Statement by

Ambassador Valentine Rugwabiza, Permanent Representative

At the Security Council Briefing

on

“Silencing the guns in Africa: Cooperation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations”
Mr President,

1. I congratulate Equatorial Guinea on its presidency of the Security Council for this month, and I thank you Excellency Minister for organizing today’s open debate of utmost importance not only to Africa but also to the Security Council.

2. I also thank Rosemary DiCarlo, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; Ramtane Lamamra, the African Union High Representative for Silencing the Guns in Africa; and Vasu Gounden, the Founder and Executive Director of the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes for their valuable and informative briefings.

3. The theme of this debate points to one of African Union’s aspirations of agenda 2063 “a peaceful and secure Africa”. Indeed, Africa’s quest is to build a secure, peaceful and conducive environment, good enough to allow social-economic development for the benefits of women and men of the region.

4. “Silencing the guns in Africa” is an ambitious yet achievable goal which may be reached by taking integrated approaches that extend across the nexus of peace and security, governance, and development. The success towards this end will require greater policy coherence and political commitment to implement available tools.
Mr. President,

5. The African Union’s roadmap for silencing the guns in Africa, is an important framework which, if implemented, will contribute to an Africa free of violent conflicts.

6. Recent positive developments of conflict resolution in the Horn of Africa and the recent Peace agreements in South Sudan and Central African Republic; are important contributions to silencing the guns in Africa even though, the later agreements are yet to translate into voluntary disarmament of armed groups under inclusive national security institutions.

7. Rwanda’s contribution to this debate will focus conflict prevention and resolution, security sector reforms, peacebuilding and sustaining peace as well as regional cooperation.

Mr President,

8. Preventive diplomacy and mediation are the integral parts of broader conflict prevention efforts. It is true that progress has been made in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts in Africa. In many instances conflicts escalate or re-erupt as a result of weak or less resilient institutions and governance systems which are not capable of taking over the management of peace sustainment.

9. Dedicated activities are needed to prevent conflict by focusing on various structural causes of conflict with the aim of strengthening the institutions and social mechanisms of states and communities,
assisting affected states to develop more robust and inclusive institutions which can address the causes and triggers of conflict.

**Mr President,**

10. Strengthening our efforts and strategies towards Demobilization Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR), will significantly contribute to silencing guns in Africa. DDR needs to be carried out at all stages of conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding.

11. Central to successful DDR is effective support to former combatants to re-integrate into civilian life. DDR is and should be perceived as part and parcel of the political process to consolidate peace and stability.

12. The illicit proliferation and possession of small arms and light weapons in Africa, including in countries under Security Council arms embargo and sanctions, contribute to perpetuate armed conflicts on the continent. More effective monitoring of the implementation of the arms embargo, will contribute to creating a conducive environment for conflict resolution.

13. Silencing guns and peace cannot be sustained without development. Good governance and inclusive institutions remain the most effective ways to prevent conflicts and build lasting peace.

I thank you