Statement by

Ambassador Valentine Rugwabiza, Permanent Representative

At the Security Council Open Debate

Mr President,

1. I would like to thank you for convening this important debate. I thank Secretary General António Guterres and AU Commissioner for Peace and Security Smail Chergui for their statements. Rwanda aligns itself with the African Union position on this subject matter.

2. Let me also convey our condolences to the people and governments of The Republic of Malawi and the United Republic of Tanzania for the recent tragic loss of their gallant Peacekeepers who lost their lives in the pursuit for peace.

Mr. President,

3. This debate could not have come at a more opportune time than this. In Addis Ababa, the African Union has just concluded an Extraordinary Session of the African Union Summit, focused entirely on institutional reform of the African Union. Of central importance to this debate is to note that these reforms are aimed at ensuring effectiveness of delivery in the area of peace and security, among other priority areas. This should be encouraging to us all, including this Council, that the African Union is taking greater strides towards better efficiency and delivery.
4. Africa currently hosts the largest number of UN peacekeeping operations, which combined account for about 75 percent of all peacekeeping personnel, majority of whom are African troops. In addition to this, over 60 percent of all Security Council resolutions concern Africa.

5. Clearly, Africa is a central part of the business of this Council. This should be a wakeup call for a more substantive involvement of the African Union in matters of Peace and Security concerning the continent.

6. Rwanda has had a long-standing contribution to sustainable peace across the continent. As a top troop and police contributing country, we believe that if regional peace arrangements are adequately supported, we can realize more progress.

7. I will make my statement from the vantage point of a country that is fully committed to global peace and security. In that regard, my remarks will focus on two key issues:

   1. Enhancing the cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in the realm of peace and security in Africa.

   2. Funding for peace operations in Africa.
Mr President,

8. I think we can all agree that the partnership between the UN and the AU is indispensable with regards to sustainable peace and security in Africa. Our partnership must capitalize on regional peace frameworks and mobilize further support for regionally led peace processes and initiatives. Such initiatives have yielded positive results, including a number of contemporary cases.

9. Rwanda would like to reiterate its position in support of the UN-AU partnership framework. The need for cooperation between international and regional organizations is crucial in the context of contemporary global challenges. The unprecedented role of regional organizations in achieving security and stability has arisen from a mutual understanding that the most effective method of peace attainment is through the joining of efforts and resources.

10. Rwanda recognizes the importance of close coordination and cooperation based on strategic conflict assessment, planning and reporting based on respective comparative advantages, as well as burden sharing on the basis of collective responsibility to handle conflict in a timely manner.

11. Rwanda acknowledges the progress of cooperation between both institutions and supports the idea of increased mutual engagement, as spelled out in the
Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace. Over time, it is our belief that with a spirit of trust and support, this would allow for greater mutual understanding and synergy, ultimately allowing for more effective Peacekeeping operations.

12. We re-affirm our support for the Declaration of Shared Commitments on UN Peacekeeping Operations, particularly concerning performance and accountability. We need to build effective peacekeeping operations which are based on strong partnerships in building predictable readiness capabilities in terms of required skills and logistics which are tailored to mission specific challenges.

Mr. President,

13. Regarding funding for peace operations in Africa, Rwanda welcomes the launching of the African Union Peace Fund in the just concluded AU extraordinary Summit in Addis Ababa. This is a critical step towards realizing Africa’s commitment to finance peace and security operations on the continent.

14. Rwanda also welcomes the initiative taken by the A3 in proposing a draft resolution on stable financing of African Union peace operations, that we hope will be adopted soon. In our understanding, this resolution will provide a framework that will enable the Council to further consider the financing of AU
led peace operations from UN assessed contributions, and that such a decision would be made on a case by case basis. If such an agreement were to be reached, we believe that we would be closer to resolving the issue of sustainable and predictable funding of AU peace operations.

15. In this regard, supporting the Peace Fund initiative and adoption of the Security Council draft resolution on funding African peace operations is a great stride that needs the support of the UN and the Security Council in particular. The African Union is also committed to enhancing accountability in its partnership with the UN and other partners. The ongoing institutional reforms of the AU are also geared towards putting in place a transparent accountability framework for the Union’s effective performance.

In conclusion Mr. President,

16. Allow me to reiterate Rwanda’s firm commitment to global peace and security. We have demonstrated time and again that our commitments are matched with action: be it through the performance of our peacekeepers or our political support to strengthen the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations and the African Union.

I thank you for your kind attention.