starved to death, tortured, mutilated and left to rot by the roadside, made to disappear by force or massively displaced, all because of their ethnicity, religion or creed in these and other conflict zones around the world — they would argue that even today, too little, too late has been done to protect them.

All of this speaks to the fact that further progress is needed in translating into action the concept of the responsibility to protect, the most important and imaginative doctrine to emerge on the international scene for decades, as Louise Arbour put it. With adequate information, mobilization, courage and, first and foremost, political will, genocide can be prevented. We, the international community, must cultivate and build that political will, or even the best of concepts and conventions will fail to protect the world from crimes against humanity and genocide.

The responsibility to protect to which Member States committed themselves in 2005 must be honoured and acted on consistently. National Governments bear the primary responsibility for protecting their populations, including through human rights education and preventive measures, such as countering incitement, extremism and hate speech, intolerance and discrimination, as well as by practising accountability to their citizens themselves. A critical ingredient in the prevention of mass atrocities is the existence of legitimate and accountable national institutions that are inclusive and credible in the eyes of a country's population, as well as an enabling foundation of the rule of law, good governance, and respect for all human rights for all. To that must be added justice and accountability. Accountability must be assured both nationally and internationally, through the supporting decisions of domestic courts and international tribunals. If justice is not done and perpetrators go unpunished, they will continue to kill, maim, rape and commit atrocities.

Through ad hoc international criminal tribunals and especially the International Criminal Court, which merits our full support, the international community

delivers a stern warning to all perpetrators that there is no escaping impunity. That in itself is an important deterrent to those who may be considering engaging in acts of violence. In that regard, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda did important work in pursuing justice, and it has set important precedents in the development of international criminal law, such as the first ever prosecution of rape as an act of war. A significant number of the perpetrators of the genocide in Rwanda, including former high-level officials, have been brought to justice. Such a state of affairs should be the rule rather than the exception. Sadly, for many victims of unspeakable crimes around the world, closure through justice is still beyond reach.

Today, through the adoption of resolution 2150 (2104), marking the twentieth anniversary of a genocide, we stand with the people of Rwanda in paying our respects to the victims and expressing solidarity with the survivors. The international community has a duty and moral responsibility to make sure that genocide and crimes against humanity have no place in the twenty-first century.

**Ms. Sapag Muñoz de la Peña** (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Nigeria for organizing this important meeting in the framework of the activities commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda, whose victims, among them many children, we remember today with deep respect and solidarity. We appreciate the statement made by Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and through him the commitment of the Secretary-General in this area. We are particularly grateful to Ambassador Keating for the reminder he has given us and for his words on the lessons learned that we should consider today.

My country had the honour to participate in the commemoration held in Kigali on 7 April. At that time we conveyed our solidarity with the people of Rwanda. We would like to once again express our gratitude for our invitation to that commemoration, which our special envoy described as a powerful experience in both human and professional terms.

The gravity of the crime of genocide and its general condemnation meant that a mere four years elapsed between the conception and adoption of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, which established that its States parties must undertake to prevent and punish that crime in time of peace or war. The International Court of Justice

has ruled that those obligations extend even to those that are not party to the Convention because they are obligations erga omnes.

Genocide springs up in divided societies, where perceptions and feelings of exclusion that fuel actions against specific groups, creating the conditions for the crime. Such declines in respect for human rights are often a warning sign that demands that national and international authorities display the political will necessary to recognize and report them, as many other speakers have said. In that regard, we emphasize the Secretary-General's Rights Up Front initiative, since it reaffirms the central role of human rights in the United Nations system, as well as the importance of the work of the Offices of the Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and on the Responsibility to Protect, which have a vital preventive role to play.

Prevention is possible and should be a central part of our responsibilities as a Council and an international community. There is room here to exercise preventive diplomacy and make efficient use of existing early-warning mechanisms. With that end in view, we recognize the role of regional and subregional organizations, such as the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, as well as of local and religious leaders, women, young people, civil society and the media. We must improve coordination and cooperation with such actors. To that end, international cooperation is necessary. The establishment of national commissions for the prevention of genocide and the efforts made in that regard by the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, mentioned at the Arria formula meeting on intercommunal dialogue and crime prevention of 14 March, are examples to consider.

