The 10th session of the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development

Item 5 of the Provisional Agenda
Implementation of the mandate and program of work –
Focused thematic discussion and interactive dialogue
Palais des Nations, Room XXI, Geneva

The Future of International Cooperation

Wednesday 30 October 2024, 15h to 16h30

Statement by H.E. Mr. James Ngango,
Permanent Representative of Rwanda

Chair,

Excellencies,

Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon!

1. Allow me to start by thanking the Chair of the Experts Mechanism on the Right to Development for his invitation to speak at this thematic dialogue related to "The Future of International Cooperation" and share Rwanda's experience about aligning international development cooperation with national priorities and strategies.

2. Rwanda has made resolute progress in socioeconomic development for the last three decades which translated into increased gross national per capita income, a declining incidence of poverty, improved health and educational outcomes, and enhanced access to basic services and infrastructure.

3. These successes have inspired confidence by the GoR to devise bold future aspirations and to foster a commitment to take meaningful measures toward becoming a more hopeful, secure, and prosperous nation.

4. Current Rwanda's Development Cooperation Policy outlines clearly its vision for development cooperation and articulates the aims, guiding principles and strategic directives for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of its partnerships for development. Its overall aim is to enable Rwanda's eventual self-reliance by accelerating the delivery of sustainable results and impacts aligned to the country's national development goals and sector strategies.

5. The main objectives of this policy are: (i) to increase the effectiveness of existing development cooperation modalities and mechanisms; (ii) to support efforts to maximize and optimize total financing for development through a sound enabling environment for mobilizing, catalyzing, and sequencing resources from a variety of sources; and (iii) to facilitate new models of engagement and partnership with a variety of actors to ensure robust results and strong mutual accountability for development outcomes among all stakeholders.

6. The policy is aligned to the country's development vision and key national planning priorities and will directly contribute to achieving Rwanda's structural transformation as Rwanda aspires to become an upper middle-income country by 2035, and a country characterized by high standards of living for all Rwandans by 2050.

7. Key highlights of Rwanda's Development Cooperation Policy include: **Guiding principles,** Policy Directives, **Preferred Modalities for Development Cooperation,** Coordination mechanisms, Policy Monitoring Framework, etc.

7.1. *Guiding principles put first:*

- **Ownership** - Government taking leadership of its own development processes;
- **Predictability & Information on aid flows** - including Budget Support/aid to budget;
- **Alignment** - Government priorities
- **Leveraging the private sector:** fostering growth through production of goods and services, employment and contribution to public finance through taxation.
- **Increasing investment whilst ensuring debt sustainability** - prioritization of investments;
- **Focus on Results and Cost-Effectiveness:** GoR expects partners to use national results frameworks and associated national systems for statistics and M&E as part of their planning, implementation, and monitoring of interventions; and both the GoR and DPs will strive towards achieving maximum value for money from development cooperation.
- **Inclusive development partnerships:** The Policy includes all key stakeholders in the planning, budgeting, implementation, and monitoring and

evaluation of development strategies. *7.2. Preferred Modalities for Development Cooperation:*

- **Programme-Based Support (PBS):** allows to strengthen the coordination, coherence and efficiency of development cooperation;
- **Basket funds/Pooled Funding:** a single un-earmarked funds whereby multiple DPs collectively finance a development programme at the sector level;
- **On-Treasury Delivery Mechanisms:** resources transfers from a Development Partner channelled through the Rwandan budget;
- **Results-Based Financing:** is an institutional development intervention Linking disbursements to a verified achievement of predetermined results;
- **Direct Project Support:** should not contain policy conditionalities Beyond those in the national development plan (technology transfer);
- **Public-Private Partnership (PPP):** implementing key infrastructure and specialized social service projects as per the national priorities;
- **Blended and other Innovative Development Finance:** additional Investments from private sector actors aligned to development priorities through the provision of complementary public funding and risk mitigation instruments. It can involve use of domestic budget resources, ODA, and philanthropic funding (through direct funding, equity, debt, TA and risk mitigation).
- **Green and Climate Finance:** additional resources designated to build Rwanda's resilience to climate change and fast-track the implementation of its green growth strategy;
- **South-South and Triangular Cooperation:** considering the unprecedented transformations in global south, the GoR believes in more of such partnerships complementing North-South Cooperation. Here, Rwanda Cooperation Initiative (RCI) facilitates and supports such activities.

8. New measures have been initiated to boost domestic savings and investment while enhancing access to external capital flows which are pivotal to realize Vision 2050 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

9. The Policy also reflects a need to respect and ensure alignment to key international commitments and agreements endorsed and/or ratified by the GoR, including the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2011), Addis Ababa Action

Agenda (2015), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2030 Agenda), Africa We Want Agenda (Agenda 2063), and Paris Agreement on Climate Change (2015), etc.

10. With regards to the guiding principles and strategic directives for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of its partnerships for development, the GoR has introduced innovative mechanisms, notably:

    i) The Division of Labour (2006 as revised to date) aimed at streamlining the architecture and governance mechanisms for development cooperation and to promoting more effective, transparent and accountable support. The (DoL) designates a lead partner agency based on their manifested interest and prior engagement, as well as evidence of having a clear comparative advantage to execute programmes, activities and innovative financing approaches in that domain.

    ii) Two: it's about Coordination, whereby institutional roles and responsibilities are coordinated through dialogue, based on the country's development priorities and investment policy, within a mutually agreed framework regarding the agenda, timing, and participation. **This is what we call "Development Partners Retreat"** which comprises sectoral, thematic and high-level platforms to discuss progress, identify opportunities and challenges, and prioritize resource mobilization to address gaps, in attaining national development targets (as described below).

11. The Sector Working Groups (SWGs) serve as dialogue forum, ownership, and accountability of development agenda by relevant actors at sector level. The main focus of SWGs is coordinating and harmonizing development cooperation, standardizing procedures, eliminating duplication, aligning external cooperation to GoR priorities, managing for development results, identifying opportunities and challenges for enhancing private investment at sector level. Members of the SWGs include line ministries, DPs, both PSF and Rwanda Civil Society Platform (RCSP) through their relevant members, and other relevant development actors. The sector-level dialogue is led by the respective lead government line Ministry.

12. **Lessons learned:** The policy context has evolved and the development financing landscape has changed significantly, both in Rwanda and internationally. Among the main shifts include: the crucial role of private sector in Rwanda's development and the increasingly important role private actors and development finance institutions (DFIs) are already playing (external private sector resources are surpassing ODA to the public sector and development partners are open to innovative modalities of development financing).

13. Therefore, the future for the international development cooperation architecture needs to shift away from aid effectiveness toward development effectiveness under which overall processes and outcomes are assessed in relation to synergizing total development finance flows, rather than assessing specific outcomes tied to aid.

Thank you.

National Dialogue and Coordination Structure

1. Development Partners Retreat (DPR): For review and Strategic planning and monitoring – Annually, Chaired by the Minister of Finance & Economic Planning

2. Development Partners Coordination Group (DPCG): overall development cooperation coordination (National Transformation Strategy-NST coordination fora) – Quarterly, Chaired by the Minister of State in charge of National Treasury

3. Sector Working Group (SWGs) – sector coordination on alignment of support to Sector Strategic plans and feed into DPCG – quarterly

4. Joint Sector Reviews (Forward & Backward looking) – twice a year – mainly indepth analysis of performance of Sector plans – outcome is signed off by Chair and co-chair (Permanent Secretary in a Ministry and Lead Development Partner) **5. Country Portfolio Performance Review (CPPR)** –implementation progress assessment – Annually