

Petition for the dissolution of the United Nations and the prosecution of certain personalities and their associates for the crime of genocide in the Democratic Republic of Congo

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The World Leaders, heads of:

United Nations (UN) Member states,
UN non-member states with status of observer at UN,
Intergovernmental organizations with status of observer at UN,
Other entities with status of observer at UN,
Specialized agencies and related organizations with liaison office at UN

Dear World leaders,

I am writing this petition to each of you through your respective diplomatic representations to the UN, and this will seem a little ironic because the petition requests, among other things, the dissolution of this organization. However, I am counting on the professionalism and goodwill of your representatives to convey this message to you, and I ask you to kindly find them, as well as their collaborators, better jobs when you have dissolved this organization which has become a danger to humanity.

I address this petition to you as a researcher; not an activist. A researcher driven by an ethical imperative of personal commitment to truth and justice, inspired by the observation of the tragedy affecting the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), years of research on the African Great Lakes region, as well as my personal life experience. I apply a decolonial and interpretivist approach that does not hide my own positionality, while seeking high standards of rigor and probity in research.

The petition will seem unusually long to you. This is due to the nature and complexity of the subject addressed. A table of contents is given at the end for flexible reading which is not necessarily in one go. But certain assertions and conclusions which will seem excessive at first glance in the recommendations section can only be properly understood in a detailed reading of the text which provides precise references and quotes that we often wanted to be expressly long for better intelligibility.

I. There was genocide in the DRC, and the conflict in the east of the country is fueled by racist ideology

As many know, an armed conflict has resumed since the end of 2021, pitting the M23 rebellion against the government of DRC, which also accuses Rwanda of supporting this rebellion. Since the end of the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 and the mass exile of the army and militias responsible for the genocide to neighbouring DRC, Rwanda has sometimes become militarily involved in the DRC either in support of rebellions or at the invitation of the government of this country for security reasons, even if its detractors often attribute other reasons to it.¹ Discrimination, persecution and violence targeting the Banyarwanda - and especially Batutsi - populations of Congo since the early 1960s have also intensified since the entry of Rwandan genocidaires onto Congolese soil, pushing certain young Tutsi to join successive rebellions such as the AFDL (Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo / Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire), the RCD (Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie / Congolese Rally for Democracy), the CNDP (Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple / National Congress for the Defence of the People) or the M23 (Mouvement du 23 mars 2009 / Movement of 23 March 2009), although the political agreements concluded at the end of these rebellions have never been implemented by successive regimes in Kinshasa to resolve the fundamental problems of their community, in particular the return to their homeland and the resettlement in security of hundreds of thousands of their people still in exile for thirty years now in Rwanda, Uganda and elsewhere.

At the end of an audience with the Congolese Minister of Defence on 7 March 2024, the German ambassador in Kinshasa declared: *'We are very concerned about the situation, we share the concern, we see that the M23 with the support of the Rwandan army is at the bottom of this worsening crisis. This situation is a violation of the sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of Congo.'*² It is certainly a lack of wisdom and prudence to peremptorily attribute responsibility for humanitarian consequences and other losses to one party to the conflict rather than carefully examining the motivations and actions of each party as mediators attempt to do in this conflict, notably through the processes of Nairobi and Luanda. But beyond the very deplorable consequences linked to the context of armed clashes such as the loss of lives of combatants, and sometimes civilians caught between the two fires; the displacement of populations exposed to hunger, deprivation and bad weather; the destruction of property and the loss of many rights, there is a very particular tragedy in the DRC: violence targeting not opposing combatants, but rather a genocidal unleashing against individuals solely because of their identity. And the world seems to have decided to turn a blind eye to this horror.

¹ Privat Rutazibwa, 'Discussing the causes and context of wars and conflict involving the Banyarwanda from eastern Democratic Republic of Congo', 25 June 2023, *AfricArXiv*, <https://doi.org/10.21428/3b2160cd.259767b3> (download 'Formatted PDF' for a better layout or go at ResearchGate:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/371860650_Discussing_the_causes_and_context_of_wars_and_conflict_involving_the_Banyarwanda_from_the_Eastern_Democratic_Republic_of_Congo/stats#fullTextFileContent).

² 'RDC : Pour l'Allemagne, le Rwanda et le M23 sont à la base de la crise sécuritaire aggravée dans l'Est', *7sur7.cd*, 8 mars 2024, <https://7sur7.cd/2024/03/08/rdc-pour-lallemagne-le-rwanda-et-le-m23-sont-la-base-de-la-crise-securitaire-aggravee>.

Since the regime of President Mobutu (1965-1997), the authorities in Kinshasa have developed a negationist narrative which consists of refusing to admit that the racist and genocidal anti-Tutsi ideology is at the origin of the recurring conflict in the eastern DRC. They have chosen to substitute it with fables of balkanization and plunder of resources. Balkanization was already attributed to the Congolese Batutsi³, especially from the beginning of the 1980s, and since 1995, it has been attributed to Rwanda in the same way as the plundering of the DRC's resources, all in an alleged Hima-Tutsi expansionism.⁴ The fantasy of the Hima-Tutsi empire is sometimes accompanied by the no less hallucinatory accusation according to which it was in reality wanted and created by the Anglo-Saxons, the Batutsi (and the Bahima) being only the executors of a neo-colonial project. Inspired by the classifications of African populations by colonial sciences, the ideologues of Kinshasa go so far as to assert that the current conflict in the east of the DRC is a war between the Bantus (with whom they themselves identify) and the Nilotics (part of whom would be those they call Hima-Tutsi).

We will show that it is rather this reasoning which is of colonial inspiration and neo-colonial instrumentalization, and that it is very dangerous for the African continent. The racist and genocidal anti-Tutsi ideology at work in Kinshasa since independence and amplified under the current regime is in fact an exact reproduction of the one which was at work before, during and after the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. It is at the same time a creation of colonial pseudo-sciences implemented for clearly genocidal objectives mainly by the White Father missionaries and the Belgian colonizers towards the end of colonization with the results of the first massacres and persecutions against the Batutsi from the 1 November 1959; then by the French State from 1990 with the result of the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994; and more generally, by a certain Western knowledge production on Africa and the region carried by certain media, activists and academics without ethics.

1. A genocide of incredible cruelty

Dear world leaders,

The images that I am going to show you are unbearably violent. Some of you have probably already seen them since they have circulated on social media. But you should watch them all because you are collectively the current guardians of humanity. I make it my duty to inform you, with the deep conviction that knowledge of the truth can liberate us all. But it will be up to each of you to decide whether or not to commit to this truth and justice.

³ The noun form 'Batutsi' (plural) / 'Mututsi' (singular) is more appropriate. I will keep 'Tutsi' for adjective forms, in quotations and in established noun forms like 'The genocide against the Tutsi'.

⁴ Privat Rutazibwa, 'Discussing the causes', p.4-5.

These images show a killing of incredible cruelty, inflicted on Tutsi individuals for the simple fact that they were born Batutsi. Those that I display in this document are a small selection; the tragedy is of a much greater magnitude. I took images of X accounts (former Twitter) whose authenticity and credibility are easy to verify. I consider the information increasingly available on social networks as sources in their own right for scientific research, particularly in the social sciences. I will provide each time the link and the X account that published it as well as the date. Other references in the text follow usual research practise. The translation of words and texts in French, Kinyarwanda, Lingala and Kiswahili into English in this document is my own.

Image 1.

Please, open the link: [here](#)

Video 1.a (the first, on the left side): The severed head is placed on the ground in the middle of a crowd. From min 0:14 to 0:18, a voice in the background says in Kiswahili: *'eeh, hii ni kicwa ya Mutusi, hii ni kicwa ya Mutusi kabisa.'* Meaning: *'eeh, this is the head of a Mututsi; This is truly the head of a Mututsi.'*⁵ A militiaman and a woman in the video specify in Kiswahili that the scene takes place in Kimoka, near the town of Sake in North Kivu; and they ask President Tshisekedi to give weapons and salaries to the APCLS, Nyatura and FDLR militias who control this area.

Video 1.b (the second, on the right side): A militiaman from the group called APCLS showing in his hands the same severed head of the Mututsi declares in Kiswahili: *'First, I am called by the name Shukuru Dunia Joseph. We show that our country has a strong army. This is the power of the DRC government. They did this job, with: FARDC, as infantry soldiers; ...; with APCLS and commandos of the DRC'. "Young people with strength",* shout other people around the militiaman. The latter continues: *'They are doing the job. Our President, see it from this: your army has strength.'*⁶

Image 2.

Please, open the link: [here](#)

Photo 2.a (left): Photo of late Kaminzobe (Semutobo).⁷

Video 2.b (right, above): Mr. Kaminzobe, a Mututsi (Munyamulenge), is burned alive in the middle of a crowd in Kalima, Maniema province, in the Greater Kivu.⁸

⁵ See <https://twitter.com/kajwiga31/status/1759182532392722551/video/1>, @kajwiga31, 18 February 2024.

⁶ See <https://twitter.com/kazitu2000/status/1756070556363841588>, @kazitu2000, 9 February 2024.

⁷ See <https://pbs.twimg.com/media/FotOXs6XwAQaRqc?format=jpg&name=900x900>, @Dachronica, 11 February 2023.

⁸ See <https://twitter.com/SugiraMireille/status/1761484133606309925>, @SugiraMireille, 24 February 2024.

Video 2.c (right, bottom): The flesh of Mr. Kaminzobe is being eaten before the crowd, and the following conversation takes place in Kiswahili: - Voice of a first person asking: *'Jojo, so it means that when you see a Rwandan, you must kill him'?* -Response from the second person eating Kaminzobe's flesh with bread: *'Then! Kill!'* -Voice of the first person: *'Ok, and we will also support you'*. - First person continues: *'Ooh, ooooh, do you see the feat Kalima is doing to the Banyarwanda? Banyarwanda, you will only see it today. Never set foot here in Kalima. Even war, don't bring it here; you can suffer. You will suffer a lot; you are being eaten with bread.'*⁹

Image 3.

Please, open the link: [here](#)

The scene takes place in Majengo, in Goma town. The biker who transported Muyambere Mahoro, a Mututsi, to Byahi has just delivered him to the Wazalendo, name designating a conglomerate of militiamen recently incorporated as army reservists by the Congolese government. Half undressed, Muyambere is stoned with large stones; crushed with feet; and they even ask a biker to ride over his head.¹⁰

Image 4.

Please, open the link: [here](#)

In the middle of a crowd, a Mututsi rolled on the ground, half undressed, was kicked and hit with sticks. Some jump high to be able to crush him with their feet with more violence.¹¹

Image 5.

Please, open the link: [here](#)

Captain Gisore Rukatura Patrick, a Mututsi (Munyamulenge from South Kivu) was a member of the FARDC, the Congolese government army. He was lynched in Goma in broad daylight and his colleagues did not intervene to rescue him. It is believed that he was also burned alive and eaten because the Goma town hall never handed over his body to his family and loved ones who wanted to give him a dignified burial.¹²

⁹ See <https://twitter.com/Dachronica/status/1624478400994738176/video/2>, @Dachronica, 11 February 2023.

¹⁰ See <https://twitter.com/kivuresidence/status/1755251113861804280/photo/1>, @kivuresidence, 7 February 2024.

¹¹ See <https://twitter.com/Dachronica/status/1755132914109415618>, @Dachronica, 7 February 2024.

¹² See <https://twitter.com/VoiceOfKivu/status/1754771223530107347>, @VoiceOfKivu, 6 February 2024.

Image 6.

Please, open the link: [here](#)

Kazungu, a Mututsi from North Kivu, was a member of the Congolese National Police. He was burned alive.

Surrounded by a crowd, in the middle it is Kazungu, nicknamed Kamuzungu, taken by the Wazalendo at 5:00 a.m., 20 February 2024, in the village of Bugamba, at the office of the Congolese National Police where he was on guard duty to protect all Congolese. Despite his sacrifice, Kazungu did not escape hatred. His appearance and ethnicity were enough for him to be lynched and burned alive.¹³

A Congolese Tutsi refugee from Masisi in North Kivu, very active on social networks, called out Madame Bintou Keita, head of the UN mission in Congo MONUSCO, about this racist murder of the police officer Kazungu:

Dear madam @UN_BintouKeita, kill okay, since you have the monopoly, but please, don't kill the souls of children... ❤️

Why do your new collaborators kill and film themselves in the presence of children??

My question is also addressed to your spokesperson, #Kedagni_Mensah who revealed the partnership of the United Nations with the criminal groups MaiMai, Nyatura and FDLR, known as Wazalendo.

The photo shows the killing of an agent of the order named KAMUZUNGU, yesterday, in the KABASHA 2 district.¹⁴

Image 7.

Please, open the link: [here](#)

The body of a Mututsi is lying on the ground, his head bloodied, probably following violent blows and stoning because stones are visible all around. Bikers ride on the body; one of them even tries to crush his head. We see a person turning the victim's body over and trying to undress her further.¹⁵

¹³ Translation of the caption in French on <https://twitter.com/SugiraMireille/status/1759974521652859036>, @SugiraMireille, 20 February 2024. The images displayed here come from https://twitter.com/Umukasi_Kivu/status/1759952746420048232, @Umukasi_Kivu, 20 February 2024.

¹⁴ See <https://twitter.com/SugiraMireille/status/1759824799105163529>, @SugiraMireille, 20 February 2024.

¹⁵ See <https://twitter.com/RwasandeK/status/1754546099707134362>, @RwasandeK, 5 February 2024.

This video aroused great outrage to the point that Congolese government propaganda agents and other supporters of anti-Tutsi racism, including a journalist who is the local correspondent for *France24* and *TV5*, claimed that the victim was not a Mututsi, but rather 'a motorcycle taxi driver from the city of Goma' called 'Christian' who 'stole his client's handbag in which there were money and a telephone'.

The said journalist is, however, used to misappropriating information. He thus relayed the message of a sign from Congolese demonstrators in the diaspora in Europe which read: "*They forced me to rape the corpse of my mother, to eat her flesh in the presence of my children*". 'Desiré Goyabaki, M23 survivor'. The journalist accompanied this message from the Congolese diaspora close to President Tshisekedi's regime with his own comment: '*I really have no words*'.¹⁶

It turns out, however, that Désiré Goyabaki and his family were not victims of the M23 in North Kivu, but of CODECO in Ituri, a militia which collaborates closely with the government of President Tshisekedi.¹⁷

The images above mainly concern Kivu, especially North Kivu in areas under government control. But images of comparable atrocity come from Ituri where the Hema populations are massacred on a daily basis and their property destroyed, in the name of the same racist ideology which assimilates them to the Batutsi.¹⁸ Similar atrocities have also been perpetrated against the Banyamulenge in South Kivu where more than 400 of their villages were burned and around 400,000 heads of their cattle looted. A Tutsi soldier in the national army was also recently lynched and cut into pieces by a gang of civilians in Uvira, South Kivu, at the instigation of a national parliamentarian.¹⁹

2. A little background

*'Hate propaganda permanently targeting the same human group is already an attack aimed at its extermination'*²⁰, and a single murder resulting from this racist ideology is already genocide. *'Belgian colonial administration started the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in 1959 to crush the Rwandan nationalists who demanded independence'*, using anti-Tutsi racism based on Hamitic Hypothesis, a pseudo-scientific construction of colonial ethnography inspired by European racial theories of the 19th century.²¹

¹⁶ See <https://twitter.com/michombero/status/1761472501924728934/photo/1>, @michombero, 24 February 2024.

¹⁷ See <https://twitter.com/onduhungirehe/status/1761802796674810142?s=03>, @onduhungirehe, 25 February 2024; <https://twitter.com/kivuresidence/status/1761689439212863701/photo/1>, @kivuresidence, 25 February 2024; <https://twitter.com/SugiraMireille/status/1761667054090809398>, @SugiraMireille, 25 February 2024.

¹⁸ See https://twitter.com/junior_kany/status/1761675640883777845, @junior_kany, 25 February 2024; <https://twitter.com/CoulibalyBojana/status/1763606927722811794?s=03>, @CoulibalyBojana, 01 March 2024; <https://twitter.com/goma24news/status/1759542283236753539>, @goma24news, 19 February 2024.

¹⁹ See <https://twitter.com/Dachronica/status/1632718120006606850?s=03>, @Dachronica, 6 March 2024.

²⁰ Privat Rutazibwa, 'Rwanda: How the post-independence regimes from 1962 to 1994 were neo-colonial, racist and genocidal', 5 February 2024, *AfricArXiv*, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10628654>, p.29.

²¹ Privat Rutazibwa, 'The genocide against the Tutsi: the establishment of the genocidal policies since 1959', 04 January 2023, *AfricArXiv*, <https://doi.org/10.21428/3b2160cd.f58c1e1a>, p. 14-15; Rutazibwa, 'Rwanda: How the post-independence regimes', p. 2-13.

Since then, this genocidal ideology started to spread throughout the region, including the DRC.²² It is at the origin of several episodes of discrimination, persecution and violence against the Banyarwanda in general and the Batutsi in particular in Congolese national life since 1962 to the present day.²³ A UNHCR official in eastern Congo could report the following in October 1963:

*I found that the authorities of North Kivu are using this term [Tutsi] as a propaganda stunt. Everything evil in their area is caused by 'Tutsi'. This word seems to be the depository of a blend of subjective fear, hate and frustration, very much like the term 'Jew' in Hitler's Germany. Therefore, anyone looking like a Tutsi is liable to be beaten, killed or imprisoned, likewise anyone who helps them. I saw in Sake a cable emanating from the North Kivu government addressed to the central government in Leopoldville in which all disorders and atrocities in North Kivu were ascribed to the Tutsis.*²⁴

In a recent televised debate in Kinshasa, Mr Ludovic Kalengayi, head of an organization for the prevention of genocide in Congo, recalled the following facts:

When you say that the problem of the DRC is Paul Kagame, I first remind you that the M23, when they took up arms, they entered through Bunagana, it was not at the border with Rwanda. Nobody talks about Museveni, nobody talks about Uganda. Why? Because already this political machination which has entered into the venom of every Congolese, always sees Kagame: Evil.

I would like to remind you, the CNDP [Armed opposition to President Joseph Kabila, predecessor to M23 rebellion]. When you talk about the percentages of M23 members who are Rwandans, that is completely false. Because already when there was the agreement of 23 March [2009] with the CNDP, they agreed for the return of refugees, they agreed for the cessation of hostilities, of discrimination that happens here anywhere. Arriving in 2012, the members – because those who are in the M23, they were in the FARDC [Congolese army]. They defected from the FARDC. 'They are Congolese,' intervenes the journalist (host). 'Congolese', continues Mr. Kalengayi. You know Makenga well. Makenga is from Masisi. He is not a Rwandan. You know Bertrand Bisimwa. Bisimwa is a Mushi, he is not a Rwandan. You know Willy Ngoma well, who was even from the UDPS [the political party of President Felix A. Tshisekedi]. He was in the North Kivu federation of the UDPS; he is from Congo Central. He is not a Rwandan. It is now up to you to tell me which member of the M23 you know, who is Rwandan, and you mention his name. Because I just mentioned the names.

And I would not like to be told that I am taking part in the M23. Who is the Congolese who took? [Incomplete question]. Personally, I left Kinshasa, I took my plane at my own expense, I went to Goma, I went to Rutshuru, I went to Masisi, I went [inaudible] everywhere. It was there that I learned that the head of state

²² Rutazibwa, 'Discussing the causes', p.2.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 4-11.

²⁴ F. Preziosi, 'Situation in North Kivu', memo, 21 Oct. 1963. Quoted in United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), *The State of The World's Refugees 2000: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action*, (01 January 2000), p. 50.

had invited the M23 here in 2020. They were housed here for more than 10 months. Why did the head of state call the Rwandans? No, he called them because he knew they were Congolese.