Greater commitment to strengthening the rule of law and respect for international law, in particular human rights and humanitarian international law, will make it possible to improve levels of inclusion and respect for diversity, development and social justice, thereby dealing with the root causes of such conflicts, as the Permanent Representative of Rwanda pointed out.

Each State has the primary responsibility to protect its population against massive and widespread human rights abuses. The international community must stand by and support Member States when they willfully or owing to a clear inability do not meet that obligation under the concept of the responsibility to protect,

enshrined in the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1). Chile has convened a series of seminars and meetings at home in the context of its commitment to the concept of the responsibility to protect and its preventive nature. This year, we hope to hold a new outreach seminar at the intersectoral level together with the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect.

Another key aspect is the need for international mechanisms and/or tribunals to ensure accountability, thereby preventing impunity and, at the same time, serving as a tool for deterrence and the prevention of future crimes. In that regard, we recall the important role of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. We also underscore the role of the International Criminal Court, established by the Rome Statute, which is one of the most important developments in international criminal justice of the past 50 years, since it is the only permanent independent international criminal court to complement national criminal jurisdictions established in order to deal with, *inter alia*, the crime of genocide. Given its complementary nature, States must duly cooperate with the Court in order for it to fully discharge its mandate.

In conclusion, Chile wishes to reiterate the appeal we launched at the General Assembly for countries that have the veto power to refrain from using it in cases of crimes against humanity, war crimes, genocide or ethnic cleansing, since that detracts from the effectiveness of the Council in upholding the most fundamental values and principles of humanity. We urge the Security Council, in particular its permanent members, to shoulder that responsibility. Let us not forget the failures of recent years and the complex situations facing us today. May we not act too late.

**Mr. Quinlan** (Australia): Human progress is evolutionary. It is built on failure and the strength of a positive response to it. Failure always contains lessons. The United Nations inaction in the face of the events of 1994 in Rwanda remains one of the Organization's darkest failures. Despite credible forewarning and the frustrated efforts of countries such as New Zealand and some other elected members of the Council that tried to persuade the Council to deploy additional United Nations forces to Rwanda, we all failed. Now, 20 years after we said never again, we witness unspeakable crimes being committed in places such as Syria and the Central African Republic. We should need no other reminders that we still have so much more work to do.

The Council's authorization last week of a new peacekeeping mission for the Central African Republic, with the protection of civilians at its core, sent a clear message that the savage abuses and atrocities must end. The Council has acted and done the right thing, as have French and African forces. But the situation could so easily have got away from us and descended into even more chaos. Many of the visible precursors to potential genocide and other atrocities were present. Prevention will always probably be our hardest task. Our diligence must be not only constant but also instrumentalized and quick. We still have lessons to learn.

The Council must now act to respond to the mass atrocities being committed in Syria, including the systematic and widespread torture and deliberate targeting of civilians by the regime as part of its military strategy. The referral of the situation to the International Criminal Court is long overdue. In that context, France's proposal for permanent members to voluntarily renounce their veto powers in cases of mass atrocity crimes is very welcome. It should be supported and we should give it serious consideration.

The unanimous endorsement by Heads of State and Government of the responsibility to protect (R2P) in 2005 was a resounding acknowledgement that, while States have the primary responsibility to protect their own populations from mass atrocities, we, the international community, and the Council must provide protection where national Governments have manifestly failed. On behalf of the Group Of Friends of R2P, comprising 45 States in total, including 10 members of the Council, we welcome the references to R2P in resolution 2150 (2014), which we have just adopted. While that is an essential normative response to our past failures, the challenge, as always, is implementation. We must do all that we can to operationalize R2P.

