

*PERMANENT MISSION OF RWANDA  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS*



Statement

By

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Conflict Prevention, Post-Conflict Peace building and  
Promotion of Durable Peace, Rule of Law and Governance

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Mr. Co-chair,

Thank you Mr. Co-Chair for affording me this opportunity to devise on such an important topic of Conflict Prevention Post-Conflict Peace building and Promotion of Durable Peace, Rule of Law and Governance. At the outset I would like to thank the panelists for their powerful presentations, particularly the two former Presidents who sent strong messages.

Rwanda aligns itself with the statement delivered by the African Group, the LDCs and the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Co-chair,

While there has been no other World War, in the nearly 69 years of the UN's existence, there have been hundreds of intra-state conflicts. With the changing nature of conflicts and its high cost on civilians, and as we discuss the post-2015 agenda, there is an urgent need to focus collectively on how we can go beyond managing conflicts and rather invest in their prevention. We need to work collectively to prevent a repeat of the atrocities plaguing recent conflicts and find ground for peaceful settlement of all the differences.

For Rwanda, this is indeed a timely debate, as we commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup>, anniversary of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi that claimed over a million lives in just a hundred days. It is also relevant to talk about peace-building given the fact that the current type of conflicts have acquired a new dimension in the wake of the global financial crisis where everyone is preoccupied by having his lion's share of the economic benefits at the expense of people's lives.

Let me emphasize that Rwanda considers peace building processes to be of vital importance. They constitute a fundamental stage if countries are to overcome the root causes of conflicts. For Rwandans, the memories of 20 years ago shaped our understanding, and allowed us to forge a new nation, successful in restoring trust in state institutions, engaging Rwandans in the reconstruction of sustainable reconciliation, building a competitive economy development and restorative justice, and overcoming ethnic divisions.

Preventing conflicts is possible, provided that these elements are addressed and leaders and stakeholders take their responsibility. We believe that those are the

foundations of any preventive efforts at national level, which in turn may shape the regional and international thinking.

However, it has to start from basics like setting up and running public systems, preventing any acts of revenge, ensuring safety and security of all people and their property; securing streets and borders, settling and reintegration of the returning displaced persons, ensuring that all the wounded and the sick get medical attention, arrest of perpetrators, guaranteeing their safety and ensuring Justice.

Mr. Co-Chair,

In order to move from a day-to-day management of conflicts and develop a culture of conflict prevention, through skills, mechanisms and institutions that address the root causes of conflicts, it is of vital importance to share experience of meaningful reconciliation and best practices in an effort to cement lasting peace. While each conflict has its unique causes and consequences, there is also a discernible pattern from which we can draw and apply lessons.

Let me share with you, two of our home grown solutions that we have implemented in Rwanda, as reconciliation tool and path towards building sustainable unity. First, there is Gacaca- a grassroot restorative justice that was a measure of reconciliatory justice mechanism.

Another milestone in Rwandan path towards solid unity and reconciliation was the adoption of “Ndi Umunyarwanda” loosely translated as “I am Rwandan as part of our healing process. It is an initiative aimed at looking beyond what divided Rwandans to have a nation built on trust and it is based on having open dialogue, telling the truth, repentance, forgiveness and healing to strengthen the culture of accountability as well as unity and reconciliation.

Finally, I wish to emphasize the role of national and regional actors in addressing the underlying causes of conflict, including racism, the dehumanization of minorities, tyranny, poverty, inequality, youth unemployment and competition for scarce resources. At the national level, the development of strong institutions including legislative and judiciary bodies that establish the foundations of good governance based on the rule of law, democratic principles and values, and accountability is a necessary step in building societies resilient to atrocity crimes, and the promotion of Human dignity.

At the regional level, regional and sub-regional organizations have a significant contribution to make. Experience has shown that regional organizations have advantages of local knowledge, proximity and the capability to mobilize and respond quickly. At the international level, member states have to redouble their political will and all players concerned in both the private and public sectors, civil society should intervene in the sidelines to create a mechanism of quick intervention in the case of mass atrocities.

We have no ground for complacency when innocent lives are being lost. If we believe that the right to life is one of the universal values on which humanity is based, it is high time we proceed in implementing practical approaches to end violence and to increase personal safety and promote strong, effective and accountable institutions. These should be embedded in the targets of the post-2015 agenda.

I thank you Mr. Co-Chair for this opportunity.