If you remember, when the head of state took power, in all the refugee camps, there was a big party. I'll give you the images. In the refugee camps in Rwanda, there was a big party, because the head of state had already promised them the return of the refugees. After a while, you know it very well. Because we imported the problem that existed in Rwanda, between the Tutsi and the Hutu.

When did it start? Because already in 1987, the Tutsi and the Banyamulenge did not participate in the elections. Kagame was not president of the Republic. In 1990, during the National Sovereign Conference, the Banyamulenge were expelled from the National Sovereign Conference. Kagame was not in power. And this discrimination affair started even in 62; since 62-63. This is when the problem started. Kagame was still a baby in the refugee camps [in Uganda].

We continue. When Operation Turquoise appeared, in 94, the genocidal Hutu entered, with weapons and ammunition. Etienne Tshisekedi [opposition figure under Mobutu regime, father of current president Félix Tshisekedi] had said it: they had to be sent, according to international law, more than 150 kilometres from the border. They were never there. Many were at the Mugunga refugee camp. And with weapons and ammunition, that was already considered a threat. This is why Mr. Paul Kagame automatically reacted. I wouldn't want to go into those details. 'Very good', intervenes the journalist (host).

And it started from the RCD [armed opposition to Presidents Laurent Désiré Kabila and Joseph Kabila]. It was the same demands. Even the MLC [another armed opposition to successive presidents Laurent Désiré Kabila and Joseph Kabila] made the same demands for the Hema in the Ituri region. You're not talking about that. And yet even Jean Pierre Bemba [Defence minister under Tshisekedi regime and head of MLC at the time] is there. He knows this story well. Mr. Vital Kamerhe [former Director of cabinet of President Tshisekedi] knows this story well.

The root causes of the conflict boil down to only one thing: the cessation of discrimination, the cessation of hostilities and massacres against the Tutsi and the Hema, the Banyamulenge, and today we have the Teke. They are called Gabonese. Nobody talks about it. I went as far as Kwamouth. I saw how the Yaka are mistreating the Teke. You're not talking about that.

But today I am very disappointed that we can applaud for the Wazalendo. I saw, they are burning the homes of the Tutsi brothers. Today, not every Tutsi is M23. Not every Tutsi is Rwandan. There are Congolese Tutsi. But when you see a person with a morphology in quotes Tutsi, you say that he is a Rwandan. No. We have to put things into perspective. If the Wazalendo are there for the M23, and we give them, we gave them this opportunity to massacre themselves, they must now leave the Congolese population.

I repeat, the Wazalendo say: 'The Tutsi must return home'. And I would also like to remind you that it is not about land. The Tutsi never claim their land, because it belongs to them. They are ethnic Congolese. And they are Congolese not through the clemency of anyone. They were here before the DRC was called DRC, Papa [Dad, Sir]. We should understand this kind of things, and let us advocate unity, peace and brotherhood.²⁵

²⁵ See [@VoiceOfKivu](https://twitter.com/VoiceOfKivu/status/1754788004680315280), 6 February 2024.

Mr Kalengay was unfortunately arrested some time later by the security services of the Tshisekedi regime, and according to the latest news, he is still in detention.

Basile Diatezwa, a Congolese political analyst established the following diagnosis during a talk show on a private television in Kinshasa in May 2023:

In Mobutu's Zaire, we started with this concept of dubious nationality, which led to the 1981 law on Zairian nationality. When I led the UDPS [opposition party to President Mobutu, to which current president Tshisekedi is affiliated] in the Benelux, I criticized this law, and I warned the Zairian authorities of that time about the political and humanitarian consequences of this law. At the National Sovereign Conference, with this concept of dubious nationality, ... already with this law of 1981, we were at odds with international law. Because as a country we have signed the international convention on stateless persons. We cannot make a Congolese citizen, a Zairian citizen, a stateless person. But we did it. Nationality was withdrawn from Rwandan speakers, more particularly from Tutsi, simply because, eh, baza [they are] doubtful nationality. And at the National Sovereign Conference, we worsened the contradictions. We chased away all those who had Tutsi facies. The late Rwakabuba considered as the father of independence; Monsignor Kanyamacumbi who was General Secretary of the episcopal council, - even Monsengwo did not defend him-. In short, we made mistakes which led to the rebellion of the AFDL [armed opposition to President Mobutu]. If we had succeeded in the National Conference, would we experience the AFDL phenomenon or the Kabila phenomenon? We pay for our own turpitudes until today.²⁶

In a talk show on *Congo Buzz TV* on 14 September 2023 in Kinshasa, Congolese journalist and researcher Belhar Mbuyi gave the following testimony:

... first, when we were students in our final years there was the first war of Congo, that of 1996, and we saw in reaction in the city of Kinshasa where we live, that there was a lot of lynching of Tutsi people. Suddenly they said that it was the Tutsi who were attacking the country and they began to beat up Tutsi in the streets, including our student colleagues on the university campus. So, then, a few months later, opinion evolved. Tshisekedi Etienne told us that Kabila was our brother, and that we had to welcome him, and everyone changed completely, and they started to say that Kabila was coming to free us from Mobutu, and later the AFDL arrived to everyone's cheers. So, I said to myself; while it was ultimately a war that everyone ultimately applauded, others were beaten, molested, persecuted for this war when it began. So, in 1998 a new war began, and there, the persecutions against the Tutsi resumed on a greater scale. There were a lot of people burned alive here in the streets of Kinshasa, especially following the call from Mr. Yerodia Ndombasi who was Chief of Staff to Mr. Laurent Desiré Kabila. Hundreds and hundreds of people were burned in the streets of Kinshasa here. 'Tutsi?' asks the journalist. Tutsi. We saw in Kisangani; it was still the same. In Kamina, Banyamulenge cadet officers who were there were put in containers which were doused with gasoline and set on fire; people burned like that inside. There were unacceptable things.

²⁶ Basile Diatezwa, guest of the talk show 'C'est politique', 10ème Rue TV Officiel, (Kinshasa, 05 mai 2023), <https://youtu.be/P2CZjMuRygA>, from minute 47:11 to 48 :50.

So, I said to myself: I will understand what is happening in the end. Why was there this first war, initially with the name of the Banyamulenge, and the second war, the same? And why do they have to attack only one community, even if these rebellions ultimately bring everyone together? During the first war it was Laurent Desiré Kabila who was Muluba from Katanga who benefited. It was not even a Tutsi who was president. Why then are it only the Tutsi who must be killed in these conditions? So, I tried to understand the reality of the East, what is really happening, what is this conflict, why there are people who shout every time: 'but, we are Congolese, why do they not want to recognize our nationality?'

Obviously, I had witnessed, during the National Sovereign Conference, the fact that certain delegates from Kivu had succeeded in invalidating the Tutsi and certain Hutu delegates of the National Sovereign Conference, by saying that they were not Congolese. I was a witness, -I was already an adult-, of the fact that when Tshisekedi Etienne made his government resulting from the National Sovereign Conference, his minister of lands, mines and energy, Mr. Jean Sekabuhoro, - of happy memory, peace to his soul-, saw many Kivutians contest his nationality, due to the fact that he was a Hutu from Rutshuru. I witnessed, like many of my generation, the fact that in the transitional parliament headed by Monsignor Monsengwo at the time, - archbishop of Kisangani at the time -, after the adoption of the Vangu Mambweni report, several people were invalidated, saying that they were Rwandan foreigners. These are the deputies Rwakabuba Shinga, who is Tutsi from Rutshuru; this is Mutsiri, who is Hutu from Rutshuru; and even, a respectable gentleman like Kalegamire who is neither Hutu nor Tutsi, but who is Muhavu from Idjwi in South Kivu, but who within the Vangu commission, had to challenge his colleagues to tell them: 'But, we are going crazy. These people are Congolese, stop.' Then Vangu said: 'That's because Kalegamire too, he's Rwandan. So, let's invalidate him too.' So, in a movement of desertion of reflection, they also invalidated Kalegamire from the transitional parliament.

So, I already had a certain concern at that level to understand what was happening. So, having become a journalist at the newspaper Le Potentiel, I began research, I became passionate about this question; after the reunification of the country, I made several study trips; I travelled through Kivu; I have been in Rutshuru almost everywhere, from Nyamilima to Nyakakoma via Vitshumbi, Rutshuru center, Kiwanja; I was in Masisi: Masisi centre, Kitshanga, ... I was everywhere. In South Kivu, I went as far as Minembwe among the Banyamulenge there, in Rugezi, in Bibogobogo, ... I was there everywhere to understand what is happening. I had the chance to travel to Europe, practically Belgium, I read a lot at the Tervuren museum, I made copies of documents, and so on.... There you go, so I'm trying to share what little I was able to learn, that's it.

So, I would like to clarify that I am not from Kivu. I am from Kasai. I don't like the expression, but from Kasai of father and mother. My father was from Kasai and my mother too. So, I am Muluba, that's it, from father and mother, and I have nothing to do with Kivu, nor with the Tutsi, nor with the Hutu, nor with the Bafuleru, nor with the Nande, nor with anyone else in a particular way. No way. Not even through marriage: my wife is from Bas-Congo, therefore Mukongo from Mbanza-Ngungu, Musingombe, the ethnic sister of the prophet Simon Kimbangu. So, there you have it, nothing to see. Because people often like to conjecture: there you go, maybe.... 'He's a Rwandan, he's a Tutsi, he's a Hutu, he's a man from Kivu,' adds the journalist (host).

*Obviously, this is the sort of thing that doesn't impress me at all. This kind of intellectual intimidation doesn't impress me at all.*²⁷

Mr. Mbuyi was invited to this television program to deliver his analysis on the book by Franco-Cameroonian Charles Onana published in April 2023 which distills anti-Tutsi hatred and which had been widely promoted and distributed in Kinshasa with the support of the Congolese government. A few weeks earlier, Mbuyi had co-signed, with lawyer Thomas Gamakolo and human rights defender Percy Tambwe, a column on behalf of the Collective Against Racism and Hate Speech in order to denounce Onana's book and to warn the Congolese authorities who were promoting it. The column concluded as follows:

*In conclusion, the book *Holocauste au Congo* [Holocaust in the Congo] by Charles Onana, a veritable breviary of Saint Goebbels, is nothing but a lugubrious and indigestible work of hateful propaganda. One could believe that this authentic Bible of hatred is the work of a nazillon intoxicated with his phobias, revulsion and aversion to Rwanda and the Tutsi as a human community, base feelings that he gives himself the mission of spreading with sinister delight in the DRC, the Great Lakes region and throughout Africa. This book is full of utter nonsense, lies and confusion that makes it a trash-talking book. As Henry James said so well, showing enthusiasm for this kind of book is the mark of a definitely primitive level of thinking.*

*We draw the particular attention of Congolese leaders to the danger represented by the book *Holocauste au Congo* on national cohesion, current and future relations between the people of the DRC and the countries of the Great Lakes, and the development of the culture of hatred in the country.*²⁸

I would like to close this section with the very lucid words of former South African President Thabo Mbeki on the current conflict in the DRC:

I saw this in an announcement too, that SADC [Southern African Development Community] also sending in its own forces into this region. The fundamental problem remains: the solution to that problem in the eastern Congo is political. It is a political problem, which really at the base of it, is that the government in Kinshasa, the government in Kinshasa must recognize the fact that all the people of the Congo are all Congolese. And it is the responsibility of the government of the Congo to protect all of them. You see, you don't have this phenomenon like you have the M23. The reason the M23 emerges whoever is behind it; but the reason, fundamental reason it emerges is because a section of the population, Congolese population, in the eastern Congo, does not feel protected. Because since the days of Mobutu, saying Banyamulenge are not Congolese, these are Rwandans and so on.

²⁷ Belhar Mbuyi, guest of the talk show 'Entre les lignes', *Congo Buzz TV*, (Kinshasa, 14 September 2023), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8dtrEvDSieY>, from minute 1:22 to 8:30.

²⁸ Belhar Mbuyi, Thomas Gamakolo, Percy Tambwe, 'Tribune – Holocauste au Congo : la Bible de la haine faite de mensonges, faussetés et confusions', *Finance-cd.org*, 21 August 2023, <https://finance-cd.com/blog/2023/08/21/tribune-holocauste-au-congo-la-bible-de-la-haine-faite-de-mensonges-faussetes-et-confusions/>.

Colonial boundaries were drawn up by colonialists. And the boundaries of DRC as they stand today were colonial boundaries. And OAU agreed virtually from its foundation, that let us recognize those borders. And therefore, the people within those borders within the Congo are the responsibility of the government of Congo. So, this political intervention is very important. I see the military interventions that are being made; maybe they are necessary. But fundamentally what needs to happen is this political solution to this problem.²⁹

It is clear from the above insights that the root cause of the current conflict in eastern DRC is the government's failure to protect the Banyarwanda population, coupled with virulent anti-Tutsi racism. The latter gave rise to cyclical violence against the Batutsi of North Kivu and assimilated populations such as the Banyamulenge of South Kivu and North Katanga, as well as the Bahema of Ituri. For some time now, this anti-Tutsi racism has become an official policy of the current Congolese regime at the highest level of the State, and the consequence is the systematic genocide being carried out against the Batutsi of North Kivu and other assimilated populations in other parts of the DRC.

3. A genocide planned at the highest level of the state

During a presidential campaign rally in December 2023 in South Kivu, President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi delivered a speech which is part of a series of official declarations showing that the massacres and other violence that target the Batutsi in Congo stem from a desire and an official policy of exclusion and extermination. The beginning of Tshisekedi's remarks in Lingala are inaudible in the document that I give as reference below, but his former chief of staff Vital Kamerhe from South Kivu interprets him into Kiswahili for the crowd: *'The Head of state says this: he does not sleep. He has begun the work of providing strength to our army. And you all know that the Mai Mai; the Wazalendo; all of them are today part of the reserve force of the Republic.'* "Wooh!", the crowd cheers. President Tshisekedi continues in Lingala:

We have done so, so that we can be many, many to defend our country. Because unfortunately our army as you know has been infiltrated for a long time. The "brassage" [intermingling]; the "mixage" [mixing]; all these things that we were doing, while it was bringing the enemy into the army. Today we are starting to eliminate them little by little, you know that the others themselves just fled back there to the M23. So, they are slowly dying out, but those who remain, and the Wazalendo are here, and the Mai Mai, we will all unite to defend the Democratic Republic of Congo.³⁰

²⁹ Former South African President Thabo Mbeki, Interview with International News Editor Sophie Mokoena, *SABC News*, (16 February 2024), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6vR6FiXsRXw>, from min 4:07 to 5:55.

³⁰ See <https://twitter.com/MahoroMpa/status/1733903994962018383>, @MahoroMpa, 10 Decembre 2023. Original words of President Tshisekedi from minute 0:10 to 1:20.: 'Tosali bongo, mpo tozala ebele, ebele to defendre mboka na biso. Mpo malheureusement armée na biso ndenge boyebi ezali infiltrée banda kala. Ba brassage, ba mixage, ba makambo nyonso wana oyo tozalaki kosala, nzoka nde ezalaki kokotisa banguna na kati

President Tshisekedi's original remarks in Lingala are reproduced in the previous footnote.

A propaganda media close to the Kinshasa regime recently interpreted these words of President Tshisekedi for those who are slow to understand. Evoking the military support of four African countries for the Tshisekedi regime and the implications it could have, the online media makes the following analysis:

This new military coalition around President Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi could upset the balance of forces on the ground. The FARDC, heavily infiltrated by the enemy (the Hima-Tutsi political-military elite) since the AFDL war (1996-1997), were until then on the defensive against a Rwandan Army very well equipped by the Western powers.³¹

The extract from President Tshisekedi's speech shows that he considers the Congolese Batutsi present in the army and other institutions of the DRC as *'long-time infiltrated enemies'*; those that its propaganda medium calls *'the enemy (the Hima-Tutsi political-military elite)'* that *'heavily infiltrated'* the institutions *'since the AFDL war (1996-1997)'*. In the same speech, President Tshisekedi questions the process of *"brassage"* [intermingling] and *"mixage"* [mixing] of the fighters of the CNDP rebellion with the regular FARDC army, a process which put an end to the rebellion in 2009 under his predecessor Joseph Kabila but which for Tshisekedi *'was bringing the enemies into the army'*, that is, Tutsi soldiers among the many who had actually defected from the FARDC to form the CNDP rebellion.

But the most disturbing thing in President Tshisekedi's speech is that he publicly admits to carrying out a genocide targeting the Batutsi. *'Lelo tobandi kosilisa bango moke moke.... Donc moke moke bazo sila'* literally means: *'Today we are starting to finish them little by little.... So, little by little, they finish'*. President Tshisekedi rejoices at the fact that *'the others themselves just fled back there to the M23'* and assures that *'those who remain'* will be dealt with by Wazalendo and Mai Mai militias. President Tshisekedi speaks here of the Congolese Batutsi who are still in the army and other security services, and in fact, the Wazalendo militias began to kill them little by little as in the case of Captain Gisore Rukatura Patrick of the FARDC or Kazungu (nicknamed Kamuzungu) of the Congolese National Police (PNC) whose atrocious death was mentioned above. Many other Tutsi officers and men were arrested, tortured and killed simply for their identity; others died as a result of ill-treatment in detention, such as Captain Mugenzi Egide.³²

It is imperative that Congolese President Felix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo be apprehended and tried for the crime of genocide, as well as other accomplices within his regime.

ya armée. Lelo tobandi kosilisa bango moke moke, boyebi que ba mosusu bango moko kaka bakimi bakeyi kozonga kuna na M23. Donc moke moke bazo sila, mais bango oyo batikali, na ba Wazalendo bazali awa, na ba Mai Mai, biso nyonso tokosangana pour defendre ekolo Congo democratique.'

³¹ *Mediacongo*, 'Guerre au Nord-Kivu: risque d'escalade avec l'implication de 6 armées régulières', 8 March 2024, <https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-134412-guerre-au-nord-kivu-risque-d-escalade-avec-l-implication-de-6-armees-regulieres.html>.

³² See <https://t.co/eINrENxUoh>, @RealManziWilly, 25 March 2024.

On 20 February 2024 in the same province of South Kivu in Uvira, civil society organizations and young people from certain ethnic groups organized a demonstration during which more than 500 participants chanted: *'We ask our government to identify all Tutsis working in the army, police, intelligence services and immigration so that they can be dismissed and sent back to Rwanda.'*³³

The speech of hatred and extermination of the Batutsi uttered by President Tshisekedi does not only target those who are in the army and security services; it targets all Batutsi. High-ranking politicians, the Mai Mai militias recently named Wazalendo, and certain civil society organizations are responsible for relaying the thoughts of President Tshisekedi and putting them into practice through various strategies of violence against the Batutsi and assimilated populations. In an audio-visual document which exposes the hate speech of President Tshisekedi and his close collaborators, we can hear from minute 0:23 to 0:30, a militia leader reviewing recruits who declares in Kiswahili: *'Huyu pia ni wa mupya mu macho yangu, jina lako nani? ... weye pia unapiga Mutusi?'* meaning: *'This one is also new in my eyes, what is your name? ... you are also hitting the Mutusi?'* From minute 0:31 to 0:38, another militia leader can be seen and heard saying: *'Tutaenda mpaka mwisho, tutatiya silaha chini wakati adui, yaani Mutusi atakuwa ameisha kuwa ndani ya Rwanda'*. It means: *'We will go to the end; we will lay down our weapons when the enemy, that is the Mutusi, will have returned in Rwanda'*. From minute 1:00 to 1:02, another militiaman declares: *'tungali tutabauwa tu; tungali tutabauwa ...'*, meaning: *'we'll kill them again, of course; we're going to kill them again...'*. From Minute 1:55 to 1:59, a man in civilian clothes states: *'Munyarwanda wa muzuri, ni Munyarwanda mwenye aliishaka kufariki, njo Munyarwanda wa muzuri'*. It means: *'A good Munyarwanda is the one who is already dead; that is the good Munyarwanda'*.³⁴

The infamous anti-Tutsi extremist organization LUCHA (Lutte pour le Changement / Fight for Change) triggered a movement in June 2022 to hunt Batutsi and pillage their property in the city of Goma, with this crowd mobilization song with an evocative chorus, inviting President Tshisekedi to open the door so that the Congolese Banyarwanda return home, that is to say to Rwanda: *'Felixe, Felixe, fungula mulango, Wanyarwanda wote warudiye kwao'* meaning : *'Felix, Felix, open the door, let all Rwandans return home'*.³⁵ A famous musician could also perform in Uvira in South Kivu during an event ironically called Amani Festival (Peace Festival), singing and having his audience repeat a song with similar content: *'Banyarwanda bote barudiye kwabo'* : *'All the Banyarwanda go back home'*, meaning in Rwanda.³⁶

Undji Yangya Philippe, a senior executive of the AFDC Nationale RDC, party of Professor Modeste Bahati Lukwebo - then President of the Senate of the DRC - and member of Union Sacrée, the coalition of President Tshisekedi, made a very disturbing revelation in a television show. He says he participated in a meeting in Lusungu which *'put in place a strategy to destroy'* the villages of the Tutsi Banyamulenge and

³³ Adam Ntwari, 'Uvira : la société civile et certains groupes ethniques exigent qu'il n'y ait plus de Tutsis dans les forces de sécurité', *SOS Médias Burundi*, 20 February 2024, <https://www.sosmediasburundi.org/2024/02/20/uvira-la-societe-civile-et-certains-groupes-ethniques-exigent-quil-ny-ait-plus-de-tutsis-dans-les-forces-de-securite/>

³⁴ See <https://twitter.com/bbisimwa/status/1738961505041711343>, @bbisimwa, 24 December 2023.