As we now understand, the genocide in Rwanda started not with massacres in churches but with hate speech, discrimination and marginalization. That underlines the fact that it is possible to identify and to implement a policy for atrocity prevention so that risk factors are addressed before a situation becomes a crisis that results in mass atrocities. As the Deputy Secretary-General reminded us this morning, just as genocide is systematic and planned, so the work to prevent it must be deliberate and systematic. Prevention requires strengthening the rule of law and respect for human rights, building institutions, ensuring good governance, combating discrimination and ensuring

the participation of women and, in particular, young people. Youth unemployment and alienation will be, I believe, the most challenging for us all over the next decades.

Prevention also requires a robust civil society and non-governmental organizations, parliaments and media. National legislation can be instrumental and education decisive. The designation of a national R2P focal point within countries can help to integrate an atrocity prevention perspective in national policies. Focal points can form instrumental networks, especially across combustible regions, for helping to prevent atrocity crimes. Australia, together with Ghana, Costa Rica and Denmark, co-facilitate the R2P focal points initiative. We encourage Member States that have not already done so to appoint a national R2P focal point.

As others have said and as we all know, effective early warning mechanisms are of course essential. The Secretary-General's Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and on R2P have a dedicated function to look for signs of precursors to mass atrocity crimes, sounding the alarm, when necessary, and working with States and regional organizations to enhance their prevention efforts. The Council should receive more frequent briefings from both Special Advisers. We should schedule regular and serious horizon-scanning sessions that are uncensored by the Council's own political dynamics. The Secretary-General's leadership on that is crucial.

The Council should support the vital Rights Up Front initiative, as we now know that human rights violations are often the canary in the mineshaft. We see that in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and will be briefed by the commission of inquiry on human rights in the Arria format tomorrow. We should also support the provision of peacekeeping operations with robust mandates. The protection of civilians must always be at the core of United Nations efforts to secure peace.

The recent use of peacekeeping bases in South Sudan to shelter people fleeing violence shows the type of concrete steps that can make a real difference and save lives on the ground. It also shows what desperate people fleeing atrocity not just need, but rightfully expect from the United Nations. As Dag Hammarskjöld said, the United Nations is not here to take people to heaven, but we are here to save people from hell. Humanitarian access itself is a vital component in how we must approach peacekeeping.

Finally, the Council must continue constantly to support efforts to end impunity, including the efforts made by the ad hoc international criminal courts and tribunals and the International Criminal Court. We are seeing evidence that international criminal justice mechanisms can be a powerful deterrent, but to do that they require strong international support. It should be axiomatic that the Council provides support to the International Criminal Court where the Council has itself referred a situation to the Court.

In concluding, I recall that in his book about the Rwandan genocide, entitled *Shake Hands with the Devil*, United Nations Force Commander General Romeo Dallaire, a hero, chillingly describes the mechanics of genocide — the actual killings every day — as hard work. It takes a lot of effort to murder 1 million people in 100 days. Equally, today it takes a lot of effort from us, hard work in the Council, to prevent genocide and mass atrocities. Renewed common resolve, through occasions like this debate, is necessary, but is too easy to give and it is never enough.

As Ambassador Colin Keating concluded in his remarks this morning — and Colin's words deserve repeating — if we truly want prevention to work, then we need better political, operational and financial mechanisms for the Council and the wider United Nations system, new mechanisms for improved early warning, better systems for briefing and presenting options to the Council at the early stages of potential crises, enhanced preventive diplomacy, more effective use of Chapter VI tools, quick preventive deployment and, if all else fails, robust deterrence.

That is simply a linear challenge to all of us in the Council and there is no rocket science in understanding that challenge. We have the conceptual frameworks and the toolkits and we see what is happening every day across the world. That is why we are sitting here. What we need to do is work harder, much harder, to match our response and the leadership mandated of us by all the peoples of the world to meet a simple linear challenge.

**Sir Mark Lyall Grant** (United Kingdom): I thank you, Madam President, for convening this important meeting to mark the twentieth anniversary of the genocide in Rwanda. I would like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General for his presence and his thoughtful intervention today. And I thank Colin Keating for his powerful and telling testimony, speaking from a position of real authority, as the President of the

Security Council in April 1994. We must heed his important recommendations.

