

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
October 28 2011, Security Council Chamber

Statement by H.E. Mr. Niyonzima, Representative of the Burundi

Allow me at the outset, Madam President, to thank you for organizing this debate on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and to commend the Secretary-General on his report (S/2011/598*). The political will of the Government of Burundi to promote gender equity and gender equality is well established. Indeed Burundi has subscribed to international agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and other international conventions and agreements on equality and non-discrimination on the basis of gender, and has implemented a national gender policy.

To implement resolution 1325 (2000), the Government of Burundi has decided that no strategy will be adopted or implemented without taking into clear account the gender dimension, so as to guarantee the full participation of women in decision-making, in prioritizing plans of action and in implementing them. As things stand, our National Plan of Action on resolution 1325 (2000) has been drafted and its adoption by the Council of Ministers is expected next month. The plan is designed to respond to the Government's national and international priorities, which are reflected in national policy documents, such as the "Strategic Framework for Combating Poverty, Second Generation", "Vision 2025" and the revised version of the national gender policy.

The substance of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security is chiefly built around four pillars — participation, prevention, protection and recovery. In terms of participation in decision-making, Burundi has made significant progress. For example, the 30 per cent rate stipulated by the country's Constitution has been exceeded during the post election nominations in 2010. Nine of the ministerial positions are currently held by women — equal to 43 per cent. With that percentage Burundi leads the rest of Africa. Our rate of women's representation in the Senate places Burundi in first place in Africa and in second place worldwide, after Bolivia.

In hiring practices for both civil service and private industry, women and men go through the same selection process and have an equal chance. In many cases, applications from women are strongly encouraged. In matters of peace and security, Burundi's National Security Council includes 2 women among its seven members. Plans for gender integration in the police force and the army have already been adopted by the relevant ministries, and currently women are increasingly included as part of peacekeeping missions on the ground in other countries.

In the area of prevention and protection, the Government of Burundi has taken stern measures to discourage abuse of girls as wives or sex slaves, by instituting a police unit for minors and morality under the ministry that handles public security. As part of the fight against gender-based violence, training sessions are regularly conducted for the military and the national police forces. On top of everything else, a national strategy to fight gender-based violence has been drawn up and will soon be adopted by the Government. The

implementation of that strategy will, however, require strong support from the international community.

In terms of recovery, the Government encourages women to form associations, so as to be able to receive assistance and support from the Administration and other benefactors. As part of implementation of the action plan under resolution 1325 (2000), the Government would like to establish a support fund for income-generating initiatives in order to enhance the economic power of women. The Government also encourages women entrepreneurs to create organizations, as that will facilitate the search for funding to bolster their companies and their management capacities.

Many challenges, such as the eradication of violence against women, the struggle against poverty, changing mindsets and capacity-building of women for their empowerment, remain to be met for effective implementation of the resolution.

I want to conclude by thanking, on behalf of my Government, all our development partners, who continue to give all the necessary support to enable Burundi women to assume their rightful place.