³⁵ See <https://twitter.com/MaishaRdc/status/1624397525682716675>, @MaishaRdc, 11 February 2023.

³⁶ See <https://twitter.com/MaishaRdc/status/1624396524636577797/video/1>, @MaishaRdc, 11 February 2023.

'take the airport... of Minembwe so that all these Banyamulenge are in the forest there, so that they do not vote' during the elections which were scheduled in the DRC for 20 December 2023.

The strategy was inspired by the concern that *'if the Bembe, Bafuleru... and Babwari community is not careful, there is a risk to let a Munyamulenge win a position of Member of (national) parliament in this territory ... and it will be a shame for the territory'* of Fizi in the province of South Kivu. *'Because Minembwe alone has 19,400 voters, Bibokoboko has 4,000. The total gives you 23,000 votes'*. According to Undji Yangya, a Munyamulenge may not campaign in villages inhabited by neighbouring ethnic groups and *'cling to the level of Minembwe'* inhabited mainly by the Banyamulenge *'and obtain the 23,000 votes that perhaps most Babembe, Babwari, Banyindu and Fuleru will not get'*. *'It would be a shame because'*, he said, since 1964, at the time of *'Anzuluni Bembe and Mwenemalungu'*, two very influential former politicians in the region, *'no Rwandan has been elected as an MP'*.

It should be noted here, as in many other passages cited in this document, the confusion deliberately maintained by the Congolese anti-Tutsi extremists who blithely refer to Batutsi and Banyamulenge as Banyarwanda or simply as Rwandans.

This executive of a party of the presidential coalition fears, however, that the SADC forces deployed in the DRC may oppose this strategy of South Kivu politicians to use their Wazalendo militias to inflict violence on the Banyamulenge before the elections, and he specifies that this is the main reason for his media apparition: *'that's where the crux of this show lies'*. He therefore believes that *'this is the opportunity to invite the President of the Republic head of state, Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo the first Muzalendo, to include the issue at the level of DRC-SADC cooperation'*.

The height of irony - but this should no longer be surprising coming from an extremist anti-Tutsi Congolese politician - is that, for this executive of a party allied to President Tshisekedi, *'the SADC troops came'* not to *'fight the Bazalendu [sic] or the Congolese Armed Forces, but rather, to support peace efforts, so that peace can return to our country'*. As if the planned attacks of the Wazalendo against the Banyamulenge, attacks that this politician wishes to be free from any interference from SADC troops, were part of these *'peace efforts'* and the *'peace'* which must *'return'* in his *'country'*.³⁷

The transcript of Undji Yangya Philippe's original words in French can be found in the previous footnote.

³⁷ See [@afcongo](https://twitter.com/afcongo/status/1747207138873659558), 16 January 2024. Original words of Undji Yangya

Philippe: 'J'étais à Lusungu, je vais vous surprendre. Si la communauté Bembe, Bafuleru ... et Babwari ne fait pas attention, il y a risque de faire passer un Munyamulenge dans ce territoire comme député. Parce que Minembwe seul a 19400 voix, Bibokoboko a 4000 voix. Le total vous donne 23000 voix. Un Munyamulenge ne viendra pas dans le Mutambala pour faire la campagne. Un Munyamulenge même s'il ne vient pas au Tanganyika pour faire la campagne, à Lulenge ou à Ngadja, il peut se cramponner au niveau de Minembwe et obtenir les 23000 voix que peut-être la plupart des Babembe, des Babwari, des Banyindu et des Fuleru n'auront pas. C'est-à-dire un Munyamulenge qui se concentre au niveau de Minembwe seulement dans sa chambre, et demander tout le monde de le choisir, il peut être ... et ce sera une honte pour le territoire. Ça serait une honte parce que depuis 64 depuis Anzuluni Bembe et Mwenemalungu, aucun Rwandais n'est passé comme député.

Moi je pense, il est important, et c'est pour cette raison que quand on était à Lusungu, on a mis en place une stratégie pour détruire, et pour que d'ici le 20, que nous puissions prendre l'aéroport n'est-ce pas, de Minembwe afin que tous ces Banyamulenge soient dans la forêt là-bas, afin qu'ils ne votent pas. Mais la SADC, et c'est là qu'il y a le nœud, de cette émission. La SADC à qui notre pays est partie, au nom du principe d'égalité des pays de la communauté SADC, la SADC arrive au Congo, commence à frapper les Wazalendo au même titre que l'EAC, au même titre que la Monusco. Moi je pense que c'est l'occasion d'inviter le Président de la République chef de l'état, Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo le premier Muzalendo, d'inscrire la question au niveau de la coopération RDC-SADC. Parce que si les troupes de la SADC sont venues, ce n'était pas pour n'est-ce pas, combattre les Bazalendu ou les Forces Armées Congolaises, mais plutôt, appuyer les efforts de paix, afin que la paix puisse revenir dans notre pays.'

4. The UN and certain African countries have chosen to side militarily with the genocidal regime of President Tshisekedi

The United Nations forces deployed in Congo, known by their French acronym MONUSCO; the armed forces of three SADC member countries (South Africa, Tanzania, Malawi), and the National Forces for the Defence of Burundi are fighting alongside the FARDC and the Mai Mai and Wazalendo militias responsible for atrocities and genocidal violence against the Batutsi of Congo and assimilated populations.

The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations, Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, was visiting the east of the DRC from 2 to 5 February 2024, notably to Goma, Beni and Bukavu where he met provincial authorities, representatives of civil society, civilian and uniformed MONUSCO personnel and the General staff of the SADC Force in the DRC (SAMIDRC). In a press release that he made public on 7 February 2024, he revealed that *'During his meeting with the SAMIDRC force commander, General Dyakopu Monwabisi, Mr. Lacroix stressed the importance of joint coordination to support the FARDC in their fight against armed groups in eastern DRC'*.³⁸

Here the Deputy Secretary General of the UN speaks hypocritically in general terms of *'fight against armed groups'* that are estimated at more than 200 in the east of the DRC, while the only target is in reality the M23 which nevertheless carries among others the demands of discriminated and persecuted communities and advocates for all communities to live together in safety. The other armed groups (Mai Mai, FDLR, Nyatura...) renamed Wazalendo, yet deeply involved in genocidal violence against the Batutsi and other civilian populations, are on the other hand integrated into the Congolese defence system alongside the FARDC and foreign mercenaries, and therefore comrades in arms of MONUSCO and the SAMIDRC.

This fixation on the M23 alone is in any case very clearly expressed by the South African commander of the SAMIDRC, Major General Monwabisi Dyakopu, in his welcoming remarks to the Tanzanian contingent in Goma in January 2024: *'You are there to fight the enemy, the M23. You are not there for city patrols or to get acquainted with Congolese people. We are here to take care of our objective'*.³⁹

A MONUSCO spokesperson was even more explicit on the UN military collaboration with the FARDC, the SAMIDRC, the Burundian forces and the Wazalendo to combat the M23. In an interview with Bernardine Diambu of UN radio in the DRC Okapi, the military spokesperson for the UN mission in Goma, Lieutenant-Colonel Kedagni Mensah said:

³⁸ *Radio Okapi*, 'Jean-Pierre Lacroix appelle le M23 à une cessation immédiate des hostilités dans l'Est de la RDC', 8 February 2024, <https://www.radiookapi.net/2024/02/08/actualite/securite/jean-pierre-lacroix-appelle-le-m23-une-cessation-immEDIATE-des>.

³⁹ *Agence Congolaise de Presse (ACP)*, 'SADC : le contingent tanzanien au Nord-Kivu avec un mandat offensif', 28 janvier 2024, <https://acp.cd/nation/sadc-le-contingent-tanzanien-au-nord-kivu-avec-un-mandat-offensif/>.

... since 29 October 2023, MONUSCO troops deployed as part of Operation Springbok have occupied defensive positions covering all possible avenues of approach for the M23 towards Sake and Goma. They operate in a dense environment involving actors such as the FARDC soldiers, and the Southern African Development Community Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (SAMIDRC), the Burundian forces and the Wazalendo.⁴⁰

The MONUSCO military spokesperson continues by specifying that their '*defensive positions near Kimoka*' had clashes during which '*the M23 suffered significant losses which prevented it from advancing and forced it to withdraw from certain positions*'.⁴¹ As a reminder, Kimoka is the place where the scene in *Video 1.a* above took place, with the severed head of a Tutsi herdsman placed in the middle of a crowd, and a militiaman and a woman asking President Tshisekedi to give weapons and salaries to the APCLS, Nyatura and FDLR militias who control the area. A surreal scene, bringing together on the same front genocidal militias busy beheading civilians, MONUSCO, SAMIDRC and Burundian forces on one side; and the M23 on the other.

As political and security analyst Alex Mvuka rightly pointed out in an interview on BBC in February 2024,

They [M23] could have taken over Goma many months ago. ... They are not after territorial control. They have been talking about ... internal political issues. M23 are fighting ... for their own survival, for their people's survival, for their communities that have been uprooted and asked to leave Congo because 'they are not Congolese enough'. These are Tutsi communities that are found now in refugee camps in Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi. That's what they are talking about, and that kind of issue is not being talked about in the media.

... the answer to your question [of IDP crisis, and refugees] ... is ceasefire and understanding the root causes of the issues. Really if there is a focus on why this violence. In 2013, SADC came and was able to defeat M23. Ten years later, they are coming for the same reason. ... regional mechanisms and international partners should really focus on the underlying causes of the conflict. Why this conflict persists? Why there is kind of more a focus on M23 when there are over 200 armed groups?

There are political issues that stigmatize certain groups of people in eastern Congo, from Ituri area to South Kivu: Bahema people; Tutsi people, in both North and South Kivu. That is the problem.

The main solutions: to address governance issues in the DRC. If those ... communities can be accepted, and that there is not so much ideology of hatred, and political hate speeches, and the armed groups mobilizing around hatred.

Regardless of what the international community can do, without touching on that issue, there will not be peace in Congo.⁴²

⁴⁰ *Radio Okapi*, 'Détérioration de la sécurité sur la RN2 : la MONUSCO renforce ses positions avancées', 18 February 2024, <https://www.radiookapi.net/2024/02/18/actualite/securite/deterioration-de-la-securite-sur-la-rn2-la-monusco-renforce-ses?s=03>.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² See <https://twitter.com/CoulibalyBojana/status/1761593156603134433>, @CoulibalyBojana, 25 February 2024.

It is time for the world to open its eyes to this horrible ignominy: the armies of the United Nations, South Africa, Tanzania, Burundi and Malawi lending a hand to the FARDC and the Wazalendo militias of an openly genocidal Tshisekedi regime determined to gradually exterminate the Batutsi and assimilated populations as shown in the speeches and images above. The armies of the United Nations, South Africa, Tanzania, Burundi and Malawi in coalition with the FARDC, the Wazalendo militias and the European mercenaries of the genocidal Tshisekedi regime to fight the M23, an organization *'fighting for their own survival, for their people's survival, for their communities that have been uprooted and asked to leave Congo because "they are not Congolese enough"*.

World leaders,

You must act. It is time to disband the United Nations for its military support of a genocidal regime and militias, and to criminally prosecute those involved in the decision-making process.

The heads of state of South Africa, Tanzania, Burundi and Malawi must also be prosecuted for complicity in genocide as well as all those who intervened in the respective decision-making. Several current Burundian political leaders are also expected to answer for other acts of genocide in Rwanda in 1994; in Burundi in Bugendana in 1996, in Buta in 1997, in Gatumba in 2004; and in the DRC during the current conflict.

5. Power in Kinshasa is under the influence of a racist and genocidal ideology

President Félix Tshisekedi is a man who knows how to display virtuous words while being deeply hypocritical. He was the first DRC president to declare that *'the Banyamulenge are Congolese'* shortly after taking power. Many people, including myself, naively believed that Congo had finally found a head of state who had the courage to confront the confusion of a very passionate public opinion, a confusion which had become the breeding ground for hatred and exclusion generally maintained by a large part of the Congolese political class and civil society, including opponents like Martin Madidi Fayulu. It was on 19 January 2020 in front of the Congolese diaspora in London, and many remember the insults that a good number of Congolese uttered against their president. The image of a dismayed and crying Congolese woman, shouting in Lingala *'atekisi mboka'* (he has sold the country) made the rounds on social media.

But very quickly, Tshisekedi surrounded himself with politicians and other advisors known for their anti-Tutsi extremism such as the deputies (future ministers) Muhindo Nzangi Butondo and Eve Bazaiba Masudi, or the infamous Justin Bitakwira Bihona-Hayi who is currently a member of parliament. Bitakwira turned out to be a dangerous ideologue of the genocide very listened to by those in power, and we will dwell a little on his public declarations.

Unofficial but influential advisor to President Laurent Désiré Kabila; Minister of Relations with Parliament and Rural Development under President Joseph Kabila, Justin Bitakwira declared in a talk show on *'Bosolo Na Politik'* program on *Bosolo television* in Kinshasa in 2023 that *'a Tutsi'* is *'a born criminal'* before adding: *'I always ask myself the question: isn't their creator the one who created the devil? I've never seen a race as bad as that. ...facing our Tutsi brothers, cruelty comes from the devil.'*⁴³ In a letter to the Congolese Minister of Justice dated 17 July 2023, the Delegate of the European Union, writing in his personal name and on behalf of ten European embassies in the DRC, expressed *'indignation at the comments made by Mr. Justin Bitakwira'* in the broadcast and invited the minister *'to fight against any stigmatization of any Congolese community or ethnic group'*.⁴⁴ The minister responded:

*I am shocked to note that you express yourself as a defender of the Tutsi/Banyamulenge community who would be the victim of a speech, while your condemnations are generally non-existent or even too weak on the killings of thousands of Congolese by the Rwandan army and its auxiliaries of the M23.*⁴⁵

The minister's response shows that her government does not disapprove of Bitakwira and that it does not count the Tutsi/Banyamulenge community among the Congolese.

During the same broadcast on *Bosolo Television*, it becomes clear that Bitakwira is a very influential advisor to President Tshisekedi. He reveals having adhered *'solemnly and officially to the Sacred Union'* [Union Sacrée, the coalition of President Tshisekedi] before adding:

*I am... one of the most... visible allies of President Tshisekedi. I have to tell you. ... what I do with him, I did not do with President Kabila for 18 years or 14 years; I did not do it. Eh, I am also like an advisor to the President of the Republic. When I have to give an opinion, I give it to him, without problem.*⁴⁶

Further in the interview, Bitakwira declares: *'First under Tshisekedi I have no function. But I have consideration. That, I have to tell you. I have consideration'*. *'From the President of the Republic?'* the journalist intervenes. *'Yes yes, I have a lot of consideration'*. *'And his political family too?'* adds the journalist. *'Ah, certainly some may not support me, but still, I am essential in the current phase of the history of our country'*. When asked by the journalist whether Bitakwira is a political problem or a political solution, the person responds: *'I am a political solution. Because there are secrets I hold about the future of this country that no one has ever heard of'*. Further on, Bitakwira becomes more explicit: *'I am part of the*

⁴³ See <https://twitter.com/FelixMugenzi/status/1678714704754008064>, @FelixMugenzi, 11 July 2023; *Bosolo Television*, 'Processus électoral et sécuritaire : le décryptage de Bitakwira', (BOSOLO NA POLITIK OFFICIELLE), 25 juillet 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ztbPXeolKU>.

⁴⁴ Union Européenne, Délégation en République Démocratique du Congo, 'Lettre de Jean-Marc Châtaigner à Mme Rose Mutombo, Ministre d'Etat, Garde des Sceaux, Ministre de la Justice de la RDC', (Kinshasa, le 17 juillet 2023).

⁴⁵ 'Le diplomate européen Châtaigner tombe mal face à Mme Rose Mutombo', *Le Soft International* n°1589 | Lundi 31 juillet 2023.

⁴⁶ *Bosolo Television*, 'Processus électoral et sécuritaire : le décryptage de Bitakwira', (BOSOLO NA POLITIK OFFICIELLE), 25 juillet 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ztbPXeolKU>.

one who fights, so that everyone has the same... understanding of Rwanda's aggression in Congo'. The host of the show thus invokes *'Bitakwira, the wise man of the country; Bitakwira, the voice through which the country's solution can emerge; ... Sage of the Republic'* to know what to do. Bitakwira responds: *'I will speak to the President of the Republic Félix Tshisekedi Tshilombo whom I meet regularly: "President, you must do everything... so that this war... ceases to be a friendly war; it must be a real war."* And to do this, Bitakwira proposes three things: *'Break diplomatic relations with Rwanda'; 'close the borders'; and 'clean our army'*, because *'Kabila...has favoured infiltration; Kabila made the army weak; Kabila gave more strength to the Rwandans to have enough positions in our army', ... 'Or to their accomplices'*.⁴⁷

This advice from Bitakwira, as well as others that we will see below, have so far been followed almost to the letter by the regime of President Tshisekedi. To ensure indisputable influence over President Tshisekedi, Bitakwira resorted to an unstoppable artifice, that of offering him an ideological justification for his usurped power. Here is how Bitakwira explains it in the same interview on *Bosolo Television*:

*Fayulu is a friend, whom I met several times, we talked, I know how he feels about the [electoral] process. And, no one is unaware, that he is in his skin as he is the elected President, and that President Tshisekedi is a President appointed by Kabila. And, in life, in life, you can have a chance, but it is not destiny. But destiny goes beyond luck. I remember when I met President Tshisekedi the first time, it's not a state secret, no. Because I knew him well before he was President of the Republic. I said to him: Excellency Mr. President of the Republic, in life, in life, when someone's destiny rings, they can go through the window, they can go through the door, and they find themselves in the living room. 'It doesn't matter which way', intervenes the journalist. No matter the path, it is the destiny of each of us. And there Fayulu will ..., I hope he will understand me carefully. ... Destiny goes beyond luck. So, I said to the President of the Republic: someone's destiny can go through the window, just as it can go through the door, you have to know what to do with it. As soon as you have it. Know what to do with it. It is essential. The one who asks the question: how did you get here? It's my destiny. Now you have to know how to manage it. That Destiny. So Tshisekedi is... in his destiny. And no one can take that away from him yet. Because God's signature goes beyond all of us. God's thinking goes beyond us...human beings.*⁴⁸

Tshisekedi therefore welcomed Bitakwira's far-fetched reasoning about destiny as a lifeline in the face of his lack of political legitimacy, and he clung to it firmly. And the destiny of the new president, according to his prophet Bitakwira, the man who *'holds secrets about the future of (his) country that no one has ever heard of'*; the man who *'fights, so that everyone has the same... understanding of Rwanda's aggression in Congo'*, this destiny is clear: it is to be the head of state who will lead the systematic extermination of the Batutsi and populations assimilated, and who will wage war on Rwanda. Bitakwira, for his part, is fully

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* See **Annex 1** for the transcript of large extracts from Bitakwira's interview on *Bosolo Television*, 'Processus électoral et sécuritaire : le décryptage de Bitakwira', (BOSOLO NA POLITIK OFFICIELLE), 25 juillet 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ztbPXeoIKU>:

invested in ensuring that *'everyone has the same understanding of Rwanda's aggression in Congo'*, that's to say, a racist understanding of the conflict in eastern DRC, an understanding that is anti-Tutsi and anti-Rwanda.