It has been 20 years since the international community said “never again”. This debate is an opportunity to assess the progress made against that pledge and to consider what more should be done. Terrible events took place in Rwanda in 1994. Today we remember the victims, the survivors and those who risk their lives to stop the horror. We remember both the personal tragedies and the horrendous scale of the killing. We commend the Rwandan people on the outstanding progress they have made in transforming their country from an impoverished war-torn State into a stable, confident country. The United Kingdom has been and will continue to be a long-standing friend, but it is not enough to simply remember. The events in Rwanda in 1994 and other genocides and mass atrocities, like Srebrenica in 1995, underline the vital shared interest in devising and re-evaluating measures to protect populations at risk.

The primary responsibility for protecting citizens rests, of course, with the States themselves. But 1994 showed us that where a State is failing to act to protect its own population or, even worse, is active in persecuting and killing its own citizens, the international community has an equal and shared responsibility to do all it can to protect populations at risk. States must act in full conformity with the United Nations Charter and work with and through the United Nations to confront threats. We urge countries that have not already done so to sign and ratify treaties such as the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Those treaties work because they provide effective penalties for persons guilty of genocide.

To deter atrocities and achieve justice for victims, perpetrators of genocide must be held accountable for their actions. Since the genocide in Rwanda, global work to fight impunity has been considerably strengthened through the investigation and prosecution of crimes in the international criminal justice system. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has made a substantial contribution. And in the International Criminal Court (ICC) we now have a permanent court with jurisdiction over genocide war crimes and crimes against humanity. It is vital that States cooperate with the ICC so that it can deliver accountability where national authorities are unable or unwilling to act.

There must be no safe harbour for those who commit atrocities, no matter what office they hold. It is a matter of great regret that some ICC States parties have failed to comply with their obligation to implement an arrest warrant for an indictment which covers three counts of genocide. It is high time for States to live up to those obligations and for the Council to follow up on its referral of the situation in Darfur.

The Rwandan genocide is one of several instances in which the Security Council has failed to act, but since 1994 the United Nations has brought about real improvements in our collective ability to take action in situations that could result in mass atrocities. We have responded to the horrors of the past with a number of important decisions. In 2006, the Security Council adopted resolution 1674 (2006) on protecting civilians and reaffirmed its commitment in resolution 1894 (2009) in 2009.

The protection of civilians is now a cornerstone of modern peacekeeping and is incorporated into most peacekeeping mandates. The United Nations has developed better early warning mechanisms to equip the international community with the means to preempt mass atrocities. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, the Human Rights Council and the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide all make important contributions.

But as Ambassador Keating spelled out, early warning by itself is not enough. We must get better at translating early warning into effective preventive action and that requires political will. Political will is a responsibility of every single member of the Security Council and especially every permanent member of the Security Council. The responsibility to protect initiative of 2005 is another positive development and is increasingly incorporated into national Governments' deliberations. We must support States that are building their capacity on the preventative aspects of the responsibility to protect and help them to respond to tensions before they escalate.

When the international community is united, we can achieve progress that would otherwise be impossible. A united Security Council effectively prevented mass atrocities in Côte d'Ivoire and in Libya and has made positive progress in Mali and Somalia. Today widespread insecurity in the Central African Republic is creating intensifying ethnic and religious divides, but the African Union, the United Nations and

the European Union are working together to bring hope to that appalling situation. But immense challenges remain. South Sudan, the world's newest nation, faces descent into civil war if peace talks falter. In Syria, the regime still denies the life-saving access the population desperately needs and continues to persecute and kill its own citizens indiscriminately.

With 20 years having passed since the terrible atrocities in Rwanda, there are no more excuses. We now have the tools not just to say "Never again", but to stay true to our word and to act together to prevent future genocides.

**Ms. Lucas** (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): I, too, thank Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Colin Keating for their statements.

