

Delegation of The Republic of Rwanda Position Paper for the General Assembly

The three topics before the United Nations (UN) General Assembly (GA) are: Nuclear Disarmament and International Security; Ensuring Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable, and Modern Energy for All; and Combating Human Trafficking. The Republic of Rwanda is committed to all three topics and regards them as equally important. Being Aware of the importance of creating a sustainable development of states and societies and seeing the necessity to protect the citizens and their Human Rights, The Republic of Rwanda hopes to find long-term solutions for the above-mentioned topics and we are deeply committed to work for these primary goals of the UN within the GA.

I. Nuclear Disarmament and International Security

Nuclear weapons pose a consistent threat to international peace and security ever since the devastating bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. As nearly every UN Member State, the Republic of Rwanda sees the danger of a nuclear war, as nuclear contamination and radiation do not know human made borders. Although the Republic of Rwanda itself is not in possession of nuclear material of any kind, we are nevertheless concerned about the international security, as long as a controlled secure storage and safekeeping of nuclear weapons and materials for the time being, and the nuclear disarmament in comprehensive agreement with the concerned Member States in the long run, have not been achieved.

From the very beginning, the Republic of Rwanda supported a plurality of agreements and frameworks that the UN have taken since the first use of nuclear weapons. For this reason, our country became signatory to the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water in 1963. Moreover, we signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) (1996), because we are convinced that the most effective way to achieve an end of nuclear testing and to reduce the production of nuclear weapons is through the conclusion of an international, comprehensive nuclear-test-ban. Next to international treaties, the Republic of Rwanda furthermore supported several resolutions on this topic, such as the A/RES/65/65 to show our support of non-discriminatory, multilateral treaties that aim to ban the production of material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosives. As a Member State of the African Union, the Republic of Rwanda is on a regional level state party to Treaty of Pelindaba (1996), that established the African continent a nuclear-weapon-free-zone.

The Republic of Rwanda believes that huge progress has been made over the last decade but we do still see a necessity to further discuss this topic and work on solutions that consider the benefits of peaceful applications of nuclear technology as well as the devastation that would be visited upon all mankind by a nuclear war and the need to avert the danger of such a conflict. We therefore see the requirement to call on all Nuclear-Weapon States (NWS) for good-faith efforts for disarmament and for reducing their military investments in the expansion of their nuclear arsenal. The GA needs to call on all Member States to sign and ratify the CTBT. The Republic of Rwanda sees this as a first and undiscussable commitment of every Member State. In addition, we believe that the GA should advocate for the establishment of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East, as tensions there involve nearly all nuclear powers and therefore pose a direct threat to international security.

II. Ensuring Access to Affordable, Reliable, Sustainable, and Modern Energy for All

With climate change threatening the living conditions of people all over the globe and particularly of people all over the African continent, the Republic of Rwanda believes that is inevitable to create new accesses to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy. Rwanda, a small landlocked country, is currently facing rising temperatures and intensified rainy and dry seasons. This happens to a large extent due to the constant use of high-level carbon emissions over the last decades, a consequence of energy production.

The Republic of Rwanda firmly believes that the only long-lasting way to provide sustainable, modern energy to all the people of this planet is through the ongoing and intense work of the United Nations on this topic. But every Member State needs to participate in the process and in this field, Rwanda is already leading by example. At the end of the last year, our Ministry of Environment introduced a prospective and progressive new Environment and Climate Change policy. It contains new provisions to better align with Rwanda's overarching National Strategy for Transformation, the long-term Vision 2050, as well as the multilateral commitments including the East African Community (EAC) Vision 2050 from 2015, the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. Also, The Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2015) and the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol (2019) are considered in the new policy, as there is a direct and strong relation between energy production and climate change. Next to the already cited international declarations and

plans, the Republic of Rwanda is a strong supporter of the Rio Declaration on the Environment and Development (1992), as well as of the UN Millennium Declaration (2000) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), linked to it. In 2015, the Republic of Rwanda supported the Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Agenda 2030, adopted to succeed the MDGs.

The Republic of Rwanda is of the opinion, that when it comes to the development and application of modern techniques, such as modern energy, the next generation needs to be included and needs to stand in the center of the progress. For this reason, our country proposes a cooperation with NGOs, such as the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), an organization that aims to work with businesses, elected officials and community groups on finding new ways to promote sustainable and clean energy, and the World Association for Sustainable Development (WASD), that runs regular training and workshops on this topic. The youth needs to be educated in and introduced to the development and most efficient use of new technologies, not only in the cities but also in rural areas. In the process of ensuring access to more sustainable energy for all, first and foremost developing countries are reliant on the cooperation with the United Nations. But in order to reach the SDGs on a global scale, all United Nations Member States need to be included.

III. Combating Human Trafficking

Human Trafficking poses a threat to the basic fundamental of human life, such as dignity, physical integrity, human rights and sustainable development. It is a widespread crime and unfortunately, the Republic of Rwanda is not excluded from the list of Member States, where they still take place. Rwanda is a source and destination country for the trafficking of women and children. The exploitation of girls in involuntary domestic servitude within our country is still a challenge The Government of Rwanda is facing. Rwandan children are also trafficked to Uganda, Tanzania and other countries in the region for forced agricultural labor, commercial sexual exploitation, and domestic servitude. Unlike these acts of crime committed within our country's borders, the past years have shown that the Rwandan People are also facing the threat of becoming trafficking victims from neighboring countries, as several cases of child trafficking have shown.

The Republic of Rwanda is making significant efforts to comply with the standards for the elimination of trafficking. It enacted a new labor code prohibiting forced labor and enslavement of children; advanced penal code revisions containing anti-trafficking provisions through the legislative process; opened a care center for victims of gender-based violence; and launched a public awareness campaign on the commercial sexual exploitation of children. According to the Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP Report), The Republic of Rwanda remains the only African country in which the government is undertaking virtually all activities related to the demobilization and reintegration of former child soldiers who have often been victims of human trafficking. Besides these actions, The Government of the Republic of Rwanda performs on a local, national, as well as on a regional level, our country is furthermore committed to work that has been done by the international community within the United Nations: In the first half of the last century, The Republic of Rwanda joined other nations and became a member state to the Forced Labor Convention (1930), which became the foundation stone of our efforts on the topic of combatting human trafficking for the decades to come. Rwanda is moreover a contracting member state to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989) together with the optional Protocol (2011) and also signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the most important transnational conventions about protecting the most vulnerable members of all societies in the world, namely women and children. In order to further protect and safeguard these two groups and to improve intergovernmental work on combatting trafficking, the Republic of Rwanda signed and ratified the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) (2010). Because we believe in the importance of coordination between member states and their officials in the fight against trafficking of persons, the Republic of Rwanda moreover supported the GA Resolution 72/185 (2017) and GA Resolution 72/195 (2017).

In order to make further steps towards combating human trafficking on a global sphere with the contribution of all Member States to this process, the Republic of Rwanda sees the necessity to educate the local officials on the importance and general validity of Human Rights for the citizens of their countries, especially marginalized groups like women and children. This should happen in cooperation with NGOs, such as Human Rights Watch (HRW). In addition, The Republic of Rwanda advocates for a transnational cooperation between the Member States of the African Union and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to create an action plan for the all the participating Member States, inspired by the Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO.ACT) between the European Union (EU) and the UNODC, which can lead as an example for other alliances of states as well. The Republic of Rwanda hopes to find ways to achieve these plans together with their international partners within the United Nations General Assembly.