During another televised event in Kinshasa to promote the book with racist anti-Tutsi content by Charles Onana that we saw above, the same Bitakwira declared *'I saw them coming'* while speaking of the Banyamulenge whom he called *'those Tutsi, therefore, Rwandans'*.⁴⁹ In this event covered by *Le Grand Congo TV*, Bitakwira claims to have seen the Banyamulenge come from Rwanda as refugees around the 1960s, yet this community was established on the soil of what became the DRC from the 16th century.⁵⁰ During the same event, Bitakwira drew the attention of his audience to the *'difference'* between *'us Bantu'* and *'them'* [Banyamulenge] by evoking a cultural detail, before announcing with an air of horrifying prediction, the imminence of a Tutsi threat:

...our misfortune is inattention and naivety. ...and we will not be the first people of a country to be liquidated. Because... the Anglo-Saxons liquidated... the race of red skins, ... the Indians. ...and they took over their country which became the United States of America. ...Perhaps Charles Onana will come and wake us up, to say perhaps we must create a centre for civic training and patriotic awakening. Because if we stay in the same state of mind, there is no Congo in 20 years, there won't be one. This country will disappear. ...So, I would like to say here that this is a golden opportunity, that someone, African, can reveal what is in this book. And as Professor Bilolo said, Kabila had bought dictionaries for the entire population, all the cream. They will also have to buy as many [Bitakwira says this while brandishing Charles Onana's book], for everyone who can read. If it needs to be translated, so much the better: into Swahili, Lingala, into Tshiluba, into Kikongo, I don't know.

Our misfortune is that we are alone against everyone. And if we ourselves do not defend ourselves, we are condemned to disappear.... I start with 1990. ... the Tutsi started the war from Uganda, to attack Rwanda. They recruited all the young Tutsi throughout the world to strengthen the front. And you know, the majority of these Tutsis who went to Uganda came from where? Do you know where they came from? ... of all the middle and high plateaus; of Fizi, Uvira and Fizi [sic]. This is where the greatest reinforcement came, to strengthen the rebellion of Fred Rwigema, - he was the first leader of this rebellion, he died on the front, Kagame was his deputy, and he replaced him, ...-. ... Because these people who call themselves Banyamulenge - that's why the European Union sanctioned me, but it made me very big. Short in stature but big in spirit -. Because I hold – I am one of the few – who holds the secrets of all the misdeeds that these people called Banyamulenge have committed in the east of the country. And I'll tell you how they did it.

... So, they are strengthening, they are going to strengthen the front of the Tutsis coming from Uganda.... But they only ask, they ask only one request: "If we occupy Rwanda, allow us to go and rule the Congo. We occupy Rwanda, you who were here in Uganda, you stay in Rwanda, but we who came from

⁴⁹ *Le Grand Congo TV*, 'Justin Bitakwira dévoile un secret jamais révélé sur la guerre de l'est, Paul Kagame- Joseph Kabila', 8 July 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74U-2AAbHYs>.

⁵⁰ CPL TV, 'Urgent, voici la vérité sur le Banyamulenge ki sont-ils ? D'où viennent-ils ? Prq de show avec eux ?' 25 novembre 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0tpQDOY_v_k; Rutazibwa, 'Discussing the causes', p. 27-28.

Zaire, you allow us to go and rule Zaire.” They are less than 60,000 souls. Less than 60,000. I don't even know if they reach 30,000. And that's how in 1914, 1994, Rwanda will fall. Rwanda falls, these Tutsi therefore, Rwandans, - they speak Kinyarwanda, Ruberwa [a Tutsi Munyamulenge politician, former Vice-president of the DRC] speaks the same language as Kagame, with spelling, the alphabets, everything, everything, everything, everything. [Audience applauds]. So that's how, -Charles says, [typing his left hand on Charles Onana's book] Charles describes how the Anglo-Saxons deployed all their military arsenal in Uganda, in Entebbe, to now reinforce the new Tutsi regime in Rwanda; of Kagame. He describes it. But Onana says, there is a chapter dedicated: ‘Banyamulenge: [Bitakwira pronounces 'colon'] premeditated destruction of the DRC.’ It's in this book here [holding up Onana's book]. Bitakwira repeats again: ‘Banyamulenge, two points, premeditated destruction of the DRC’. It's as if you said: ‘Snake: destruction or premeditated bite... of the chicken’. It is written. And when I say that, they will shout: ‘did you hear what Bitakwira said in the conference? He says that we are the premeditated destruction of the DRC’. Yes, it's Charles Onana who describes it.⁵¹

In the same televised conference, Bitakwira took care to precede this populist awareness of the Tutsi threat with a long introduction where he presents himself as one of the rare - if not the only - connoisseurs of the deep realities of the conflict in the east of Congo. He readily compares himself to great historical figures of the stature of Mao Tse-Tung and Mandela; and reveals in passing to be a very influential advisor to President Tshisekedi whom he has *'the opportunity to meet on several occasions'*. He compares the history of China colonized by Japan to that of Congo and sets the tone of his incitement to hatred by telling the fable of the chicken and the snake to which he alluded above, implying that the latter represents the Mututsi.

...I am not only from the east, but I am from Mulenge. Yeah! My mother was born in Mulenge, and I am less than seven kilometres from this famous village.... But before addressing the question, I will provide a little historical background. I have already had the opportunity to say it a thousand times; I don't know if I have always been heard: it's the history of China. China was colonized by Japan for 109 years. ...And during this century and nine years, the Japanese whipped the Chinese morning, noon and evening. ... I did six months of training, ... for the history of China only. And I have always been convinced that the day we are going to apply the same method of China, the DRC has the vocation of being the China of Africa. ...And so, I know three villagers: Mao Tse-Tung, Mandela and myself. ... In China, they [the churches] have become granaries. And you preach anything, they close your church, because you have to preach the salvation of China. Here is my introduction: let's now go to Congo and Rwanda.

By the way, regarding the war, the occupation and what is happening in Congo, I often tell myself that I don't need paper. Because I was born into this, I experienced this, and I am perhaps the only witness, in Congo, who can testify to the reality of things and why we have reached this point. At the beginning, - I have the opportunity to meet the President of the Republic on several occasions - I said: “the dynamic in which you

⁵¹ *Le Grand Congo TV*, ‘Justin Bitakwira dévoile un secret jamais révélé sur la guerre de l'est, Paul Kagame- Joseph Kabila’, 8 July 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74U-2AAbHYs>.

are, is the dynamic of Mzee Laurent Désiré Kabila". How? It's the legend of the chicken and the snake. I don't know if you learned this legend in elementary school. There is a bush fire. The snake does not know how to escape, because it crawls. But there is the chicken next door. The chicken can fly to escape the fire. ... Now the snake flatters the chicken to say "really, help me to save myself". And the chicken stretches his neck to the snake. The snake [sic; Bitakwira should have mentioned the chicken instead] flies away and crosses the river. And he lands on the ground. He now tells the snake to come down. The snake tells him that "I haven't eaten for three days. It's been three days since I last ate, you're my prey". And the snake crunched the chicken.

Last year, as always, there were meetings of people from the east, at the Beatrice hotel, under the moderation of Dr. Mitteo from the civil house, who spent more than 25 years at our place; he knows everyone, and in the workshops, they put the different tribes side by side. As luck would have it, -I am Mufuliru from Uvira, we constitute 85% of the population of Uvira-, they put us side by side with our Tutsi friends who stole the name of my village and of my mother, and they proclaimed themselves Banyamulenge. Now they meet us, face to face. The first day I didn't go. The second day people said: "but... your absence was too noticeable". No, I'm going there. Now they put us side by side, that we have to talk face to face. When I enter the room, they all exclaim: "eeh, Bitakwira, OK, it's good that you are here". They ask me the question: "Mr. Bitakwira, you are telling people around the world that you saw us coming? Since when did you see us coming, while we have been there since the 16th century. Were you there in the 16th century?" I tell them: "I regret to tell you that my eyes have never been operated on. The same eyes that saw you coming are on my face." [The audience laughs and applauds]. Because I saw them coming. They carried what they call; they call it bisambagara. The bisambagara is that we Bantus carry our baskets on our backs. They carry it on their heads. Do you understand the difference?⁵²

In the last part of his presentation for which we reproduce extracts below, Bitakwira affirms that Laurent Désiré Kabila took the head of the AFDL, - the rebellion which overthrew President Mobutu – 'not knowing what's in the package'. He alleges that 'those Tutsi there' whom he describes as 'criminals' 'came in 96 believing that they are going to exterminate everyone', and that 'The objective of Rwanda and the Anglo-Saxons' was 'the dismantling of the Democratic Republic of Congo', a thesis he shares with Charles Onana whom he cites. Bitakwira also announces that he will encourage the President of the Republic to promulgate the law integrating those he calls 'young resistance fighters' [essentially Mai Mai who later became Wazalendo] into the army as reservists, comparing in passing these Mai Mai to the armed wing of the ANC [African National Congress] whose fighters he presents as 'Mai Mai of South Africa'.

Bitakwira considers as 'our naivety' and 'our inattention' the fact that an officer 'of the same race' [to say Tutsi], had just been appointed in Bukavu as head of operations, believing that generally that appointing Tutsi officers 'in the east and in the most strategic places' is equivalent to 'handing over a country to an enemy.' He denounces what he considers to be the complicity of the Bashi of South Kivu in the occupation of this part by Rwanda and promises that if he becomes 'president of the republic', his

⁵²Ibid.

'biggest decision' would be to drive out the army all those who took part in rebellions, particularly targeting those assimilated to the Batutsi such as the RCD whose former members he readily compares to lepers whose contagion we must guard against.

Now, in 96. It was in... October 96. At my place; there is a village near my place called... Kakagabwe. This is where the first bullet went from. From the Banyamulenge revolt. It later evolved into AFDL. Mzee came wearing a jacket that was not his size. Not knowing what's in the package. And that's how it became AFDL. Leader: Mzee Laurent Désiré Kabila. ...Now Mzee takes the wrapper. Without knowing the content. So, I swear to you and I tell you that this is my fight. Whatever the European Union or other, that: "We sanction you". By believing: "As we sanctioned him, he will shut up". Nooo! Do you know that Mandela was declared a terrorist by these same White people? Me, only sanctions. "Ooh, we're going to freeze your assets". Do I have any first? [Audience laughter].

These people, these Tutsi, that you see, as the Professor says, they came in 96 believing that they were going to exterminate everyone. ... I say: exterminate everyone. They could allow themselves to take all the keys to your hotel; they wrote on the hotel: "irafashwe", that is to say: "it is seized". And they leave with the keys for Kigali. They will spend two months there. Your hotel is closed. As for the killings, let's not talk about them. And when they say: "well, we must sanction Bitakwira". It's because they want to erase our memories. That people no longer remember what they did wrong: bury women alive, crush children in mortars; they allowed themselves all these acts. So, when you want to talk, they say, "No. He needs to shut up. It reminds us of the evil of what concerns us". And since they are indeed sponsored by White people, they believe that it is "the superior race".

I know an old man of mine who had given his cows to be looked after. Because they were our shepherds! These people were our shepherds. He had them look after the cows, when the AFDL came, or the Banyamulenge revolt came, they came to collect all the cows and took them to Rwanda. 'Thieves,' someone in the audience interjected. 'Pardon ?' asks Bitakwira who apparently had not heard correctly. 'Thieves,' the person in the audience repeated. 'Criminals,' Bitakwira added energetically.

So, as long as we remain naive, as long as we remain inattentive, we are handing over this country to the enemy. I inform you, that through our naivety, through our inattention, not a month ago, an officer, of the same race, who participated in the Kasika massacres, ..., he has just been appointed to Bukavu, in charge of operations. Not a month ago. Because we condemned Kabila, Kabila exaggerated, because Kabila appointed more than 24 generals from a community which has less than 60,000 inhabitants. 24. I have around 1,500,000 inhabitants, if not two million. I don't even have a single general. So, our shepherds of yesterday became our officers. Yes, 24 generals, not counting the colonels. And no one should be appointed to the west or the centre. All must be appointed in the east. And in the most strategic places. Is there anything better than that in handing over a country to an enemy? Is there anything better than that? No. ...

So, internal complicity. I'm going to reveal a secret here. You know that the division, from 11 to 26 provinces, I will tell you a secret: only Grand Kivu has three provinces. ... All other large spaces have four to ... five provinces. Because Grand Kivu should also have four provinces. Because it had three districts plus the city of Bukavu: Kindu, Goma, Uvira at my place, and the city of Bukavu. At my place, there has been no granting

of a province, even though the source of all our misfortunes is ... there. Because Bukavu should be central Kivu. South Kivu is in Uvira. But that's where there are all these misfortunes. The people who destroy the country only come from there.

Now what is the game being played? The game that is being played is that, even under the RCD, under AFDL and others, the Rwandans only resort to the Bashi of Bukavu. If there is a Mushi here in the room, he can listen to me. Because when the Rwandans occupy Kivu, in Bukavu, to be governor, you have to be Mushi. Unfortunately, until today it's the same thing. But there was complicity: the Katintima, the Mwendanga, the Bertrand Bisimwa, the Runiga, all. Because the land, the land of central Kivu; Central Kivu is: Bukavu, Walungu, Kabale, Kalehe, Idjwi; the fertile ground of Rwanda is that part. But towards the south, there is resistance: Uvira, Fizi, Mwenga; and it is there now where the Ruberwa, the Ruberwa make kings. One day I explained to the President of the republic: "As long as you do not add a province in Greater Kivu, we will suffer until eternity."

Because Uvira is not Bunagana. If Uvira falls today, Kinshasa falls the next second. But at least Bunagana fell but we held out for a year! Because when the Rwandans occupy Uvira, in Bukavu we do not fight, we do not resist. They do this: [Bitakwira stands up and gestures to let someone pass] 'Boleka na bino, boleka' [go your way, pass]. These are security realities. Because water... we only stop it at the source. We do not block water in progress.

What is the objective of Rwanda and the Anglo-Saxons? Charles Onana says so. It is the disintegration of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Now we find ourselves faced with two realities: a strong poor man, and a weak rich man. Have you ever seen this in life, where the poor is stronger, and the rich is weaker? Even if the Anglo-Saxons support Rwanda, which has less than 12 million inhabitants; we have more than 120 million... And you hear what the Westerners are saying? The Anglo-Saxons? Since we took the initiative, ... to integrate young resistance fighters to become reservists? Did you hear their message? "It's the red line." And yet if we tried to freeze the front today, it's because of these people. But the White people know that if we integrate these young people there, their approach is ruined. Now they say: "It's the red line." As if to organize our army, we have to ask someone for permission. And I hope ... the President of the Republic has declared in Mbuji Mayi that he will not give in to any threats or intimidation. But I will personally tell it to him: "You said that you did not give in to any intimidation. What is happening? Enact the law, right?" [Cheers in the room].

We are the ones who are making it easier for Rwanda to do with us what it has done. It is ourselves. Because if I am president of the republic today, what is the biggest decision I will make? Anyone who has already taken part in the aggression in the Congo can no longer be part of the army. How is he going to be part of the army, and that he attacked his country? How will he stay in the army? You know, we have general inspectors of the army who were at the RCD in Kisangani, in Goma, in Bukavu. They are the inspectors. It's like you put a leper in front of you and you start touching him even though it's contagious. Leprosy is contagious, right?

And calling out to a musician who is in the audience, Bitakwira says to him: ... "we must sing about the leprosy there. Because I can even make compositions for you, so that we can liberate the country". [Cheers in the room]. Then, he adds: Musicians have a big role to play for our liberation. I was a personal

friend of Myriam Makeba. I met her in Guinea Conakry. And this lady explained to me - you know that what Rwanda is doing against us is not even 1/10th of what the Whites did in South Africa? It's not 1/10th-. But Myriam Makeba told me - because she spoke Swahili perfectly. She went into exile in Tanzania-. She told me: "Kijana, muziki wangu umekomboa Afrika ya Kusini." "My music liberated South Africa." Because she was a woman who could put on a concert, with a million participants. And everyone paid. She sent 70% of her revenue to the Mai Mai of South Africa, Osizwe Umkhonto [sic]. The spear of the fatherland. They were Mai Mai in South Africa. They waged armed struggle to oppose... apartheid.⁵³

Justin Bitakwira is therefore an ideologue of the genocide unfortunately very listened to by the authorities in Kinshasa. Using the mirror accusation procedure usual for ideologues of his type, he imputes to the Congolese Batutsi the desire to '*exterminate everyone*' (the other Congolese), while they are precisely fighting to have their right to life recognized, and their nationality constantly threatened since the early 1960s. While these particular demands of the Congolese Batutsi are part of the broader demands for better governance through rebel politico-military organizations which generally include Congolese from all walks of life, Bitakwira strives to cast suspicion on these organizations that he presents as carriers of Tutsi expansionism with an apparent but perfidious openness to others (*snake and chicken tale; Mzee Kabila takes the packaging without knowing its contents*). He thus accuses the other Congolese who join them of '*internal complicity*', '*inattention*' and '*naivety*', attributing to these organizations evil aims such as '*the disintegration of the DRC*'.

These racist elucubrations with genocidal aims are already destructive for the DRC; but the authorities in Kinshasa want to make it a matter for the entire African continent.

6. Anti-Tutsi racism in DRC: the fantasy of the Hima-Tutsi empire and the call for Bantu solidarity draw heavily on genocidal propaganda of the Habyarimana regime in Rwanda and threaten all of Africa

The first manifestations of anti-Tutsi racism in Congo appeared in 1962 but especially in 1963 with the "Kanyarwanda war", triggered mainly by politicians from the so-called indigenous tribes fearing losing elections due to the vastly greater number of Banyarwanda voters (Bahutu, Batutsi and Batwa) of North Kivu.⁵⁴ The Banyarwanda in this area were divided into three categories at that time: the indigenous Banyarwanda people of the territories of Rutshuru, Nyiragongo and Masisi who were on their ancestral lands at the creation of the current DRC; those from immigration organized by the Belgian colonial administration from Rwanda to the DRC between 1937 and 1955 for labour in colonial mines and plantations; and the mainly Tutsi refugees (but also some Hutu and Twa) having fled the first genocidal

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p.6-7.

massacres against the Tutsi and political persecution in Rwanda between 1959 and 1964.⁵⁵ This last category of Tutsi refugees almost entirely left the DRC to resettle in Rwanda after the liberation of the country by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) in 1994. To the first category of indigenous Banyarwanda of North Kivu can be assimilated the Banyamulenge (mainly Tutsi) of South Kivu and North Katanga with regard to the status of autochthony. After the seizure of power by Colonel Joseph Désiré Mobutu (who would later be called Mobutu Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa Za Banga) in 1965, the Batutsi in Congo experienced a real lull until the beginning of the 1980s which coincided with the rise of the racist fundamentalism of MAGRIVI (Mutuelle des agriculteurs des Virunga / Mutual of Virunga Farmers), an organization of extremist Congolese Bahutu created at the initiative of the Rwandan regime of Habyarimana to destabilize the Batutsi of Congo. A comparable organization, *Abanyarwanda-Abahutu* Association had been created in Uganda by the same Habyarimana regime, with similar objectives, as well as a number of Hutu students associations in some universities abroad.⁵⁶

A leaflet in French distributed at the University of Kinshasa in 1981 threatened to kill Tutsi students as well as Tutsi families residing in the vicinity of the university hill, accusing the Batutsi of Congo (then Zaire) of '*demanding the autonomy of certain entities of Zairian soil*' while overwhelming them with odious insults.