Twenty years ago, despite numerous warnings, the States Members of the United Nations, and in particular of the Security Council, were not able to take decisive measures that would have put an end to the spread of ethnic hatred or to prevent genocide. As my Minister of Foreign and European Affairs did in Kigali on 7 April, I wish to pay tribute to the hundreds of thousands of victims of genocide. I also pay tribute to the strength and determination of Rwandans who were able to rebuild their lives and their country after their terrible ordeal. Our meeting today will not restore life to the more than 800,000 massacred Rwandans or lessen the pain of the survivors, but it is an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to applying the lessons of the past in order to prevent such atrocities from happening in the future.

The genocide in Rwanda unleashed a shock wave that rocked the entire United Nations. It raised fundamental questions about the authority and responsibility of the Security Council, the effectiveness of United Nations peacekeeping, the scope of international justice, the roots of violence and the responsibility of the international community to protect endangered populations from genocide. I shall focus on two points: the responsibility to protect and the fight against impunity.

The 1994 genocide highlighted the need for the United Nations to strengthen its capacity to respond to serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, and to give greater attention to the prevention of mass atrocities. It was a catalyst to the development of the principle of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic

cleansing and crimes against humanity. This principle, which Luxembourg fully supports, was endorsed by the 2005 World Summit. Since then, the Security Council has invoked the responsibility to protect several times, most recently in South Sudan, Yemen, Mali and the Central African Republic. The Council must continue on this path and embody the principle of the responsibility to protect in all its dimensions.

Luxembourg also reaffirms its full support for the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General for the Prevention of Genocide and its early warning role. On our initiative, the Special Adviser was able to speak for the first time before the Security Council at its open meeting on 22 January (see S/PV.7098) to sound the alarm about the Central African Republic. Indeed, we must pay special attention to forewarnings of atrocities, in a logic of prevention. Sustained efforts are needed to end incitement to hatred and intolerance. The implementation of the Rights Up Front initiative, launched by the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General in December 2013, will also contribute to strengthening the capacity of the United Nations and the Council to respond in a timely manner.

Over the past 20 years, the Security Council has come to recognize that the fight against impunity is essential to preventing further genocide and to bringing justice to victims. Created on 8 November 1994 at the request of Rwanda, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has played a crucial rôle. While the ICTR is about to conclude its work and its transition to the Residual Mechanism is in progress, we welcome the significant progress made by the ICTR in developing international law to bring justice to victims, apprehend fugitives and prosecute persons responsible for genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

The ICTR has been a source of inspiration to national and international courts, and in particular in the creation of the International Criminal Court. Mass atrocities committed in recent decades have shown that it was imperative to create a permanent court with universal vocation to end impunity for the most serious crimes. It is more important than ever that the Council fulfils its responsibilities to end impunity, including by providing unfailing support to the International Criminal Court.

This commemoration of the Rwandan genocide, a moment of reflection and pain, is also a moment of inspiration to action. We must act to prevent genocide,

crimes against humanity and war crimes. Whether for Syria, South Sudan or the Central African Republic, we must do our all to ensure that the Security Council lives up to its responsibilities. Our goal must be to translate the moral imperative of “never again” into action. The unanimous adoption this morning of resolution 2150 (2014), drafted by Rwanda, impels us to do so. Let us comply in honour of the victims of the past and to protect future generations from the scourge of genocide.

**Mr. Cherif (Chad)** (*spoke in French*): I thank you, Madam President, for having convened this meeting of the Council on threats to international peace and security and the fight against genocide. I also thank Mr. Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Colin Keating for their statements.

The world is commemorating the twentieth anniversary of the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda, which cost more than 800,000 human lives. It was a massacre that shocked the conscience of the entire world in its brutality and scope. Chad remembers all of those who lost their lives and expresses its support to the survivors and relatives of the victims who continue to seek the truth. Chad welcomes the efforts of the Rwandan Government and its reconciliation and peacebuilding policy, which has enabled the country to restore stability and pursue its economic recovery.

The world is increasingly threatened by conflicts within States arising from multiple and varied causes. Given its inability to end conflicts, the international community must use all the tools necessary to anticipate conflict and thereby prevent its tragic and incalculable consequences, including genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and other types of atrocity.

