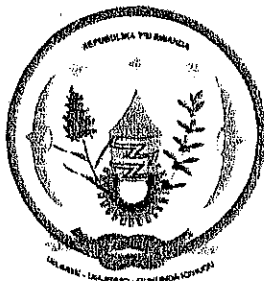


REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



PERMANENT MISSION OF RWANDA

GENEVA

50th SESSION OF THE UN COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND
CULTURAL RIGHTS

Presentation of the Periodic Report of the Government of Rwanda on
Implementation of the International Covenant
on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

*Statement by H.E. Mrs. Soline NYIRAHABIMANA, Ambassador, Permanent
Representative of the Republic of Rwanda in Geneva,*

Head of the Rwandan Delegation

Geneva, 08 May 2013

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Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished members of the Committee
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to present on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Rwanda, the combined second to fourth periodic reports pursuant to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

Allow me to present the members of the delegation that will be supporting me in the presentation of our reports ;

- **Dr. NGIRABEGA Jean de Dieu**, Director General of Clinical Services, Ministry of Health
- **RUSANGANWA Eugene**, Principal State Attorney, Ministry of Justice
- **Moses Rugema**, First Counsellor Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations Office in Geneva.

At the outset, let me acknowledge and apologise for the delay in the submission of these reports. Rwanda, as you are all aware, has over the last two decades undergone tremendous challenges and upheavals which culminated with the 1994 Genocide against the tutsi. The 1994 Genocide not only resulted in the deaths of over a million of our citizens but also left Rwanda without any institutional frameworks to speak of. We have however set upon the task of putting in place institutions and policies that have contributed to Rwanda rebuilding itself, its people and its social and economic fabric.

Rwanda has established an inter-institutional taskforce on treaty reporting tasked with coordinating the preparation of treaty reports and advising on adoption, accession or ratification of treaties. As a result we have drastically reduced the backlog of reports due and are well on track to fulfilling our reporting

obligations. Rwanda is today party to most human rights treaties and is in the process of ratifying others. In that regard, I am pleased to inform you that Rwanda will shortly ratify the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The reports before you were prepared following a broad consultative process and outline the measures taken by the Government of Rwanda to promote and protect the economic, social and cultural rights of its citizens. The responses to the list of issues present additional information on progress made since the submission of the report in 2009. This presentation will therefore seek to provide you with supplementary information on some of the areas in which we have registered significant progress and on the challenges we face.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished members of the Committee

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. **Non-discrimination** The equal treatment of all Rwandan citizens is enshrined in Article 11 of the Constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, which states that all Rwandans are born and remain free and equal in rights and duties. Discrimination of whatever kind based on, inter alia, ethnic origin, tribe, clan, colour, sex, region, social origin, religion or faith, opinion, economic status, culture, language, social status, physical or mental disability or any other form of discrimination is prohibited and punishable by law. A number of communities have however historically experienced different forms of discrimination particularly, economic discrimination and in this regard, the government has put in place policies

and mechanisms to address the particular challenges faced by these communities.

2. Rwanda has sought to realise the rights enshrined in articles 6 to 15 of the ICESCR through the Vision 2020 and the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS) which are the comprehensive economic, social and development strategies through which Rwanda seeks to achieve middle income country status (a GDP per capita of \$1240) by the year 2020. This vision is based on the following thematic areas, economic transformation ; rural development ; productivity and youth employment and accountable governance.
3. **The right to health:** The number of health centers increased from 385 in 2004 to 473 in 2012 and the number of district hospitals increased from 34 in 2004 to 42 in 2012. New categories of health facilities (health posts at cell level and provincial hospitals) have been introduced in the system. The training and deployment of community health workers and the provision of health insurance with coverage of approximately 96% of the population significantly increased the number of Rwandans accessing health care.
On **Child mortality**, Rwanda has achieved MDG 4. The Under-five mortality rate is 76 per 1,000 live births in 2010, and the infant mortality rate is 50 per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate has dropped from 86 per 1,000 live births in 2005 to 50 per 1,000 live births in 2010.
On **Maternal health**, 98 % of women who gave birth between 2005 and 2010 received antenatal care at least once from a health professional (doctor, nurse, or midwife). Health Facility based deliveries that were at 30% in 2005, increased to 69% in 2010. The maternal

mortality rate dropped from 750 per 100,000 live births in 2005 to 340 in 2010 and Rwanda is well on track to achieving MDG 5.

The **HIV/AIDS** seroprevalence rate dropped from 10.8% to 2.3 %. Antiretroviral coverage is 91%, which means that 91% of patients needing ARV have them. The mortality related to AIDS reduced by 78%. The transmission of HIV from Mother to child declined from 10.8% (2004) to 1.9% (2012) and all health centers in the country provide counselling and testing for HIV and treat patients in need of treatment.

Between 2005 and 2011, Rwanda decreased the incidence of malaria by 86% and the mortality (deaths by malaria) by 74%.

4. The right to education: The achievements registered in the area of the promotion and protection of the right to education includes the gradual breaking of barriers that prevent children from attending primary education by measures such as the abolition of school fees and by constructing more classrooms at the Administrative Sector level where children can easily walk home. In addition, the provision of free education increased from the Nine Year basic education to the 12-year basic education.

5. The right to work: Since 2009, Rwanda has progressively enacted laws and put in place institutions for greater enjoyment of the right to employment/work, these include;

- Ratification of the Convention on the protection of the rights of all migrant workers and members of their families of 1962;
- Ministerial order n° 11 of 07/09/2010 determining the modalities and requirements for the

registration of trade unions or employers' professional organizations;

- 6. The right to take part in cultural life:** The government of Rwanda has sought to revive the inclusive cultural identity which historically characterised Rwanda through the promotion of values and the expression of Rwandan culture, National heritage and arts through various institutions.

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished members of the Committee
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

These are some of the measures that Rwanda has put in place to promote and protect the human rights of its citizens.

Despite the many challenges we face as a nation still recovering from a most horrific genocide, Rwanda's commitment to the promotion and protection of human rights including through the improvement of the economic, social and cultural welfare of its citizens in all areas of life is unwavering. We look forward to continued partnerships with the international community and civil society organisations. We look forward to a productive dialogue with the members of the Committee.

I thank for your attention.