...this group of impostors and usurpers of nationality is even demanding autonomy on the national territory, of certain entities on Zairian soil. These include the zones of Masisi, Rutshuru, Goma, Idjwi, Kalehe, and part of the zones of Uvira, Fizi and Mwenga, all in the Kivu region, which are nevertheless integral parts of our country, but today, demanded by this Tutsi people; people vomited by theirs, we mean the Hutus of Rwanda, this following satanic, racist behaviour noticed among these hated by all. ... We issue a cry of alarm to any authentic Zairian and worthy of this nationality, to rally with us to fight against these Nyenzi, these very venomous snakes that are the Tutsi of Rwanda, immigrants in Zaire. A people without scruples, without manners, drinkers of blood, hated by everyone and everywhere.

Let all the Tutsi on this hill know from now on that they are sentenced to death on probation. We will hit even the families of these impostors, from the plateau to Righini, passing through the clinics... These vomits from everyone and everywhere occupy our places, high responsibilities in our governmental circuit to take root more. These hated who want to encroach the geography of our country.

... In conclusion, we decide and demand the following: 1° That all Rwandans recognize themselves as foreigners in Zaire by benefiting from the same advantages conferred by such a status within the framework of international cooperation in the same way as the Congolese, Angolans, Belgians, French ... 2° That all

⁵⁵ Aloys Tegera, *Les Banyarwanda du Nord-Kivu (RDC) au XX^{ème} siècle. Analyse historique et socio-politique d'un groupe transfrontalier (1885-2006)*, (Université de Paris 1 Panthéon – Sorbonne, thèse de doctorat en histoire [histoire de l'Afrique], juin 2009).

⁵⁶ Antoine Mugesera, *Imibereho y'Abatutsi mu Rwanda 1959-1990. Itotezwa n'iyicwa bihoraho*, (2ème édition, Kigali, 2015).

*Zairian students cultivate and maintain an implacable hatred towards all those who do not conform to the present nationalist political religion.*⁵⁷

In 1995, a parliamentary committee in Kinshasa openly accused the Batutsi of wanting to create 'a Hamite empire'.

*Creating pockets of Tutsi expansion throughout the region of the Great Lakes countries..., the Tutsi of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and all the other Tutsi who live in Zaire, Kenya and Tanzania project into a near future, the birth of a Hamite empire which, for reasons of camouflage, would be called the Republic of the Volcanoes or the United States of Central Africa if their federalist union effectively links Dar-es-salam to Matadi. ...*⁵⁸

In 1996, the Prime Minister of what was still called Zaire under Mobutu regime, Léon Kengo wa Dondo insinuated in an official speech that the Batutsi wanted to 'redefine the boundaries' and create 'states with a mono-ethnic component' before adding: 'It is indeed more and more clear today that they are seeking to create a glacis stretching from the Ruzizi plain in South Kivu to the southern borders of Sudan via the forests of Maniema, North Kivu, the lands of Bunia, Watsa, Isiro, in Haut-Zaire'.⁵⁹ His Minister of Foreign Affairs Gérard Kamanda wa Kamanda later spoke of 'Hima empire' which 'seeks to take shape from the edges of Kenya encompassing Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda and part of the Tanzanian Kagera and Zaire. The Tutsis would end up there and the Hutus would be dumped into neighbouring countries'.⁶⁰ The Ministry of Information of the same government was to release a book in January 1997 with the collaboration of Kabuya Lumuna Sando, denouncing 'the racist and hegemonistic ideology of the Tutsis who want to reign over all the Bantus around the Great Lakes'.⁶¹

After the outbreak of the RCD rebellion in 1998 against his regime, the president of the DRC Laurent Désiré Kabila explained it this way: 'Territorial expansion is another motivation. The Hima-Tutsi empire needs territories; Congolese lands.'⁶²

Justin Bitakwira, the former minister of Joseph Kabila and current MP under Tshisekedi regime also declared last year that it was 'a waste of money, time and energy' for the DRC to engage in the Nairobi

⁵⁷ 'Vive la nation zaïroise'. See excerpts in Privat Rutazibwa, *Les crises des Grands Lacs et la question Tutsi. Réflexions sur l'idéologie du génocide dans la sous-région* (Editions du CRID, Kigali, 1999), 177-8.

⁵⁸ Rapport Vangu, 1995 (<https://congovirtuel.com/information/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Rapport-Vangu-3108-III.pdf>), p. 159.

⁵⁹ Mr. Léon Kengo wa Dondo, Premier Ministre du Zaïre, 'allocution au 19ème sommet des chefs d'Etat et de gouvernement de France et d'Afrique', (Ouagadougou du 04 au 05 décembre 1996). As quoted by Privat Rutazibwa, *Les crises des Grands Lacs et la question Tutsi. Réflexions sur l'idéologie du génocide dans la sous-région* (Editions du Crid, Kigali, 1999), pp. 52-53 ; Mr. Gérard Kamanda wa Kamanda, Ministre des Affaires étrangères du Zaïre, interview au journal *Africa International*, n° 300, décembre 1996/janvier 1997.

⁶⁰ Mr Gérard Kamanda wa Kamanda, Ministre des Affaires étrangères du Zaïre, interview au journal *Africa International*, n°300, décembre 1996/janvier 1997. As quoted by Rutazibwa, *Les crises des Grands Lacs*, p. 53.

⁶¹ République du Zaïre, Ministère de l'Information et de la Presse, *Conflits de l'Est du Zaïre* (publication présentée par Kabuya Lumuna Sando, Editions Secco, Kinshasa, Janvier 1997).

⁶² See https://twitter.com/Mbaya_junior3/status/1759221555417043253, @Mbaya_junior3, 18 February 2024.

process with countries like Rwanda, Uganda and Kenya which he accused of creating the 'Hima empire', claiming that the conflict in eastern DRC is 'a war between the Nilotics and the Bantus'.

This war; this war; of the aggression of the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is a war between the Nilotics and the Bantus. Between the Nilotics and the Bantus. ... we only have four countries minimum, or maximum, or even three: Angola, Burundi now, as there is a Hutu at the head; and Tanzania. And Zambia, Zambia too, is Bantu. The rest, Rwanda: go; Uganda: leash; Kenya: yaan! You don't even look at Ruto's face.... Are you looking at the face? We know all the tribes of Kenya: the Kalanjin [sic], the... there are many. And we know those who are Nilotic and those who are Bantu. It's an empire... that they created. Hima Empire, power, Tutsi-power. And you will throw yourself into their arms. You run away from the rain into the ocean. You are fleeing the rain into the ocean!

...if it was Zimbabwe, South Africa, Zambia, I don't know...Botswana. "If it were even Chad," intervenes the journalist. Chad no. He's a Peul. He's a Peul. Because West Africa also has its Nilotics. Macky Sall is a Nilotic. Sankara was Nilotic. Blaise Compaore is Nilotic, Idriss Debi is Nilotic; They also have their own ways of living there.

So, now, we are not aware that with Bill Clinton, Bill Clinton wanted to transform the Great Lakes sub-region like in the Middle East. The same way the Israeli treats the Palestinians is what they are doing here in Congo. In the meantime, we too still resort to the same people to come to our aid.⁶³

Bitakwira developed, during the same interview, this alleged role of Bill Clinton and the Anglo-Saxons in the use of Rwanda, which according to him has no real agency in the conflict in the east of the DRC.

It is not really Rwanda that is aggressing us. Rwanda, it's like eeh ! how can I say, it's like a dog. That they actually climb the tree. And it starts screaming right up, up in the tree. You have to ask yourself the question: who climbed this dog up in a tree, when a dog doesn't climb up in a tree? It's been since Bill Clinton. Bill Clinton got the dog, put it up in the tree, and it beat slowly, and we just stared.

So, I'm telling you, Bill Clinton... rode a dog up a tree. And, when you read the book by Charles Onana my brother, on... the dismantling of the Democratic Republic of Congo from 1994.... And see the deployment... of the army and military officers and American intelligence that they deployed in Entebbe who were now coming to reinforce Kagame's army. And the millions and millions they gave him. This is how Bill Clinton scolded Jacques Chirac, over his Turquoise operation. They stifled this Turquoise operation to encourage Kagame to dismantle the Democratic Republic of Congo, and take care of all its wealth.

I say well...Dismantle. So, for Clinton, Kagame's mission is for this country to become a non-state; a non-state. And they used accomplices. You will read in the same book, - because people tell me, the European Union tells me: "Oh, me; it's you who...who sows hatred". No, no, no. It's not hatred. I hold the truth....⁶⁴

⁶³ *Bosolo Television*, 'Processus électoral et sécuritaire : le décryptage de Bitakwira', (BOSOLO NA POLITIK OFFICIELLE), 25 juillet 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ztbPXeolKU>.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

It was in February 1991 that the concept of the *'Hima-Tutsi kingdom'* appeared for the first time in a propaganda pamphlet distributed by the Habyarimana regime then at war against the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) rebellion launched on 1 October 1990 from Uganda and that took Kigali on 4 July 1994 after stopping the genocide against the Tutsi perpetrated by the regime and its successor of Théodore Sindikubwabo. The pamphlet was the work of an organization which presented itself as being made up of certain members of the Rwandan parliament, and it was signed by Dr Léon Mugesera, a senior member of the MRND party then in power who was extradited from Canada in 2012 and sentenced to life in prison by a Rwandan court in 2016 for incitement to genocide and inciting ethnic hatred following his writings in the pamphlet but also, his speech of 22 November 1992 in Kabaya where he encouraged his Bahutu congeners to kill the Batutsi and throw them into a tributary of the River Nile to send them back to Ethiopia where they are supposed to have come from because, *'at [their] home it was in Ethiopia but we were going to find them a shortcut, namely the Nyabarongo river'*.⁶⁵ In the pamphlet, Mugesera accused the RPF of wanting *'to establish in the Bantu zone of the Great Lakes region (Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire, Tanzania, Uganda) a vast Hima-Tutsi kingdom, an ethnic group that considers itself superior, like the Aryan race and which has Hitler's swastika as its symbol'*.⁶⁶

This pamphlet was widely distributed. At that time, I was studying at the Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa, an institution attended by students coming from all the Catholic dioceses of Zaire at the time, but also from several African countries and even outside the continent, and I remember having received a copy of Mugesera's pamphlet from a fellow student who had received it from a Rwandan student on a scholarship from the archdiocese of Kabgayi in Rwanda when it was still led by Mgr André Perraudin, a Swiss national, a White Father missionary who played a pivotal role in the anti-Tutsi genocidal violence of the late 1950s to early 1960s in Rwanda. The Rwandan student was in close contact with the First Secretary of the Rwandan embassy in Kinshasa who provided him with propaganda material for the Habyarimana regime with the mission of disseminating it widely, as I was able to see with this pamphlet.

The theory of the Hima-Tutsi empire was invented by the Habyarimana regime to discredit the link between the new president of Uganda, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, and the RPF rebellion which was mainly formed in its beginnings by the descendants of Rwandan Tutsi refugees from the 1960s. The latter had massively joined Museveni's NRM (National Resistance Movement) from 1982 following the terrible persecutions of the Ugandan regime of Milton Obote, when more than 80,000 people among them were expelled to the Rwanda of Habyarimana who then refused to welcome them. French historian and

⁶⁵ Association des Femmes Parlementaires pour la Défense des Droits de la Mère et de l'Enfant en collaboration avec Dr. Mugesera Léon, *'Toute la Vérité sur la Guerre d'Octobre 1990 au Rwanda'* (Kigali, février 1991).

⁶⁶ *Ibid.* For Mugesera's speech [transcript of a French translation from Kinyarwanda], see André Guichaoua, *'Les antécédents politiques de la crise rwandaise de 1994. Rapport d'expertise rédigé à la demande du Tribunal Pénal International des Nations Unies sur le Rwanda'* (Document II, Annexe 11, Arusha/Tanzanie, avril 1997).

Africanist Jean Pierre Chrétien explains how those who invented the theory of the Hima-Tutsi empire relate it to the personality of President Museveni:

President Museveni, who came to power in 1986, is, through his father, a Hima from Ankole, more precisely from a small Hima clan in the region known as Mpororo, which was a former small kingdom shared between Nkore and Rwanda. Even if Museveni's ideology is essentially nationalist, with for a long time, a strong Marxist and anti-imperialist connotation (the orientation of the activists of the "front line" against apartheid in Dar-es-Salaam), and even if his essential supports in the guerrilla war (between 1981 and 1986) were the Bantu-speaking populations of southern Uganda, the supporters of the military (Amin Dada tradition) and of Milton Obote being rather established among the Nilotic-speaking populations of the north, the adversaries of Museveni nevertheless exploited his family origin (his mother would also be of "Rwandan" origin) to make him a "Hima-Tutsi".⁶⁷

In December 1991, the infamous *Kangura* newspaper published an article evoking 'the great Hamite empire...modelled on the Aryan myth' that 'the Tutsi ethnic group wants to establish in Central Africa'. The same newspaper in its *Kangura Magazine - Version Internationale* launched in 1992 spoke of the alliance between President Buyoya of Burundi, Museveni of Uganda and the RPF for 'the constitution of a Hima-Tutsi kingdom of Central Africa' and raised awareness so 'That the Bantu peoples in general and the Hutu in particular become aware of the imminence of their humiliation by the Hima-Tutsi and do everything in their power and knowledge to keep their heads held high'. In its February 1992 issue, the newspaper continued:

BANTU PEOPLES OF THE ENTIRE WORLD UNITE...There is indeed a diabolical plan developed by the Tutsi ethnic group and its relatives and aimed at the systematic extermination of Bantu populations as well as the extension of the Nilotic empire, from North-West Ethiopia and Douala to the tributaries of the Nile and the mouth of Juba, from Gabon to Lesotho via the vast basins of Kongo, the tectonic trenches of Tanzania, the high mountains of Kenya, the Cape coast and the Drakensberg range. This crusade has already made progress in Kivu, in Hima Museveni's Uganda and especially in Burundi....What are these Bantu peoples waiting for to protect themselves against this genocide skilfully and carefully orchestrated by the Hamitics hungry for blood and barbaric conquests and whose leaders compete for the gold medal in cruelty with Emperor Nero of Rome?....⁶⁸

In a broadcast on 3 June 1994 in the midst of the genocide against the Tutsi, the editor-in-chief of RTLM (Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines) tried to justify this crime by explaining that 'Museveni has the plan to establish a reign of the Tutsi, which he called *Himaland*, which would start from Uganda, go

⁶⁷ Jean-Pierre Chrétien, 'Copie d'une note rédigée à l'intention de la Mission d'information sur le Rwanda de l'Assemblée Nationale française' (Le 17 août 1998), <https://francegenocidetutsi.org/ChretienEmpireHima1998.pdf>.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

down to Rwanda and swallow up northern Burundi, and even take the region north of Zaire, called North Kivu'.⁶⁹ The same RTLM will speak of a 'Belgian-American plot' to explain the attack of 6 April 1994 against the plane transporting President Habyarimana, an attack that the extremists took as a pretext to begin the paroxysmal phase of the genocide against the Tutsi even though they were the real perpetrators of the downing of the plane according to subsequent investigations.⁷⁰

Immediately after the end of the genocide against the Tutsi, the deniers continued to justify it by invoking the thesis of the 'Hima-Tutsi empire' allegedly supported by 'international complicity'. In their letter 'Cri de détresse des grands séminaristes rwandais réfugiés' (Cry of distress from the Rwandan refugee major seminarists) of 15 August 1994, they wrote from Goma in the DRC to Pope John Paul II the following:

*The RPF is in the process of carrying out the plan of international complicity, which, as the press suspected, would consist of creating a Hima empire in the centre of Africa; aims which seem to be materializing with the current occupation of Rwanda by populations from Uganda and Burundi, as well as the growing instability among our neighbours in Burundi.*⁷¹

The first political organizations formed in exile and resulting from the genocidal regime such as the RDR (Rassemblement démocratique pour le retour des réfugiés / Rally for Democracy and the Return of Refugees) and their Belgian allies from the Flemish Christian Social Party (CVP) were the first to evoke the 'Anglo-Saxon plot' to explain the civil war that they had just lost in Rwanda and try to justify the genocide against the Tutsi that they had just committed.⁷²

The fantasy of the Hima-Tutsi empire is in reality a form of 'mirror accusation' well known to those who study genocide propaganda. It was attributed to the Batutsi and assimilated populations in reference to the call for Bantu solidarity which was very real in the genocidal propaganda in Rwanda in the 1990s but also earlier in the 1960s. The ninth of the 'ten commandments of the Bahutu' published by the newspaper *Kangura* in 1990 decrees among other things that 'The Bahutu inside and outside Rwanda must constantly seek friends and allies for the Hutu cause, starting with their Bantu brothers'.⁷³ In a message of 'fraternal

⁶⁹ Jean-Pierre Chrétien [en collaboration avec Jean François Dupaquier, Marcel Kabanda et Joseph Ngarambe), *Rwanda : les médias du génocide* (Karthala, Paris, 1995), pp. 172-3. As quoted in Chrétien, 'Copie d'une note rédigée'.

⁷⁰ Cour d'appel de Paris. Tribunal de grande instance de Paris, *Rapport d'expertise. Destruction en vol du Falcon 50, Kigali (Rwanda)*, (Paris, 5 janvier 2012), <https://francegenocidetutsi.org/RapportExpertDestructionFalcon5janvier2012.pdf>; Republic of Rwanda, Independent committee of experts charged with the investigation into the crash on 06/04/1994 of falcon 50 aeroplane, registration number 9XR-NN, *Report of the investigation into the causes and circumstances of and responsibility for the attack of 06/04/1994 against the Falcon 50 Rwandan presidential aeroplane, registration number 9XR-NN*, (known as Mutsinzi report, Kigali, 20 April 2009),

<https://www.minijust.gov.rw/index.php?eID=dumpFile&t=f&f=11256&token=d0630eb88bdcdc1811c83e05151fcd8e4b542765>.

⁷¹ 'Cri de détresse des grands séminaristes rwandais réfugiés' (Goma, 15 août 1994). As quoted by Chrétien, 'Copie d'une note rédigée'.

⁷² Jean-Pierre Chrétien, *Le défi de l'ethnisme. Rwanda et Burundi : 1990-1996* (Karthala, Paris, 1997), pp.307-308. As quoted by Chrétien, 'Copie d'une note rédigée'.

⁷³ *Kangura*, n° 6, décembre 1990.

*congratulations to our congeners in the state of Kongo that will achieve independence on 30 June 1960', leaders of the racist party PARMEHUTU of Rwanda declared in January 1960: 'We urge them to contribute to the lifting of the feudal colonialism which hampers the growth of the Bantu populations of Ruanda-Urundi. The liberation of the populations of Ruanda-Urundi from Tutsi colonialism is a prerequisite for true independence of this region of Africa.'*⁷⁴

This call for Bantu solidarity initiated in Rwanda is just as real in the current genocidal propaganda of Kinshasa as we saw above with Bitakwira talking of *'a war between the Nilotics and the Bantus'*. It was also real in the propaganda of MAGRIVI in Mobutu's Zaire in the 1980s. One of the governing documents of this organization mentions the *'notorious unconsciousness and blissful tranquillity'* of the Bahutu, terms which are unsurprisingly echoed by the *'inattention and Bantu naivety'* that constantly recur in Bitakwira's speech. This document ended with a call for *'cohesion between the Bantu ethnic groups'*.