The 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) places the prevention of mass crimes — genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity — at the core of the responsibility of States to protect civilians. The lessons learned from the genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda call upon the entire international community to reconsider its means of action and capacity to act when faced with such mass atrocities. In that context, the international community should not only continue to assess the effectiveness of its measures, but also and above all to provide itself with an early-warning mechanism to detect situations that are likely to lead to crimes on a mass scale.

While the genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda escaped the vigilance of the international community at the



time, my country notes with great concern that, unfortunately, the latter remains powerless in the face of mass crimes perpetrated in some parts of the world.

Although the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic Operation Sangaris has saved thousands of lives and set in motion a stabilization process in Central African Republic, the international community remains paralysed when it is faced with other situations of grave violence perpetrated against civilian populations. Confronted with large-scale atrocities, States — and the United Nations — must above all meet their responsibilities to end them before it is too late.

Former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in a statement he made at the Human Rights Council in Geneva, said,

“We have little hope of preventing genocide, or reassuring those who live in fear of its recurrence, if people who have committed this most heinous of crimes are left at large, and not held to account. It is therefore vital that we build and maintain robust judicial systems, both national and international, so that, over time, people will see there is no impunity for such crimes.”

We therefore cannot speak about reconciliation or lasting peace in Rwanda without raising the question of justice for the victims and their families and the impunity that certain perpetrators of genocide and their accomplices enjoy. Indeed, only an independent and impartial justice system can make a significant contribution to healing wounds and mending broken hearts. In that regard, we welcome the work done by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in arresting and prosecuting perpetrators of genocide and their accomplices. That initiative sounded the end of impunity and sent a strong signal to all those who might be tempted to commit mass crimes. The ICTR has shown that strengthening international criminal justice could go beyond playing a deterrent role to efficiently contributing to prevention.

The United Nations, whose principal role is the maintenance of international peace and security, must strengthen its cooperation with the regional and subregional organizations to be even more effective before, during and after conflict throughout the world. In that regard, we welcome the current partnership between the African Union and the United Nations and call for it to be strengthened. Concerted action between

the United Nations and the African Union has allowed, despite the lack of resources and some difficulties in coordination, to contain and/or push away serious threats to peace at various levels in certain African countries, including Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, to cite but a few.

In conclusion, we believe that the Security Council should react with urgency in the event of mass crimes based on its responsibility to protect. The resolution that we have just adopted (resolution 2150 (2014)) translates, we hope, our shared determination and will to continue to fight against the crimes of genocide and serious violations of human rights.

**The President:** I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

I want to join those who have taken the floor before me to thank our briefers, Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson and Ambassador Colin Keating, for their briefings. They have not only provided profound insights and fresh perspectives on today's subject of discussion, but they have also established some institutional memory for the future. I want to sincerely thank Ambassador Keating in particular for his recognition of Nigeria's critical role in condemning the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and reinforcing the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda in the Security Council in 1994. I thank him very much; we feel inspired by that recognition.

The concept note for today's briefing (S/2014/265, annex) invites us to consider various issues related to the prevention of genocide. I shall attempt to address the evolution of the preventive capabilities of the United Nations since the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, early warning mechanisms, fighting impunity through justice, and lessons learned.

On the evolution of the preventive capabilities of the United Nations since 1994, Nigeria would like to acknowledge the important steps that the United Nations has taken, and I want to name them specifically. During the tenth anniversary of the genocide in 2004, then-Secretary-General Kofi Annan presented a five-point plan of action aimed at preventing genocide. The elements of the plan were designed to, first, prevent armed conflict which may provide a pretext for genocide; secondly, protect civilians in armed conflict, including through the use of United Nations peacekeepers; thirdly, end impunity through judicial

action in national and international courts; fourthly, gather information and set up early warning systems; and fifthly, take swift and decisive action, including through the use of military force.

