

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
Tuesday, 26th October 2010, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)

Statement by Her Excellency Mrs. Aloysia Inyumba, Senator of the Republic of Rwanda

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and for giving my delegation the opportunity to participate in this debate, as we mark the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). I also welcome the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2010/498) and endorse the recommendations in that report. The Rwandan delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Minister of International Cooperation of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security.

The Rwandan Government officially launched, on May 17th this year, a national action plan on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) for the period 2009-2012. The development of this action plan started with a baseline study which highlighted tremendous contribution that Rwandan women have made to peace, security, justice and reconciliation since the genocide of 1994, together with current challenges facing women in conflict management. This process was carried out in a very participatory way. Our country has a national steering committee chaired by the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, with the participation of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Security, the private sector, civil society and United Nations agencies. I would say that the process in my country has been very participatory and very engaged.

Our action plan has a number of major components. The first is our commitment to the prevention of violence and conflict. Our national programme commits us to dissemination of national and international laws dealing with women, the revision of all discriminatory laws and the identification of all existing discriminatory practices and adoption of strategies to address these challenges. We have also begun the ratification of international laws and conventions, and we are in fact in the process of domesticating those laws.

Also in our action plan we have a specific chapter on the protection and rehabilitation of victims. We have started to establish gender-based violence centres at the grass-roots level throughout the country, and we initiated a law on prevention and punishment of gender-based violence, which was passed in 2009. It includes penalties and substantive mechanisms to empower the national police, the Ministry of Defence and other security agencies to contribute to stabilization and to ensuring that women are protected in conflict. In Rwanda we also have gender desks in all departments. Specifically, we emphasize training for all personnel involved with the issue of gender-based violence in our country. We have also initiated an action plan and an awareness and training programme especially for our peacekeeping forces that go to Darfur. Other than the general mandate that they have as part of a peacekeeping mission, they also have a special objective of ensuring that women and refugees in the Sudan are protected.

Last week, my country deployed a delegation of 90 women police officers to the Sudan as reinforcements for their brothers there and ensure that they promote best practices, from which Rwandan women have also benefited. It is in the context of the high-level International Conference on the Great Lakes Region that we have today begun in my country an international conference, chaired by our President, on the role of security organs as part of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000).

In line with our action plan and with the reinforcement of women's participation in decisionmaking organs relating to peace and security, I am proud to say that we have advanced in terms of women's participation, with a high level of representation of women in parliament — 56 per cent. This extends into the lower echelons such as local government, the judiciary and the private sector. The action plan in our country also promotes peacebuilding, especially bearing in mind that, with our experience in conflict management in a postgenocide situation, we have a lot to offer the region.

We remain firmly committed, and we will continue to play an important role at the national, subregional and global level in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We recently established a successful structure called the Women's Forum of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region whose sole mandate is to ensure that resolution 1325 (2000) is fully embraced in the region and that all women from the 11 countries of the Great Lakes region benefit from it and share their experiences in the region.