

**Human Rights Council Session 42 – Statement of the Kingdom of the Netherlands  
(Group of Friends of R2P Geneva) on Item 2**

In reaction to Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the High Commissioner and the Secretary-General

Geneva, 10 September 2019

Mr. President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of members of the Group of Friends of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P).

We would like to thank the High Commissioner Madame Bachelet and her Office for their tireless endeavours in preventing the continuation of human rights violations, engaging with Governments to secure respect for all human rights and enhancing international cooperation to protect human rights including through reporting of gross human rights violations around the world. We further thank her for the oral update to the Council.

The work of the High Commissioner, the Human Rights Council and its mechanisms is vital to fulfilling the Responsibility to Protect populations from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing. Geneva-based human rights mechanisms are fundamental to uphold our individual and shared commitment to mass atrocity prevention.

Mr. President,

The High Commissioner's reports on country situations are particularly relevant in supporting international efforts to address the risks of mass atrocity crimes, since they help raise awareness and can mobilize effective preventive and responsive action at an early stage. Further, OHCHR plays a crucial role in addressing factors which facilitate systematic human rights violations and can, through the wider Geneva-system, contribute to provide technical assistance and capacity building to strengthen domestic atrocity prevention.

Furthermore, we highlight the importance of special procedures mandate holders, the Universal Periodic Review and other mechanisms of the Council that assist States to fulfil their

international obligations. States also have an individual responsibility to protect their populations from mass atrocities and, where unable or unwilling to do so, the responsibility lies with the international community to act through the United Nations. Lastly, we highlight the importance of streamlining the United Nations system in the field of human rights to more effectively prevent gross human rights violations.

Mr. President,

It is clear that the key to effective action in preventing mass atrocity crimes is raising awareness of situations at risk. We therefore urge the High Commissioner to continue to shed light on systematic human rights violations and mobilize support to take action. Towards this end, we call upon the international community to better utilize this knowledge to act in a timely and decisive manner when early warning signs of possible atrocity situations emerge.

Thank you.