One year later, at the 2005 World Summit, leaders from across the world agreed on the responsibility to protect populations against the four mass atrocities — genocide, ethnic cleansing, war crimes and crimes against humanity. We appreciate the Secretary-General's past reports on the subject in which he has proposed tools for genocide prevention, including the report of January 2009 on "Implementing the responsibility to protect" (A/63/677), the July 2010 report on "Early warning, assessment and the responsibility to protect" (A/64/864), and the July 2013 report on "Responsibility to protect: State responsibility and prevention" (S/2013/399).

In July 2009, the Secretary-General presented his January 2009 report to the General Assembly, and in the same month a General Assembly plenary debate on the responsibility to protect was held (A/63/PV.97). The debate presented delegations with an opportunity to demonstrate their support for implementing their commitments under the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document (resolution 60/1). Similarly, following the release of the July 2010 report, the General Assembly, on 9 August 2010, convened an informal interactive dialogue on the main themes of the report. Nigeria was one of the eight countries that participated in that dialogue.

In addition to the periodic reports, the Secretary-General has made some significant appointments since the genocide in Rwanda that will help in the fight against genocide, which has been mentioned by various speakers this morning. We therefore commend the Secretary-General for appointing the Special Adviser for the Prevention of Genocide and a Special Adviser on the Responsibility to Protect. We also commend the Secretary-General for his Rights Up Front initiative, which contains six critical actions to help the Secretariat coordinate the Organization's work in the area of human rights. One of the actions requires the United Nations to provide Member States with candid information concerning people at risk of various violations of human rights.

Nigeria would like to underline the importance of adherence to the principle of early warning mechanisms and the need for a timely and decisive response. Today,

there is a plethora of theatres of conflict around the world, and urgent actions are required to halt those conflicts and indeed address their root causes. In some of those places, the situation is reaching a critical threshold and the risk of mass atrocity crimes is very high. The benefits of an early warning mechanism is that it enhances the chances of detecting those signs that point to the possibility that genocide may indeed occur. With that comes the added benefit of allowing for preventive measures to be taken in a timely manner.

Nigeria remains committed to the fight against impunity. We believe that impunity must be addressed resolutely wherever it occurs anywhere in world. The fight against impunity and the prevention of mass atrocity crimes are national priorities for us, as clearly demonstrated through the various instruments instituted to address that menace. Our belief in the need for global action against mass atrocity crimes and security threats to humankind underpins our ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Arms Trade Treaty and other relevant international legal instruments.

Nigeria appreciates the important role of the ICC in fighting genocide and other mass atrocity crimes. Perpetrators of genocide must be held accountable in order to send a strong and unambiguous message of zero tolerance on the part of the international community. We recall that at the 27 January New York launch of Kwibuka20, the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, the Secretary-General aptly stated that we have learned important lessons. He also emphasized that genocide is not a single event but a process that requires planning and resources to carry out, and that with adequate information, mobilization, courage and political will, genocide can indeed be prevented.

Several questions arise from that thesis of the Secretary-General. How can we obtain information to prevent genocide? Who needs to be mobilized and by whom in order to prevent genocide? And how do we generate the courage and political will to prevent genocide? Those are key questions to which we are all collectively responsible to provide adequate and genuine responses.

Ultimately, it all boils down to the choices that we all decide to make. The choice of compassion over hatred, the choice of inclusion over exclusion, and the choice of peace over war are always ours to make.

Today is an important reminder of the far-reaching consequences of those choices. Let the memories of Rwanda be a constant and visible reminder of the necessity of making the right choice — the choice of peace. Let us muster the courage that makes us too strong for fear and too noble for anger or revenge. Let us eschew neutrality.

In 2010, while we served on the Security Council, I had occasion at a retreat of the Council to remind the Council that, according to the great poet Dante, neutrality is not an option because, again according to Dante, the hottest corner of hell is reserved for those who preserve their neutrality in times of moral crisis.

We want to take this opportunity to recognize the remarkable progress that Rwanda has made over the past 20 years in healing the wounds of genocide and advancing the process of reconciliation. We are greatly inspired by that, and we join the international community in the adoption of resolution 2150 (2014) today in the determined chorus of “never again”.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.*