... the awareness which the Hutu group is currently echoing is a logical but belated result of the notorious unconsciousness and the blissful tranquillity which it has often displayed, ... The confusion created and maintained for its benefit by the Tutsi ethnic group under the term "Rwandan" which unfortunately grouped and still groups any person speaking the Kinyarwanda language living in the Republic of Zaire has led to a total incomprehension of our Zairian compatriots regarding the distinction between Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups. The Muhutu is a muntu of the Bantu race which was colonized by the Tutsi conqueror around the 13th-14th centuries.

... seek cohesion between the Bantu ethnic groups... you are without ignoring that the Tutsi present themselves to other ethnic groups as the Banyarwanda of North Kivu, originating from Masisi for some and from Rutshuru for others and assert everywhere that they are our brothers; hence the name "Rwandan" which continues to humiliate us among our compatriots and compromise our Zairian nationality....The Hutu should remind their Nande and Hunde neighbours of the division that the Tutsi have created among the different ethnic groups of the North Kivu to be able to explain their policy of hegemonism... Compatriots previously informed about the whole situation (history of the Hutu ethnic group, politics of the Tutsi) will thus allow influential politicians to differentiate a Hutu from a Tutsi and will also be useful for stealing from the Tutsi, information relating to their policy towards the ethnic groups of North Kivu and Hutus in particular.... Hutu students will participate in one way or another in the destabilization of Tutsi politics (e.g. sabotage, defaming Tutsis to friends of other ethnic groups, etc.).⁷⁵

This divide of populations following 'ethnic' or 'racial' lines (Hutu-Tutsi; Bantu-Nilotic/Hamite) is gaining momentum and contaminating other African countries under the influence of genocidal

⁷⁴ Prise de position du Mouvement de l'émancipation Hutu, Gitarama (Ruanda), le 30 janvier 1960 ; in Supplément à *Jya mbere* n° 5 du 3 janvier 1960.

⁷⁵ 'Quelques éléments pour la promotion du peuple Hutu du Zaïre', MAGRIVI manifesto distributed clandestinely from the 1980s. Two Catholic priests from the Diocese of Goma, a Tutsi and a Hutu, had written a pastoral reflection to denounce ethnic hatred, analysing in particular this MAGRIVI manifesto which they had annexed to their reflection distributed to their colleagues as well as to Christian communities. See excerpts in Rutazibwa, *Les crises des Grands Lacs*, pp.151-152.

propaganda from Kinshasa. The Republic of Congo, whose capital Brazzaville faces Kinshasa on the other bank of the Congo River, is a striking example. A rental contract for 12,000 hectares for 20 years by a company with Rwandan investment for agricultural purposes has triggered a lively controversy fuelled by racist considerations imported from Kinshasa.⁷⁶ A blogger could thus write in May 2024: *'Kagame is jubilant at the idea of dominating the Bantus once he has taken possession of Kongo lands'*. He thus criticizes the son of the Congolese president, Christel Ngueso, whom he accuses of being a foreigner himself, for *'signing 99-year leases with Nilotic foreigners in place of the Congolese, moreover on their backs'*. The blogger then launches into a tirade where the abject insult disputes primary racism and paranoid imagination:

The Tutsi come from far away before returning to Rwanda then targeting the distant Congolese lands to the west of Eden ex-Zaire...once returned to Rwanda they plotted against their Hutu brothers until the culminating moment of the genocide. Once in power, the territorialist vision of the Tutsis, a minority that has become a political majority in Rwanda, always refers to the fable of the mouse wanting to swallow an elephant. For thirty years since rabid dogs lost without a collar, the Nilotics of the Great Lakes have been biting the hocks of the DRC in the East of this Republic. ...Then the hidden agenda where the indigenous Congolese will be expelled from their own land by the new Rwandan owners, false farmers but real soldiers. ...

After the Tutsi genocide, Kagame felt like the Jewish soul, subject of the holocaust, who like Benjamin Netanyahu exhibits the alibi of the genocide suffered under the Third Reich to justify the offensive of 7 October 2023 that he maliciously pushed Hamas to commit. ... The Exodus of the Rwandan Jew, of the Semito-Nilotic, into Bantu country is legitimate since it is founded in the theology of aberration, namely: "Be what you have never been, and what does not belong to you, take it! What is not yours is yours" says St Paul Kagame in the epistle to the Tutsi. ...We talk loudly about the enemies coming from the Far East of Rwanda to dispossess the Bantu of their land, we must not forget the enemies from within. ... Castor, tomatoes, tea, plantains, oranges, safous from Tutsi farmers will not grow. ... The Congolese land will be the tomb of the Antichrist of the Thousand and One Hills, the man with the elongated head called Paulo.⁷⁷

This text is only a small illustration of more abundant racist literature on social networks, in particular blogs and podcasts on YouTube. The controversy created great agitation within Congolese public opinion, with some demanding the outright cancellation of a series of agreements with Rwanda which were signed in 2021 and 2022. A collective of five NGOs even wrote an open letter to President Denis Sassou Nguesso in May 2022 denouncing an *'unconstitutional'* agreement to grant cultivable land to Rwanda for 25 years, and demanding *'the pure and simple retraction of this agreement which is humiliating and dishonourable for*

⁷⁶ Philippe Randrianarimanana, 'Cessions de terres au Rwanda : y a-t-il une brouille entre Brazzaville et Kinshasa ?' (TV5 Monde, 13 juin 2024).

⁷⁷ Lambert Ékirangadzon, 'Evangile selon St-Paul Kagamé' (21 May 2024), <http://berijc.over-blog.com/2024/05/evangile-selon-st-paul-kagame.html>.

the Republic of Congo' and which according to the authors, should have been validated by *'the consent of the Congolese people called to decide by referendum'*.⁷⁸

To find out more, the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Congo received the Rwandan ambassador to ask for clarifications before being received for approximately 2 and a half hours on 23 May 2024 by the Congolese Prime Minister accompanied by 7 members of the government who made available to the bishops all documents relating to the agreement between Congo and Rwanda. In a press release published the next day, it is said that *'taking into account the documents to which they had access, it appears from the analysis of the bishops'* that *'there was neither transfer, nor sale, nor dispossession of Congolese lands for the benefit of Rwanda'*; that *'the protocols of Agreement are framed by the legislative texts in force in Congo Brazzaville'*, and that *'The Bishops of Congo-Brazzaville urge the People of God and all people of good will not to give in to speculation of all kinds likely to disturb the peace and tranquillity of minds'*.⁷⁹

But the controversy did not fail to continue to swell, with some accusing the bishops of corruption, others vehemently denouncing *'the expansionist and hegemonic aims of Rwanda'*.⁸⁰ This is perhaps the opportunity to mention a Togolese television program which commented on this news in May 2022 when a group of NGOs sent an open letter to the Congolese president on the subject of land "ceded to Rwanda." We will reproduce large extracts from this interview where the view of another African observer brings a breath of rationality and common sense in the face of the hysteria and irrationality of ambient racism.

...I particularly appreciate the approach. ... part... of the territory has been made available... for 25 years for economic exploitation. ...They say it's unconstitutional. This is because they do not even agree on the principle, because for them, the President of the Republic should go through a referendum. This is why I... clarified earlier that it is a question of rental; it is not a question of alienation of part of the territory...

But I appreciate the approach, they are Congolese from Brazzaville, if they do not agree with an approach... in relation to the state, this letter addressed to the president of the republic, for me it is a very good approach. Now it will be a question, if the technicians who signed the agreement have not done everything so that the interests of Congo Brazzaville are preserved, that they make a much more technical proposal showing to the president of the republic that in this agreement it is Congo Brazzaville which loses, in order to be able, if necessary, to get the president to make an amendment. But we must not forget that in the current context, who is buying our land? It's the Westerners, it's the Turks, it's the Chinese. I would not object to taking land from Congo Brazzaville and selling it to Rwanda; I prefer that these lands be sold to Rwanda (rather) than it be sold to foreigners who have absolutely nothing to do with African territory, and that is the reality on the ground today.

...in the approach, apart from this side where I find that we do not even need a referendum to make 12,000 hectares available to a country; -many of our countries have done so, the assembly has often not even

⁷⁸ 'Des ONG congolaises dénoncent un accord de concession de terres au Rwanda' (VOA, 10 mai 2022).

⁷⁹ Abbé Vivien Carol Etouolo, Le Secrétaire Général (Pour la Conférence des évêques du Congo), 'Communiqué de la Conférence des évêques du Congo à l'issue de la session extraordinaire du mardi 21 au vendredi 24 mai 2024' (Brazzaville, le 24 mai 2024).

⁸⁰ 'Accords de cession des terres au Rwanda : le gouvernement congolais a caché la vérité aux évêques' (TLR-TV, 1 juin 2024).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c6VX7af25TA>.

been asked to vote, much less to talk about a referendum-. This is where I said: the demand is exaggerated. But we want the interests, not only of the populations who are in the space, but we must even... question the agreement: what does Congo Brazzaville gain from the agreement?...

When the Rwandans... arrive at the level of Congo Brazzaville, it is not to say we are Africans, we will do everything together. No. They come as an economic operator with a very clear business plan; over the 25 years there is a quantity of money that they want to earn and return home because they will not leave with the land that they have exploited. And they will leave things behind that they cannot lift and then take with them as well. ...

Rwanda is a country that wants to develop. We saw Rwanda put its name on outfits of... "yes, Paris Saint Germain or even Arsenal...", intervenes the journalist. There you go. You have a country that wants to launch itself economically. Clearly. We can blame them whatever we want, but this ambition for Rwanda to develop is extremely clear. ... there is Congo Brazzaville which is next door with more than 12 million hectares of arable land which are not really exploited, because it is less than... 5% of the 12 million hectares existing in Congo Brazzaville which are exploited. ...

And I prefer that it stays in Africa rather than that it goes to another country. And let's not forget that in the area, there is an agreement that was recently signed, the free trade agreement between people and goods. Let us not forget that this zone is part of the CFTA [Continental Free Trade Area] zone in general; I put myself in this perspective. That is to say, if we must develop Africa, we must do it first with the Africans. If we don't have the skills, if we don't have the means, at this moment we could possibly look elsewhere. While often, the means are there, the skills are there, but it is the gaze that is not turned towards Africa....

Rwanda did not go to Congo Brazzaville to do traditional agriculture. It's agribusiness that they're going to do. But in this, for me this is what is important. When they do, people will learn just by seeing it... For me, just that, it's a way of saying to the Congolese: but you have a gold mine in front of you, you refuse to bend down to pick up gold. But it can already have an impact on mentalities so that the rest of the 12 million, other Congolese, get up to exploit it. And it is Africa that wins....

... everyone knows Rwanda's tendency today to develop on all levels. If the same trend, if the same technicality, I was going to say even if the same political will does not exist at the level of Congo Brazza, but Rwanda will come and create it.... And that's why our countries must agree to have this modesty, to take from the other country what I don't have. If we do, but we only further develop our own countries. ... it is not up to Rwanda to come and develop Congo Brazzaville, it is up to Congo Brazzaville to assume its own development. Whether in partnership with Rwanda or by taking Rwanda's expertise, that poses no problem to me....

If Rwanda succeeds in this experiment in Congo Brazzaville, but the door is open for Rwanda in other countries, and even for more space inside Congo Brazzaville, and other countries will not even wait Rwanda; They will certainly take advantage of Rwanda's experience to do the same thing themselves. And if we resolve, for example, this problem of Africa's dependence from a food point of view, everyone agrees that we

*have all the land we need. ...not to mention that it is in direct line with the CFTA that we signed which should allow Africans to trade more with each other instead of trading with others.*⁸¹

This analysis of a media outlet from another African country gives hope that the continent will perhaps victoriously resist the racist drift towards which the power in Kinshasa and its acolytes want to lead it.

7. An anti-Tutsi racism that makes the conflict with Rwanda intractable, denies the existence of Congolese Batutsi, and vows to their extermination

Justin Bitakwira, the ideologue of the Tshisekedi regime and its predecessors wants the conflict between the DRC and Rwanda to be exactly like that between Israel and Palestine. In his interview with *Bosolo TV* that we mentioned above, he said:

*I told you last time that in Israel there are also Arabs. OK? They are in parliament, in Israel. The Knusset [sic]. But Israel cannot take its Arab officers and appoint them to the border with Palestine. Impossible! Impossible. Oh, the military region; oh, the defensive zone; oh, what what. Arabs, from Israel. Your lie! Those Arabs, those officers will turn on you.*⁸²

To achieve this objective, the Kinshasa regime relies on a double strategy: preventing the presence of Tutsi soldiers in the eastern part of the DRC initially, then completely eliminating the Batutsi from the army and security services afterwards; and replace these Batutsi with Mai Mai and other Wazalendo. Bitakwira accuses former president Joseph Kabila precisely of not having applied this strategy and consequently, 'of having entrusted the entire army to the enemy'.

I... gave you an example last time, on the mistakes of President Kabila. I told you about it. It was a tactic. To promote the enemy. And entrust the whole army to him. When in your house, you know among us the Bantu -those who have lived in town don't know it - among us the Bantu, each man, in his hut, has a spear. You can't sleep without a lance. When an animal comes to attack you, pa pa! Now: an enemy takes away the army of a country from you. It is he who becomes the real commander. All the strategic positions are him. You gave to the enemy during the day, not at night. Are you Congolese? ...

I tell you that, all the Mai Mai generals, who are facing Rwanda, eh? He brought them all here in exile. And they are still here. The... Padiri, the Nakabaka, the Safari. They are numerous. ... He sent the Nilotics there, the Tutsis there. ... Twenty-four generals, if I'm not mistaken in the number. ... "And the Mai Mai were sent into exile," asks the journalist. ...they were recalled here. Without functions. And they are still

⁸¹ 'Congo Brazzaville : Un accord de concession de terres au profit du Rwanda passe mal' (*New World TV*, 11 May 2022).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3RKYvKZlik>.

⁸² 'Processus électoral et sécuritaire : le décryptage de Bitakwira' (*Bosolo Television*, [BOSOLO NA POLITIK OFFICIELLE], 25 juillet 20230). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ztbPXeolKU>.

*there, without functions. Are you going to fight against the Rwandans without the Mai Mai army? ... It's that Rwanda will even enter in two hours.*⁸³

Bitakwira then pleads for 'general states of the army' in order to make sure that 'anyone who has already joined a rebellion' 'does not set foot in the east' and to 'give him a deadline to leave our army'.

... anyone who has already taken up arms against the Democratic Republic of Congo I tolerate a little, that he is still part of our army, but that he does not set foot in the east. Let him not be one of the soldiers in the east, one of the commanders in the east, anyone who has already made the rebellion.

*... I believe we need the general states of the army. ... We have to do the autopsy. Anyone who has taken up arms against the Republic, against the country, not only must he no longer be in the east of the country, but we must give him time to leave our army. And we need a civic form for each soldier. How are you going to have anti-homeland officers? They have already killed, they have enriched themselves in the rebellion, and you treat them as heroes. They start to... drive around in the best jeeps... in the capital.*⁸⁴

Tshisekedi's ideologue finally finds that it is not enough to have made Wazalendo reservists. They must be an integral part of the national army, the FARDC, and be on the front line, because according to him, they face Rwanda more effectively.

I followed Top Congo this morning. That the resistants, they occupied five villages. Resistants. They do not say our army; they say resistants. Wazalendo. They recovered five villages.... Why not integrate these Bazalendo into our army? ... That they automatically become FARDC. Who forbade us to integrate them? We made them reservists, yes. Reservists, in case the army is strong on the ground to hunt the enemy. This is where we keep the reservists. But if those who can recover five villages, we continue to call them resistance fighters, Wazalendo, instead of automatically being FARDC?

*...there is a pure race of these people, whom Rwanda fears. Rwanda only fears these young people. ... Why it never occupied the east? It's because of it. What is happening in Minembwe over there, in Minembwe, at the Ruberwas' place. With the Makanika and the others. It is not the FARDC who are defending themselves. It is the resistance fighters who are defending themselves. Otherwise, the Tutsis there would have already exterminated everyone.*⁸⁵

This last passage sheds light on the ultimate objective of this conflict that the Tshisekedi regime would like to be intractable. He mentions Minembwe in the territory of Fizi in South Kivu, a region which has no border with Rwanda and where the presence of the army of this country is not reported. There are Banyamulenge self-defense groups including Twirwaneho [Let's defend ourselves] led by Makanika, a

⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

former FARDC officer who deserted to organize the self-defense of his community whose members were constantly killed and their livestock pillaged by Mai Mai - today called Wazalendo - often supported by the FARDC since the resurgence of violence in 2017. Using a mirror accusation tactic specific to genocidaires, Bitakwira speaks of the Tutsi Banyamulenge of Minembwe who *'would have already exterminated everyone'*.

However, in this region precisely, we saw above an executive from a party in President Tshisekedi's coalition revealing that a *'meeting in Lusungu'* in which he had taken part had planned *'to destroy'* the villages of the Tutsi Banyamulenge and *'take the airport... of Minembwe so that all these Banyamulenge are in the forest there, so that they do not vote'* during the elections which were planned for December 2023. A congolese NGO involved in genocide prevention released a report in December 2022 indicating that government soldiers (FARDC) of the 12th Brigade in collaboration with Mai Mai militia Biloze Bishambuke had burned down three villages of Tutsi Banyamulenge in Minembwe.⁸⁶ A collective of civil party lawyers led by the Belgian Bernard Maingain revealed in March 2023 that it had filed in September 2021 a *'complaint of several hundred pages concerning the abuses committed against the Banyamulenge'* which had not yet been investigated by the General Prosecutor of Bukavu in South Kivu. The lawyers were also outraged by *'the extreme violence against the Tutsi, Banyamulenge and Hema, especially in Goma where demonstrations provoked by hatemongers turn into pogroms without the slightest intervention by the police and the army to protect the victims'*.⁸⁷ In a public debate with Bitakwira on *Kibenge TV* in January 2024, Mr Moïse Nyarugabo spoke of more than 400 Banyamulenge villages burned; 400,000 heads of cattle pillaged and several Banyamulenge Tutsi killed, these atrocities being the work of more than a hundred Mai Mai militias groups with the complicity – sometimes even direct action – of the Congolese national army, the FARDC.⁸⁸ A recent research paper confirmed these figures, adding that 1500 Tutsi Banyamulenge had been killed from 2017 to mid 2020 according to a June 2020 local NGOs report; 131 schools and 35 health facilities destroyed in areas inhabited by the Banyamulenge.⁸⁹

The conflict in the east of the DRC therefore aims at the extermination of the Batutsi (and assimilated populations according to colonial ethnology such as the Bahema of Ituri) before becoming a conflict with Rwanda. But the power of Kinshasa needs justifications, and for this it resorts to false and negationist narratives to cover its genocidal project. Blaming Rwanda constitutes the first and most important of these justifications which is broken down into the following two negationist narratives: *'Rwanda's will, since it was led by the RPF-Inkotanyi (Rwanda Patriotic Front/Inkotanyi) in 1994, to loot*

⁸⁶ Programme multisectoriel de vulgarisation et sensibilisation (PMVS), 'Les Tutsis Congolais /Banyamulenges victimes d'injustices sociales. Rapport détaillé expliquant un probable génocide en RDC' (Décembre 2022).

⁸⁷ 'Communiqué de presse du Collectif des avocats en charge de la défense des parties civiles Banyamulenge du Sud-Kivu, Tutsi du Nord-Kivu et Hema en Ituri' (6 février 2023, signé par Me Jean-Paul Shaka, Me Amadeo Kamota, et Me Bernard Maingain, avocats respectivement aux barreaux de New York ; Sud-Kivu/Bukavu ; et Bruxelles et Cour pénale internationale).

