

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



STATEMENT

by

***Honourable Stanislas Kamanzi
Minister of Natural Resources
of the Republic of Rwanda***

***at the United Nations Conference
for Sustainable Development/UNSCD RIO+20***

Check against delivery

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

It is a great honor for me to address the Rio +20 Conference on behalf of the Government and the People of the Republic of Rwanda. Allow me to congratulate and thank the government of Brazil for so gracefully hosting this significant event and for facilitating the relevant deliberations that have led to agreement on the outcome document of this summit, "the future we want".

Rwanda views sustainable development as a central goal; which at the global level; we have to collectively aspire to and achieve in order for humanity to prosper in a dignified way.

Excellencies; distinguished delegates,

When the Rio Earth Summit convened in 1992, sustainable development was not a priority for the then government in Rwanda. The latter was instead focused on enforcing policies of social, economic and political exclusion, which culminated in the 1994 genocide that claimed more than a million lives and left the country devastated.

The new government has resolutely embraced the tenets of sustainable development and has placed it at the core of its national development strategy. Rwanda with the commendable support of its partners has sought to ensure that our development pathway is anchored on principles that promote good governance, participatory decision making, gender equality with an emphasis on the key role women can play, partnership with the private sector, including through the creation of a conducive investment environment, social protection, sustainable management of the environment and rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems, investment in programs with broad scale and long-term effect, such as basic education for all, technical and vocational training to harness productivity and job creation especially for the youth, renewable energies and food security.

A recent evaluation showed that efforts from that sustained process have remarkably contributed to overall national poverty reduction of 12 % by 2012.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates;

While Rwanda rightly feels gratified by the progress achieved; we are mindful of the acuity of the remaining task, in the context of the emerging and trans-boundary challenges our planet is faced with; which constitute an intractable impediment to the ultimate stages of sustainable development we all aspire to. We are therefore ready to play our role in laying out global and regional strategies and mechanisms to overcome those challenges. We subscribe to all the options agreed upon as part of the Rio+20 process to tackle the obstacles towards development for all, now and in the generations to come, as articulated in our Summit's Declaration "The Future we Want". We urge for a renewed resolve from all of us for effective global and regional cooperation to that end.

At the national level, in a bid to tackle those global challenges, Rwanda has taken steps to fine-tune our medium and long-term development framework so as to take into account the increasing threats of climate change and the local and international issues relevant to sustainable management of natural resources. We have recently completed our National Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy. The Strategy also provides for a mechanism to mainstream sustainable national and international funding of actions defined therein; and this is the Rwanda Fund for the Environment and Climate Change, FONERWA.

Rwanda has been working with partner Countries and Organizations to devise a functional framework for our Nations to adequately account natural capital in our national socio-economic processes. In this regard we are pleased to reiterate our support of the outcome of the recently concluded Summit that convened in Gaborone Botswana. We call upon other Nations to consider pursuing that goal; which we believe is in line with laying proper grounds for sustainable development.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates;

Allow me to conclude by remarking that Rio +20 presents our generation of leaders with an opportunity to redeem ourselves in collaboratively shaping a proper future for humanity, drawing lessons from past failures. Let's seize it.

Thanks for your kind attention.