

REPUBLIC OF RWANDA



RWANDA'S UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW ADOPTION

**STATEMENT BY HON. BUSINGYE JOHNSTON,
MINISTER OF JUSTICE and ATTORNEY GENERAL**

16th MARCH 2016,

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

*Thank you Mr. President,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;*

On behalf of the Government and the people of Rwanda, I am pleased to be here today for the adoption of the report of the second Universal Periodic Review of Rwanda.

We are glad to be here again to engage with the Human Rights Council and to reaffirm our commitment to promoting, protecting and ensuring human rights. I would like to reiterate how important the UPR process is for Rwanda. It presents a good opportunity for self-assessment in our holistic quest to continuously improve as a country. We are always happy to share our success stories and any challenges that we face.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the 89 States that engaged with us actively during our review. I extend our gratitude to our troika, the United Arab Emirates, Nigeria and the Plurinational Republic of Bolivia and the UPR Secretariat for the immense efforts they put into the Working Group report for our review. I also thank those members of civil society who contributed constructively to Rwanda's Second UPR.

Mr. President,

Rwanda has reviewed the 83 distinct recommendations it received from the November 2015 review. Our responses to each recommendation are contained in our addendum to the Working Group report A/HRC/31/8/Add.1.

In accordance with our Constitution, National Laws as well as International Obligations already undertaken, Rwanda accepts only those

recommendations for which implementation is possible within the next four years.

Recommendations that enjoy the support of Rwanda in full are those where we support both the spirit and principle behind the recommendation and are able to implement it in practice.

Rwanda also supports recommendations to take actions we are already taking or have taken, and intend to continue taking, without in any way implying that our ongoing or prior efforts have been insufficient or that these actions are necessarily legally required.

Recommendations that do not enjoy the support of Rwanda are generally those where we are not able to commit to implementation at this stage, whether or not we agree with the principles behind the recommendation, or where we have recently reviewed our position on the issue in question; or where we reject the assertions being made.

It is in that regard, that of the 83 recommendations received, 50 have been accepted and we will endeavor to ensure their implementation before our next UPR. 26 recommendations enjoy the support of Rwanda in principle but could not be accepted for implementation at this time because it is not possible to guarantee that the requirements necessary for the implementation of those recommendations will be readily available within the reporting period. 7 recommendations did not enjoy the support of Rwanda as they are not compatible with our domestic law and constitution.

Mr. President,

The Government of Rwanda has already begun the implementation process for the accepted recommendations. The first step was to hold a stakeholders' consultation, on 17th December, on the outcome of the November 2015 review. I am pleased to report that the consultation was well attended with representation from Government, Civil Society as well as representatives of some of the recommending States.

The second step was to create and share a road map for the implementation of the 50 accepted recommendations. This road map was developed by the National Treaty Body Reporting Task force which is a platform that brings together Government and Civil Society Organizations to jointly consider implementation of Rwanda's human rights obligations.

I am also pleased to inform you that this process has been successful and all of the Government institutions concerned have accepted responsibility to implement the recommendations in their domain.

The Government of Rwanda has also taken an additional step to encourage more active Civil Society participation in the implementation of this second phase of the UPR. In order to achieve, this we have made an open call to all civil society organizations working on human rights issues in Rwanda to partner with us in the implementation of the recommendations.

Government wants civil society to be a partner not just in monitoring or evaluating Government efforts but to walk with us from the beginning all through the implementation process. I believe that this approach will go a long way in continuing to strengthen the interaction between Government and Civil society in developing our Country.

We look forward to hearing from the distinguished delegations gathered here this afternoon.

I thank you.