⁸⁸ 'Dialogue inter congolais, JUSTIN BITAKWIRA Vs MOÏSE NYARUGABO (dossier MINEMBWE)' (*Kibenge TV*, 3 January 2024). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tAS1GZcsni8>.

⁸⁹ Delphin Ntanyoma, 'The Banyamulenge in the African Great Lakes Region. Between the Rock and Hard Place?' (Visiting Researcher, University of Leeds/United Kingdom, 2024).

minerals and other wealth from the Congo'; and *'expansionist tendencies of Rwandans in general and Tutsi in particular'* to create *'the Hima-Tutsi empire'*, *'balkanize the Congo'* or *'annex Congolese territories'*.⁹⁰ Academics joined this negationist operation of whitewashing or apologizing for racist and genocidal anti-Tutsi ideology in the DRC by formulating the following theories whose inconsistency and dangerousness we have demonstrated elsewhere: *'Rwandan irredentism' (myth of 'Greater Rwanda')* and *resources 'plundering'*; *'land disputes'*; *'political activism by Rwandan Tutsi refugees'* under Mobutu regime, and *'violence by Tutsi rebel leaders'*.⁹¹

The fundamental cause of the conflict in the DRC is its disastrous governance exacerbated by genocidal anti-Tutsi racism. General Laurent Nkunda, initiator of the CNDP (National Congress for the Defense of the People) had found the appropriate image to reflect this reality. He often compared the DRC to a vast hospital whose residents, namely the entire Congolese population, suffered from bad governance, with the Rwandan-speaking populations - especially the Batutsi - being in intensive care!⁹² The CNDP was unfortunately dismantled and Nkunda arrested on 22 January 2009 by Rwanda - where he is still detained to this day - in the wake of the joint operation *Umoja Wetu* of the Rwandan and Congolese armies against the Rwandan genocidal forces FDLR in the east of the DRC, at the invitation of President Joseph Kabila. Perhaps it is time for Rwanda to release this Congolese general whom it sacrificed to make peace with the DRC - a sacrifice that successive Congolese authorities have made useless - so that he can join his comrades in their liberation struggle.

If Rwanda sometimes invites itself - or is sometimes invited by the Congolese government - into the conflict in the DRC, it is to defend its security. And it does not deny it or apologize for it, as President Paul Kagame often repeats. Western media and activists - including United Nations experts - often claim that Rwanda denies its involvement in the DRC to give themselves reasons to constantly accuse it. However, Rwanda and especially its President have never denied it. If President Kagame's responses to Western journalists on this issue are generally enigmatic, it is his way of exposing their hypocrisy which ignores the complexity of the context of the conflict to reduce it to a simple question of the Rwandan military presence in the DRC.⁹³

If the motivations for Rwandan involvement in the DRC had been predatory or expansionist, this country would have kept a continuous military presence there since its first intervention in 1996. After the fall of the Mobutu regime in May 1997 by the AFDL, Rwanda quickly decided to withdraw its troops from the DRC while warning its regional partners to replace it in the supervision of the new Congolese army. There was a climate of hatred and hostility against the Rwandan forces maintained by President Laurent

⁹⁰ For a detailed analysis, see Rutazibwa, 'Discussing the causes'.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* In this article, we analyse especially scholars David Newbury, Gillian Mathys, Stanislas Bucyalimwe Mararo, René Lemarchand, Isidore Ndaywel è Nziem, and Jason K. Stearns.

⁹² Privat Rutazibwa, 'Paix et sécurité dans la région des Grands Lacs : le défi ignoré' (*Dialogue*, Mai 2013). The organization Institut Panos Paris had published an abridged version of this text in a collective work devoted to Rwanda, Burundi and the DRC, entitled *Le Cahier des Médias pour la Paix*, Juillet 2013).

⁹³ See, among others, the interview 'Paul Kagame, président du Rwanda : « Nous sommes prêts à nous battre si nécessaire avec la RD Congo »' (*France 24*, 20 June 2024). <https://youtu.be/bgQHMrM0jis?si=oY1SXIFuHvvN6uHB>.

Désiré Kabila himself who nevertheless begged Rwanda at the time to allow him to keep James Kabarebe as his army general chief of staff with a reduced strength of 199 Rwandan soldiers.⁹⁴ The Lusaka Agreement of 10 July 1999 provided for the disengagement and withdrawal of belligerent forces by 15 kilometres; Rwanda unilaterally offered to withdraw 200 kilometres. After the signing of the Pretoria Agreement on 30 July 2002, the withdrawal from Congolese territory of Rwandan troops that had been supporting the RCD rebellion started on 17 September 2002 and ended on 5 October 2002, well before the three-month deadline stipulated in the agreement.⁹⁵ After the joint military operation *Umoja wetu* against the FDLR from 20 January to 25 February 2009, Rwandan troops immediately withdrew from Congolese territory.

It is therefore not because of the Mai Mai that Rwanda has not maintained a continuous military presence in the east of the DRC as Justin Bitakwira claims, but rather through a deliberate political choice to give peace a chance. In a debate in 2012 on the M23 rebellion with Congolese intellectuals grouped in a Rotary club, I mentioned a kind of '*unlimited irresponsibility insurance*' which successive Congolese leaders seem to enjoy in the eyes of their public opinion as well as the international community.⁹⁶ Their criminal responsibility continues to benefit from this unlimited irresponsibility insurance today. And since the numerous armed interventions in the DRC followed by withdrawal have not succeeded in giving Rwanda definitive peace in the face of the recurring threat from the FDLR supported by the Congolese state which seems determined to make the conflict intractable, the Rwandan authorities should seize the African Union (AU) to reflect seriously on an ultimate solution for a definitive peace for Rwanda and the populations concerned on the other side of the current border where massacres and persecutions of a genocidal nature already take place on a recurring basis.

Blaming Rwanda also allows the power in Kinshasa to delegitimize the M23 rebellion and its predecessors by identifying them only with the Batutsi whom it presents as Rwandans, therefore foreigners, thus making their demands illegitimate. And this constitutes the second justification in Kinshasa's negationist narrative intended to mask its genocidal project against the Batutsi and assimilated populations. Bitakwira presents the Banyamulenge as Rwandan Tutsi '*refugees*' that '*the UNHCR poured into our country... from 1959*'. Referring to two well-known Banyamulenge politicians in Kinshasa, he asserts that they are Rwandans simply because they speak the same language as Paul Kagame, the President of Rwanda: '*Ruberwa speaks the same language as Kagame, Nyarugabo speaks the same language as Kagame, all of them speak the same language as Kagame*'. During the same television interview, this ideologue of President Tshisekedi concedes that the Banyamulenge and other indigenous

⁹⁴ Commission Nationale pour l'Unité et la Réconciliation (CNUR), (Sous la direction de Déo Byanafashe & Paul Rutayisire), *Histoire du Rwanda. Des origines à la fin du xx^e siècle* (Kigali, 2016).

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ 'M-23 : débat citoyen entre un Congolais et un Rwandais sur le conflit en RDC' (Présentation de P. Rutazibwa, *ARI-RNA*, 01 août 2012).

Batutsi of North Kivu are Congolese, but out of favour according to him, before overwhelming them for their participation in various rebellions which he curiously attributes to the only Batutsi:

How can a people go to war four times? In a country that welcomed him? He is not from this country, but we welcomed him, we accepted him. And we started to accept that no, he is also Congolese. But it is they who always wage war: AFDL, it is them; RCD is them; CNDP is them; M23 is them. Always them.⁹⁷

Another Congolese, Louis Gahereri, recently made a media appearance in which he echoed Bitakwira's logic. Presented as 'Prince of Rugari' (in Rutshuru Territory in North Kivu Province) and 'Hutu Notable', he claims that the territory of Rutshuru is the land of Bahutu alone and that the Batutsi were welcomed there, and he adds that its language is 'Kihutu' and not Kinyarwanda, taking care to remind that 'Hutu and Kihutu... are totally Bantu' and that 'the Tutsi are Nilotics'.

In Rwanda it is said that there were kingdoms. This is Rwanda, led by Tutsis who came to replace the Hutu kings who were there, with their ubwenge. "That's to say?" asks the journalist. ... Ubwenge is a kind of malignancy. "Ruse," the journalist completes. Ruse to seek to... "harm others", adds the journalist. So! This is what they used to push aside all the Hutu Bami [kings], and they took power.

But I will inform you, I who am from Rugari. I told you about Rulenga, who is our great-grandfather. It was he who gave the priests the land to build the Church of Rugari, the parish of Rugari. Rulenga we were the ones who ruled. We are the ones who have reigned in Rugari for centuries and centuries. How can we explain that in Rugari there was not a Tutsi king? How? To say that they are claiming, right? We are from the Congo and our territory, our spaces, all our localities and all our groupings, these are groupings inhabited by Hutus with Hutu leaders. We have nothing to do, nothing to do with Rwanda. ...

I am Hutu, I remain so, all my life. I have Kihutu, I talk it all my life. Kihutu exists even before borders are drawn. ...The Hutu and the Kihutu, all are totally Bantu. The Tutsi are Nilotics. I believe that it is they who will be able to tell humanity; they will be able to tell humanity where their language is. Since they speak Kihutu. Where did they put their language? Because as I told you, Kihutu has existed since, even before the country was divided. We migrated to Chad-Niger, speaking our language. It's everyone like that. We didn't come to learn Kihutu here. ...Whoever says that we must ban the concept of Hutu, Tutsi, what does he want us to call them? And that's the problem. There are people who are talking about Kinyarwanda. What do I, a Congolese, have to do with Kinyarwanda? Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Kiha, Kifumbira, these are Hutu languages. There, they called them that way. But we here, it is the Kihutu.

Kihutu is my language, here in Congo I speak Kihutu. We must rather ask... the Nilotics who have arrived, even those who are in Rwanda and Burundi, where has their language gone? ...Why did they

⁹⁷ 'Processus électoral et sécuritaire : le décryptage de Bitakwira' (Bosolo Television, [BOSOLO NA POLITIK OFFICIELLE], 25 juillet 20230). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ztbPXeolKU>.

*abandon their language? It's a way of integrating with ubwenge. ... I am a prince at home, my land is in Rugari. ...I am Hutu from Rutshuru. ...We welcomed the Tutsis at our place.*⁹⁸

The archives of the White Fathers (also called Missionaries of Africa) give a scathing denial to Gahereri's fantasies. The document we cite dates from 1928 and it was written by Monsignor Léon Classe, Apostolic Vicar of Rwanda. He specifies that Bwisha, to which the current territory of Rutshuru roughly corresponds, was indeed a province of the kingdom of Rwanda and he even mentions the name of Rulenga, the great-grandfather of Gahereri!

Rwanda has, in the last twenty years, lost three of its northern provinces:

1) Bgisha (or Bwisha on maps) in the N.W. [Northwest] sister province of Bugoyi;

2) Bufumbira to the N. [North] of Mulera (Rwaza mission);

3) almost all of Ndorwa to the NE [North-East]. Only the south of Ndorwa still remains in the Vicariate of Ruanda.

Bgisha contains 1 mission – Tongres Ste [Sainte] Marie, at Chief Rulenga's, (hence the mission name Rulenga). ...

In all these territories, current Ruanda, Bgisha or Belgian Ruanda, Bufumbira and Ndorwa or English Ruanda, there is only one and only people, the Banyarwanda, one and only language, Runyarwanda. It was the kingdom of Lwabugiri, father of Musinga at the time of his accession.

*In 1901, the chief given to us by Musinga, Lubanza, to lead us to Bugoyi, was the full brother of the chief of Bugoyi; he commanded some hills of Bgisha of the N. Until 1918, Nyundo, Musinga's own brother, was the leader of the English Bufumbira.*⁹⁹

This document therefore reveals to us that Rulenga, the great-grandfather of Gahereri whom the latter claims to have been 'king' of Rugari (and of a line which would have reigned 'for centuries and centuries!') was in reality a chief of some hills of Bgisha - like his colleague Lubanza - dependent on the kingdom of Rwanda; inhabited by Banyarwanda; and speaking the same language, Runyarwanda (or Kinyarwanda).

The name 'Wazalendo' given to the anti-Tutsi militias now integrated into the reserve force of the DRC and which those in power would like to fully integrate into the army is another clear example of the negationist narrative of Kinshasa which poorly hides its rejection of the Tutsi populations whom it doomed to extermination. Mzalendo (singular) / wazalendo (plural) in Kiswahili commonly translates to patriot/patriots. But the word also has a nuance of mzaliwa which translates to native. The Wazalendo are therefore people who consider themselves native as opposed to the Batutsi whom they consider foreign, and their patriotism is nothing other than implacable hatred against the Mututsi. We saw above a Mzalendo declare that *“a good Mututsi is one who is already dead”* and another Wazalendo commander affirm that *“we will lay down our arms when the Mututsi returns to Rwanda”*. For the Wazalendo as for

⁹⁸ 'Louis Gahereri Crève L'Abcès' (CONGO DIGNITY, 18 June 2024). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RrjrZRh9g4>.

⁹⁹ Mgr Classe, 'Territoire du Ruanda : limites – extension (1928)', A.G. Mfr., N° 00220395, in P. Stefaan Minnaert, *Collectio rwandensis. Contribution à l'histoire de l'évangélisation du Rwanda* (Kigali, 2024), pp. 243-244.

their government in Kinshasa, the Batutsi who fight within the M23 (alongside Congolese of other ethnic groups) so that their families can live peacefully on their ancestral lands in Congo are only Rwandans who must return to Rwanda.

Cleansing the DRC of Tutsi populations by expelling them to Rwanda is only one step in the strategy of the ideologues of genocidal anti-Tutsi racism in Kinshasa. For them as for their emulators who were the architects of the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 in Rwanda, the Mututsi deserves no place anywhere in the world; he must disappear. Colonel Théoneste Bagosora, jailed for life by the ICTR in 2008 for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes (before his sentence was reduced to 35 years on appeal in 2011) also believed, just like the ideologues of Kinshasa today, that the Rwandan Tutsi refugees of the 1960s had no legitimacy to fight within the RPF between 1990 and 1994 to return to their homeland, Rwanda. In a 1995 document, he compared the Batutsi to the Jews in these terms:

...the RPF had managed to attract the sympathy of the international community which had let itself be manipulated and abused by its propaganda. The Tutsi, being the masters of lie, have even started the campaign to compare themselves to the Jewish people in order to secure the sympathy of its powerful lobby all over the world. ... The Jews, ...at the second destruction of their city Jerusalem in 70, ...were forced to flee once again their motherland. More or less two thousand years later, they had still the right to go back to their homeland in liberating it from its different invaders, whereas the Tutsi have never had a country of their own to make up a people. There have never been a Tutsi people neither in Rwanda, nor in Burundi, or anywhere else. There have simply been Tutsi who have been naturalized as they progressively arrived in Rwanda as well as in Burundi. ...

...Tutsi are and will remain Nilotic migrants naturalized either as Rwandans, Burundians, Zairians, Ugandans or Tanzanians who should rather favour a policy of peaceful coexistence with the people who welcomed them and moderate their behaviour, proud and arrogant, prone to impose their supremacy in the Great Lakes region.... On the other hand, the Hutu people invaded since the 1st October 1990 and chased away from its country by those Tutsi with the support of their Hima cousin Yoweri Museveni, has the right, in the same way as the Jewish people, to go back to its motherland. And the day will come. It is a matter of time which, in any case, will be shorter than what has been endured by the Jewish people.¹⁰⁰

The management of power by the RPF is fortunately a political management and not an ethnic one as Théoneste Bagosora would have it. Rwanda has once again become a nation for all its citizens without discrimination. This testimony from young Mukiza Willy Maurice during the Umushyikirano National Dialogue in December 2019 is one of the many indications. Mukiza is the son of Major General Ntawunguka Pacifique alias Omega, commander of the FDLR. Ntawunguka alias Omega is well known in both Rwandan and Congolese public opinion because after the capture of Kitshanga by the M23, social media published a telephone conversation of 26 January 2023 between President Tshisekedi and General

¹⁰⁰ Théoneste Bagosora, 'L'assassinat du président Habyarimana, ou l'ultime opération du tutsi pour sa reconquête du pouvoir par la force au Rwanda' (S.d., Yaoundé, 1995).

Mugabo Hassan where the Congolese president urgently requested the telephone of Major General Omega of the FDLR to be able to speak to him directly and presumably, seek his support to counter the M23.¹⁰¹ In his testimony, Mukiza Willy Maurice talks about the normal life his family leads in Rwanda without being threatened or worried because of his father's actions.

I have an older brother and a sister who follows me, we are three children of Major General Ntawunguka Pacifique, who is based in the forests of Congo, in terrorist groups that aim to disrupt the security of Rwanda. ... Even though my father is on the other side in the forests, you have not abandoned us, the country took care of us, it taught us, we do well like all other Rwandans, we are safe, no one asks anything to wrongs us, you took care of us like you take care of all Rwandans. We attended schools, my elder brother even studied at university with government scholarship, after graduating he continued in China, where he is doing his Master's, no document was ever refused to him, no one asked him where he was going; in fact, you understand that we were like all other Rwandans, regardless of the fact that we were children of Ntawunguka Pacifique. ...

My sister is also studying at the University in Ghana, where she is studying Pharmacy; I also graduated from the University of Rwanda, from the College of Science and Technology in the Department of Civil Engineering; I graduated this year; I am now an engineer thanks to the country that gave me security. Regardless of who I am. ...We at home sometimes we talk, and feel it is impossible that we are treated the same as others while our Muzehe [Father] is one of those who do not wish the country to progress....

I want to advise my fellow youths, we have a country that loves us and supports us, so take this opportunity and avoid people who talk to you, who intend to make you hate your country. ... I don't understand how you can throw away this opportunity and connect with those groups; in the morning you are running, when you think of sleeping you are still running, your goal has no consistency, it is only to destroy. I advise you so that we all work together to speed up the development of our country; the Vision 2050 that is being talked about now, we are the ones who must strive for it. ...

I cannot conclude without advising all Rwandans wherever they are in the forests or even outside the country, including my father, to lay down their arms and come back so that together we build the country. Rwanda is safe, there is total peace, and development is rapid. I don't understand how someone can beg you to give you a chance, and you reject it. If it was me who was there [in the Congolese forests], it's me who should ask for this chance. We, as children of Ntawunguka, are ready to serve it [the country], in any way.¹⁰²

Ntawunguka Pacifique however declared one day to General James Kabarebe who was encouraging him to lay down his arms and return to the country: *"I will return to Rwanda when there is no longer a single Tutsi*

¹⁰¹ Babou Bénjamin, 'Tshisekedi yumvikanye asaba numéro ya terefoni ya Gen. Omega wa FDLR ngo bavugane' (*Bwiza*, 28/01/2023). <https://bwiza.com/?Tshisekedi-yumvikanye-asaba-numero-ya-terefoni-ya-Gen-Omega-wa-FDLR-ngo>.

¹⁰² Venuste Twarabanye, 'Mukiza yitandukanyije na se uyoboye FDLR wavuze ko azagaruka mu Rwanda nta Mututsi ukirurimo' (*Igihe*, 19 December 2019). <https://igihe.com/amakuru/u-rwanda/article/mukiza-yitandukanyije-na-se-uyoboye-fdlr-wavuze-ko-azagaruka-mu-rwanda-nta>.

in this country".¹⁰³ His son's testimony can give hope that this genocidal 'Grand Soir' dreamed of by Major General Ntawunguka Pacifique alias Omega will no longer happen in Rwanda.

