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Sir Jeremy Greenstock  
United Nations Association – UK  
3 Whitehall Court  
London  
SW1A 2EL

Dear Sir Jeremy,

Thank you for your covering letter of 14 May 2014 to Mr Simmonds about the United Nations Association-UK's letter campaign to encourage the Government to increase its capacity to prevent atrocity crimes and clarify the role and responsibilities of the UK's Focal Point. I have been asked to respond.

The UK is fully committed to the concept and the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and we actively work to increase the focus on preventative aspects of R2P. It is part of the UK's wider protection work and, alongside the Protection of Civilians, is a guiding principle of the UK Government's 'Building Stability Overseas' strategy.

Within this, we are committed to supporting work on the prevention of mass atrocities including through strengthening the UK's early warning system. The UK analyses where the risks of conflict and insecurity are high and where action can make a difference. This approach enables the UK to respond effectively, setting necessary action in motion, such as working through the United Nations or bilaterally with conflict prevention activity in the countries concerned.

We believe that the preventative aspects of R2P are crucial to preventing mass atrocity crimes from being committed. Our focus is on supporting those states most at risk through developing their capacity to protect their populations. This means helping states to build good governance, the rule of law, inclusive and equal

societies, and effective judicial and security sectors which all contribute towards building a preventative environment where R2P crimes are less likely to occur.

The UK actively supports capacity building in a number of countries, for example we have supported the development of the prosecution service in Ghana (the CJS). This project helps promote inter-justice agency co-operation, make judicial processes more efficient and increases trust in the rule of law, so that cycles of spiralling retaliatory action can be prevented. The UK has also deployed a civilian Human Rights expert from the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative UK Team of Experts, to Mali to work within the EU Training Mission. This mission is supporting the Malian Armed Forces with training to strengthen their capacity to protect civilians from human rights violations, including sexual violence. To date around 2,500 soldiers have been trained.

Working on implementing practical, preventative measures alongside partners such as the EU and UN, enables the UK to ensure a collective international response to preventing mass atrocity crimes is timely and is as effective as possible. Current multilateral efforts to halt ongoing atrocities in fragile countries such as Syria, South Sudan, Somalia and the Central African Republic (CAR), have seen the UK actively support efforts to deploy a UN peacekeeping mission to CAR to help stabilise the country and play an active part in the adoption of a UN Resolution to help improve humanitarian access to Syria.

The UK also provides direct support to the UN Joint Office for the UN Secretary General's Special Advisers for the Prevention of Genocide and R2P. This support enables them to provide training and post-training technical assistance to states and regional organisations to strengthen their capacities to develop early warning, risk assessment and response strategies. Further, we directly support the Global Centre for the Responsibility to Protect (GCR2P), a leading NGO based in New York. In particular, our support enables GCR2P to increase engagement with emerging powers and regional organisations on the implementation of R2P, and supports the facilitation and expansion of the R2P Global Focal Point network.

The role of the UK Focal Point is to oversee and progress all these streams of work and embed the concept of R2P into relevant HMG policies which cover protection issues and fragile states. As evident through our support of GCR2P in the facilitation and expansion of the R2P Global Focal Point Network, we consider the initiative to be an important way for members to share best practice and encourage the implementation of the preventative aspects of R2P. Our active engagement at annual discussions and R2P focused events seeks to ensure the initiative adds value and not bureaucracy, and for more non-Western members to participate and champion R2P principles. This work is led by the Director of the Multilateral Policy Directorate within the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

Through the Multilateral Policy Directorate, we work with the Ministry of Defence, the Department for International Development, and the Home Office on UK activity and policy for fragile countries at risk of R2P crimes. In addition, integrated departments and teams, such as the Stabilisation Unit and the newly formed Joint Secretariat (to manage HMG's Conflict, Security and Stabilisation funding from 2015), draws upon experts from a range of Government departments to deliver programmes and projects which support the Government's conflict prevention work. Recent joint activity includes the deployment of UK Civilian Policing expertise to UN missions.

I hope that this letter reassures you that the UK is fully committed to seeing R2P implemented and that the UK Focal Point role is working to deliver preventative measures which protect citizens in fragile countries.

A copy of this letter has been emailed to your members who supported the UNA-UK campaign letter. Please feel free to share a copy of this letter with other UNA-UK members who are interested in our work on R2P and the Focal Point.

Yours sincerely,

*Chablise Stoner*

**Conflict Department**

Foreign and Commonwealth Office