

**Security Council Open Debate on UN Peacekeeping: A Multidimensional Approach, January 21<sup>st</sup> 2013, Security Council Chamber**

*Statement by Mr. Nduhungirehe, Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations.*

Allow me to begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his comprehensive briefing to the Council. I also would like to thank His Excellency Jalil Abbas Jilani, as President of the Security Council, for having organized this important debate and for the tremendous role Pakistan has always played in peacekeeping operations.

Rwanda is a committed contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations. We hope that we can continue to share our experience in international peacekeeping and national peacebuilding, in order to enrich the debate on the future role of multidimensional peacekeeping.

Rwanda's commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security is based on our responsibilities as a contributing member of the international community and on a moral obligation shaped by the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi and the failure of the world to intervene. Our active participation in peacekeeping missions began in 2004, in Darfur, with the African Union Mission in the Sudan, and today Rwanda is the sixth major troop- and police-contributing country in the United Nations and the largest troop- and police-contributing country in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), with a presence in seven other United Nations missions.

Having embarked upon our own path of reconciliation and nation-building, my country is of the firm belief that peacekeeping and peacebuilding are two sides of the same coin and that the nexus between the two should continually be enhanced as the scope of mandates continue to expand, along with the tasks of peacekeepers.

I applaud the draft resolution (S/2013/27), which Rwanda has co-sponsored. It reiterates the interdependence between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and encourages progress on a coherent approach to addressing all stages of the conflict cycle. Addressing critical peacebuilding priorities will facilitate the successful undertaking of peacekeeping mandates and ensure a coherent and effective response to peacekeeping, stabilization and recovery. It is time to give peacebuilding a legitimate place in both the budgets and the mandates of peacekeeping operations.

As peacekeepers endeavour to address the challenges at hand, they should not seek to take over security and governance responsibilities; instead, they should seek to build local capacity to address those challenges.

In that regard, let me address a few areas of focus that were outlined in the concept note (S/2013/4, annex) prepared by Pakistan for this debate, namely, quick- impact projects, training and partnerships.

Now more than ever, the first boots on the ground need to be able to perform early peacebuilding tasks, in addition to maintaining the ceasefire and protecting civilians. In order to ensure that United Nations peacekeepers can deliver and engage effectively with their civilian counterparts, a training mechanism in post- conflict community development for United Nations peacekeeping forces would benefit the peacekeeping process as a whole, including the peacekeepers and local populations.

In addition, the unique comparative advantages of the United Nations in the field of peacekeeping can be optimized by enlisting troop- and police-contributing countries with experience or expertise

relevant to the needs of a particular mission, including appropriate language skills at all levels, in order to be able to communicate without interpretation with local authorities and local populations. Moreover, preparedness, such as stand-by forces with earmarked trained personnel, is key. Hurriedly collecting troops from different countries with various levels of training, ethics and commitment is not the best way to put together a peacekeeping force.

Furthermore, any previous national experience with early peacebuilding and capacity-building should be emphasized in force requirements. In addition to traditional predeployment training, Rwandan troops often participate in post-conflict peacebuilding workshops before deploying to peacekeeping missions and have first-hand national experience with small- scale community development projects.

For example, improved energy-saving cooking stoves, which use less firewood than traditional stoves, were introduced in Rwanda in 2000 in order to preserve trees and the environment. Now Rwandan peacekeepers have brought such stoves to Darfur, where women and young girls live in fear of getting raped every time they venture outside camps for internally displaced persons or their villages to collect firewood for cooking. Apart from saving the lives of women who risk being raped or killed while collecting firewood, the improved stoves also allow troops and police who were previously escorting them to focus on other mandated tasks. Rwandan peacekeepers have also built classrooms and clinics, planted trees in Darfur, and led community clean-up programmes in several Haitian towns that have since become permanent fixtures.

Quick-impact projects help to lay the foundations of locally-owned long-term development, capacity- and institution-building. Products such as the stoves, as well as the construction of classrooms, clinics, police stations and basic sanitation infrastructure have had a positive impact on Rwandan society during post- conflict reconstruction. I hope that the budgets for quick-impact projects continue to increase as they become integral to peacekeeping operations.

It is crucial that partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, especially the African Union, continue to be enhanced and strategically coordinated. Multilateral partnerships will help to ensure that troops are deployed to missions that are endowed with resources matching their mandates, and to prevent restrictions or caveats imposed by some troop- and police-contributing countries on the use of their personnel. The political backing, concrete support and legitimacy provided by such groups to United Nations peacekeeping operations are as important today as they have ever been.

Planning processes should, from the initial stages, consider early peacebuilding tasks that can and should be implemented along with a mission's traditional mandate. Adequate training, meaningful partnerships with all stakeholders and early infrastructure projects owned by the host State are a few of the tools that can help to pave a road to sustainable peace and security in areas of the world where that is necessary.

Responding to the call of the Secretary-General to contribute needed enablers, Rwanda has recently deployed military utility helicopters to the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan, and we hope that our aviation unit will enhance the Mission's ability to implement its mandate. We again reiterate Rwanda's commitment to supporting the multidimensional approach to United Nations peacekeeping, and pay tribute to the women and men serving in peacekeeping missions, as well as those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the name of peace.