8. An anti-Tutsi racism which rejects the legitimacy of the politico-military organizations that carry the demands of the Congolese Batutsi

The Tshisekedi regime also constantly resorts to the mirror accusation as we have just seen above in the case of Minembwe, by charging with unspeakable crimes the politico-military organizations carrying the demands of the Batutsi and the Batutsi in general, when they only ask to live from a power and its militias who rather seek their extermination. Still in South Kivu, Bitakwira and a certain Congolese opinion have often mentioned the massacres of Kasika and Makobola attributed to Banyamulenge soldiers during the RCD rebellion against the regime of Laurent Désiré Kabila without explaining the context. Here is how Bitakwira talks about it:

*...the Tutsi exterminated people in Uvira, Fizi, as we have never heard in history. That I tell you. And they know it. And every time we are invited to meetings, they want us to erase our memory, so that we no longer remember anything, but I always tell them: as long as you have not asked for forgiveness, so long that you will not have asked for forgiveness, for the women buried alive in Kasika, Mwenga, Katogota, in Makobola. Do you want us to forget? That you did nothing?*¹⁰⁴

An article published in 2020 allows us to better understand the context of the Kasika and Makobola massacres which became real instruments of propaganda of hatred against the Batutsi. The author of the article, Victor Mutsinzi, is presented by the newspaper as someone *'who has long worked in the vicinity of Laurent Désiré Kabila's Alliance of Congo Liberation Forces (AFDL) and the movements RCD (Congolese Rally for Democracy of Azarias Ruberwa) and MLC (Movement for the Liberation of Congo) of Jean Pierre Bemba'*. Here are excerpts from this article:

In August 1998, the second war broke out in the DRC and the Banyamulenge, the Tutsi of North Kivu and certain Bashi civilians and soldiers were arrested and summarily executed throughout the territory under the control of the armed and security forces, and also the militias, of Kabila father. The commander of the Maniema military region, Moïse Segabiro, as well as other indexed soldiers felt threatened with death and decided to leave Kindu at night towards Bukavu. And after a long journey, the group arrives in Kasika and humbly and friendly asks for accommodation with the Mwami and the parish priest, believing they have crossed the danger zone.

¹⁰³ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ 'Processus électoral et sécuritaire : le décryptage de Bitakwira' (*Bosolo Television*, [BOSOLO NA POLITIK OFFICIELLE], 25 juillet 20230). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ztbPXeolKU>.

But the next morning, when leaving their hosts and after having received assurances from the Mwami that the route to take was very secure, the men of Commander Moïse Segabiro were surprised by an attack by the Mayi-Mayi Nyakiliba mixed with the population in the very center of the village of Kasika; and Moïse, visibly targeted, is shot down in cold blood as well as some of his bodyguards and others are injured.

The few survivors fought back first in self-defense (a right recognized to anyone attacked) and then to recover the bodies of their killed comrades and also the wounded. What followed was a pitched battle in the middle of the village against the Mayi-Mayi using the civilian population as a human shield. Hence the collateral damage to be deplored, and the responsibility lies with the Mayi-Mayi criminals who launched this attack against the innocent passengers.

It must be emphasized that the extremists who politically and hatefully exploit this bloody event have never told the truth regarding the cause and the number of Mayi-Mayi militiamen killed in this fight. They have chosen, as usual, lies and ethnic hatred as their political stock in trade. Also, it is well known to everyone that the number of deaths recorded on all sides (military, civilian and Mayi-Mayi) was 55 people.

In Makobola, it was on the night of 31 December 1998 that the military position of the troops of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) was attacked by around a hundred heavily armed attackers who came in motorized boats on Lake Tanganyika. And here again, the militiamen of the Kabila senior regime used the civilian population as a human shield in their attack. The RCD troops stationed in this position were completely overwhelmed by the firepower of the attackers that it took the intervention of reinforcements from Uvira to change the military situation on the ground. And as one might as well expect, collateral damage among the civilian population is deplored and the responsibility lies above all with the attackers.

But the opportunity was still good for Congolese extremists to make political capital on the blood of innocents. Not only did they hide the truth about the cause of these bloody events from both sides, but also and above all the deaths among the attackers were counted as those of the civilian victims of the massacre to be sold to their Western and political sponsors of the Kinshasa regime at the time.

Another important thing to note. This attack took place during the period of the strategy put in place by the regime of Kabila father and which consisted of “bringing the war back to where it started”. That is to say, attacking and destabilizing the rear bases of the RCD troops. And this strategy was operationalized by the Congolese Consulate General in Kigoma, Tanzania. In other words, these well-equipped and heavily armed attackers were on a mission ordered in the service of this strategy of the regime of Kabila senior.

Note also that all the detailed information on Kasika and Makobola is well known by a large number of Congolese political authorities but who preferred to remain silent after having benefited materially and politically from this second war. We can cite, for example, Alexis Thambwe Mwamba (president of the senate), Lambert Mende (senator), Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi (Leader of the RCD/KML), Norbert Bashengezi Katintima (former governor of South Kivu, vice-president of CENI), Elisée Munembwe (Vice-Prime Minister in charge of Planning), Generals Amis Kumba Tango Four and Jean-Pierre Ondekane.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁵ Victor Mutsinzi, ‘Vérité sur les massacres de Kasika et Makobola qu’on prête aux Rwandais’ (Igihe, 5 octobre 2020). <https://fr.igihe.net/Verite-sur-les-massacres-de-Kasika-et-Makobola-qu-on-prete-aux-Rwandais.html>.

This valuable insight into the context therefore allows us to see that at the origin of these two tragedies lies the same racist and genocidal anti-Tutsi ideology which pushed the militias affiliated with the regime of Laurent Désiré Kabila to attack soldiers considered to be Tutsi.

The Tshisekedi regime and the civil society organizations affiliated with it in anti-Tutsi hatred such as LUCHA and Filimbi or even journalists in its pay also resort to shameless lies in their propaganda, falsely attributing to M23 images of atrocities committed by the ADF in Beni, Boko Haram in Nigeria, or other jihadist groups in Mali and Burkina Faso, or even by the Lendu CODECO militia against the Hema populations in Ituri. But their lie seems to have succeeded, since the international media repeat over and over again that *'the M23 is sowing desolation in the east of the DRC'* and even the United Nations adopts this narrative despite their other reports which attest to the contrary, namely that the M23 is the least violent armed group compared to the FARDC and other militias which roam the east of the DRC.

The Kinshasa regime even goes beyond the borders to evoke the massacre of the Bahutu in Burundi in 1972 by the regime of Colonel Michel Micombero, thus justifying the genocidal hatred against the Congolese Batutsi as revenge against the supposed crime of their fellows in Burundi. Here is how Bitakwira describes this episode:

Burundi in 1972, ... under President Micombero. He exterminated more than 200,000 Hutus. And they were going to pick, ... everyone up at home. ... They were going to take the Hutus, in 1972 in Burundi; they were taking you from your home in front of your wife, in front of your children; you climb into the dumpster; they gather you together in groups of 80, 120; they are going to dig; you are seeing how they dig. And then they unload the dump truck, you all down. Come on, ... they put the sand on top. You're gone. At that time the Tutsis of... Burundi thought that they could exterminate all the Hutus of Burundi, even though they were only 11-12% of the population. The others are around 89-90%. It was with Nkurunziza yesterday that the Burundi liberated themselves against these Nilotics. ... Do you know under what conditions Melchior Ndadaye died? Elected. ... in what conditions did he die? So, facing our Tutsi brothers, cruelty comes from the devil.¹⁰⁶

Just like the episodes of Kasika and Makobola in South Kivu in 1998, that of Burundi in 1972 also deserves clarification of the context. I will do so once again with extracts taken from the studies of a great intellectual authority on the subject.

Professor Joseph Gahama, a renowned Burundian historian, clarifies on the onset that *'What has long been described as "the events of 1972" goes beyond this simple qualification and does not constitute a genocide against the Bahutu as the Burundian Senate declared it in December 2021'*. He adds that it is

¹⁰⁶ 'Processus électoral et sécuritaire : le décryptage de Bitakwira' (Bosolo Television, [BOSOLO NA POLITIK OFFICIELLE], 25 juillet 20230). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ztbPXeolKU>.

'ikiza, a local word designating something bad and unpredictable with extremely, very serious consequences'.¹⁰⁷

According to historian Evariste Ngayimpinda, author of a well-documented study on the Burundian political-ethnic conflict carried out on behalf of the Burundian Human Rights organization *Ligue Burundaise des Droits de l'Homme (LBDH)-Iteka*,

*this tragedy refers on the one hand to the massacres perpetrated by Hutu elements against their Tutsi neighbors between 29 April and the first days of May 1972, massacres repeated in May 1973 in the regions of Nyanza-Lac and Mabanza which will remain subjected to endemic violence until 1974, as well as in those of Kirundo and the extreme south of Kumoso in the current commune of Bukemba. It also refers to the terrible repression which fell almost exclusively on the adult Hutu male population during the months of May and June 1972, as well as in May-June 1973 in the regions where the massacres of the Tutsi had just been repeated.*¹⁰⁸

Professor Gahama explains that '*Insurgents from Tanzania first attacked Nyanza-Lac and Rumonge in the south of the country and then headed in bands of a few hundred towards Bujumbura and the other important cities of the seven out of the eight provinces that then comprised the Burundi*',¹⁰⁹ with only the province of Bubanza being an exception.¹¹⁰ These Bahutu insurgents had received '*long training... in Tanzania where the rebels received lessons to exterminate the Tutsi*'.¹¹¹ The killings were to begin '*on the evening of Saturday 29 April 1972 during parties and balls organized everywhere with the aim of surprising as many Tutsi political authorities as possible, both civil and military*'.¹¹² According to Ngayimpinda,

Festivities had been planned everywhere at the instigation of Hutu personalities, in order to bring together the targets and thus optimize the chances of success of the operation. In Bujumbura a ball was planned at the officers' mess, where the President of the Republic, ministers, senior officials and the military high command were invited. Similar festivals to bring together local authorities were planned in Bururi, Rumonge, Nyanza-Lac, Gisozi, Kibumbu, Makamba, Muramvya, Rutana, Ngozi, Kirundo and elsewhere. ... The question of the time of the start of the massacres, as well as that of the possibility of the kick-off which was to be given on CORDAC radio, remains quite enigmatic. ... President Micombero himself would have only had his

¹⁰⁷ Joseph Gahama, 'La République rwandaise (1961-1994) : un laboratoire de l'idéologie raciale dans l'Afrique des Grands Lacs ?' (Actes du Colloque international Savoirs, sources et ressources sur le génocide perpétré contre les Tutsi du Rwanda/La recherche en acte, Équipe de recherche-Université du Rwanda 2022-2023, édition CIRRE-université du Rwanda 2024).

¹⁰⁸ Evariste Ngayimpinda, *Histoire du conflit politico-ethnique burundais. Les premières marches du calvaire (1960-1973)* [Editions de la Renaissance, Bujumbura, 2003 ? (s.d., but the bibliography includes documents published in December 2002)], p.379.

¹⁰⁹ Joseph Gahama, 'Le Burundi à l'épreuve de la haine ethnique et de l'idéologie du génocide : crises récurrentes et violences contemporaines (1965- 2015)' [Actes du Colloque international Savoirs, sources et ressources sur le génocide perpétré contre les Tutsi du Rwanda/La recherche en acte, Équipe de recherche-Université du Rwanda 2022-2023, édition CIRRE-Université du Rwanda 2024].

¹¹⁰ Ngayimpinda, *Histoire du conflit politico-ethnique*, p. 426.

¹¹¹ Gahama, 'Le Burundi à l'épreuve de la haine ethnique'.

¹¹² *Ibid.*

life saved thanks to the anticipation of the attack, The order for the massacres was to be given after his assassination in the middle of a dance party, to take advantage of the political chaos and the power vacuum thus created. ... the massacres would therefore have been precipitated, ... due to the inevitable complexity of the organization of a plot which clearly covered the entire country, with hordes of barely literate attackers, "in a hurry to put an end to it"

Of all the regions affected by the massacres, it was the province of Bururi which paid the heaviest price for this carnage with around 2000 to 3000 people, almost entirely Tutsi, massacred during the first five days. In the provincial capital, around 40 personalities were brutally killed, some of them including their wives and children. ... For four to five days, the attackers took part of the province; they proclaimed the "People's Republic" in Martyazo, in the current commune of Vugizo, where the green flag with a red stripe flew.¹¹³

The rebels were armed with '*machetes, spears*' and '*a few firearms*'.¹¹⁴ The Minister of Public Works at the time, Marc Ndayiziga was involved in the acquisition and supply of these weapons, as was the Rwandan embassy in Bujumbura.¹¹⁵ The financing of the rebellion was mainly ensured by '*contributions from Hutu elements who were involved in the movement*' and '*contribution lists had been circulating since 1971*'.¹¹⁶ Rich Hutu traders also gave substantial support to the rebellion, such as Hassan of Gitega who allegedly ordered '*no less than six buses for the transport of the rebels*' and '*who had put at least two Mercedes buses of around sixty places each at the disposal of the movement to bring the rebels to Kirundo and Ngozi*'.¹¹⁷

Professor Ngayimpenda also shows that '*The movement was based... on an ideological base conveyed by the People's Party of Burundi*', whose '*genocidal project was explicitly included in the statutes reproduced in the leaflets found on certain rebels*'.¹¹⁸ These leaflets revealed the rebels' genocidal action plan, summarized as follows:

- *Stand as one man, arm yourself with spears, pruning hooks, machetes, arrows and clubs and kill any Tutsi wherever they are.*
- *May all our supporters unite to exterminate every last Tutsi, whether military or civil servant.*
- *Attack Ministers, Governors, Commissioners, ambassadors, advisors, party officials who are only Tutsi. Massacre them with their wives and children, do not hesitate to disembowel pregnant women.*
- *Let us compete in courage, discipline and agility to exterminate every man, every child and every mututsikazi [Tutsi woman] so that history no longer speaks of them.*
- *No imprisonment, no trial for the Tutsi. All, women and children in the grave.*
- *Every activist must gather his brothers and teach them to punish the Mututsi.*

¹¹³ Ngayimpenda, *Histoire du conflit politico-ethnique*, p.417, 427, 428, 429, 430.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 412.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 413-414.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 419.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 418.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 423.

- *Don't be afraid anymore, reassure families, create popular democracy.*
- *If you take a city, you must leave a few fighters there to guard state property, the gains of the revolution, as well as the recruitment of members of the integrated movements of our party. The others must continue the extermination until they meet other massacrers who come from other corners of the country.*
- *Every revolutionary activist must scrupulously follow the instructions of the People's Party of Burundi to be able to celebrate with joy the victory over the feudal lord, the despoiler, the tyrant, the one who subjected us to the chicotte, the thief, the good-for-nothing Tutsi.*¹¹⁹

From the results of the investigation he conducted between 1997 and 2002 across Burundi and abroad for this study of the Iteka League, Ngayimpenda concludes that *'Even if the rebellion of April-May 1972 was brought under control as soon as the second week after its outbreak, it is clear that this was part of a plan to genocide the Tutsi'* and that *'many elements of the Hutu intellectual, political and business elite were involved in this genocidal project, with strong foreign connections, both regional and extra-African'*.¹²⁰ He adds, however, that in terms of victims, *'the repression was incommensurate with the rebellion'* and that it *'reached in places the proportions of a real crime against humanity'*.¹²¹ He further notes that what we can learn from this repression,

*is the almost total absence of legal proceedings. ... In fact, there would have been judgments of which we were unfortunately unable to have a trace and which are in any case presumed to be expeditious. ...But in certain cases, the arrests took legal forms, signed by a substitute or a prosecutor on the basis of lists of contributors to the "accounting of the Hutu solidarity fund" or future leaders. Some of them were quick to admit it: in the province of Ngozi, in the current commune of Gahombo, a teacher from Kivoga, named Jérémie Nyandwi, allegedly said this to the people who came to arrest him: "We ultimately don't know where the gods of Tutsi come from. As long as you managed to arrest me, kill me if you want. No one would have thought that there would be a single Tutsi who would survive."*¹²²

Ngayimpenda, however, insists that

*not all of the people arrested were involved and above all they were not treated in accordance with the law. As long as they did not follow any judgment, almost all of the executions carried out as part of this repression were carried out summarily. The result is that in the eyes of the law and in the eyes of public opinion, almost all of the people swept away by this repression become innocent victims, even if everything suggests that many of them were certainly guilty.*¹²³

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 423-424.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 523-524.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 525.

¹²² *Ibid.*, pp.472-473.

¹²³ *Ibid.* p. 483.

The Kasika and Makobola massacres, like those of 1972 in Burundi mentioned by Bitakwira, therefore participate in the strategy of the mirror accusation not in the sense that these massacres did not really take place, but rather in that of negation of the genocidal character of the context which produced them, namely a plan to exterminate the Batutsi whose implementation was precisely countered by sometimes ferocious repression.

This mirror accusation also concerns the legitimacy of each party to the conflict in the DRC to take up arms. Kinshasa claims a good conscience and a position of victim, supported in this by certain Western powers, and accuses the M23 and Rwanda of being aggressors. But the truth is that it is this regime in Kinshasa which started the last conflict and which does not want it to be resolved. In a recent interview, General Sultani Makenga, head of the armed wing of the M23, revealed that a delegation from his movement had spent 14 months in Kinshasa shortly after Tshisekedi took power, and that an agreement as well as a budget had been agreed between the two parties so that the M23 could, on the one hand, deploy its forces and secure North Kivu and South Kivu in order to allow the repatriation of the mainly Rwandophone Congolese refugees dispersed in neighbouring countries, and on the other hand, deploy an M23 brigade in Mbanza-Ngungu (Central Congo province) to train and constitute a safe security service for President Tshisekedi facing his political ally of circumstance, former President Joseph Kabila who continued to exercise great influence over the army and security services.

After a long wait for the agreed budget that the Tshisekedi regime did not release, the M23 delegation was informed that it could return to North Kivu where the movement had returned since 14 January 2017 from Uganda where it had withdrawn in 2013, and that Kinshasa was going to recall her. A week later, government forces (FARDC) attacked M23 positions and the current conflict resumed. In the same interview, General Makenga, who rarely appears in the media, gives other interesting details on security in areas under M23 control, as well as on the prospects.

It seemed useful to us to translate into English this entire interview conducted in Kinyarwanda in May 2024.¹²⁴ It was obtained thanks to the tenacity of journalist Mutesi Scovia from the private channel *MAMA URWAGASABO TV* who managed to meet the rebel leader in his Rutshuru maquis.

Journalist Mutesi Scovia (*MAMA URWAGASABO TV*):

Sir, I want to ask you, before we maybe talk about life today, what is the main reason you came back after the defeat in 2012? Where did you get the confidence that you will now be able to achieve what you failed to do before?

Major General Sultani Makenga:

Thank you! In 2013, we did not lose the battle. That's what governments say; you defeat people when you take away the reasons they are fighting for. So, there were problems at that time, the United Nations came, SADC and others came, and we had to leave the ground. We found ourselves in Uganda, we found ourselves in Rwanda for some, but we also had an agreement in Nairobi that we signed with the then government of Kinshasa; we agreed on a number

¹²⁴ 'Maj.Gen Sultan MAKENGA ATUGANIRIJE BYINSHI BITUMA M23 IKOMEZA KURWANA NDETSE NA TUMWE MUDUCE BAFITE' (*MAMA URWAGASABO TV*, 24 May 2024). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=run-WSp6ldg>.

of things. Then there was a process to ensure that what we had agreed was implemented; nothing was done, until the government of the day clearly told us that it had no intention of doing anything. We therefore looked at every possible means to ensure that the problem would still be resolved peacefully, but we were unable to do so. This is how we chose to return home. So, we returned home in 2017 in January, the 14th; we decided to return because it was the only way left to solve our problems. That's how we returned home, until today as we talk!

Journalist:

Maybe I should come back and ask you to give a picture of today: like where you are so far; what you do; why you fight, so that those who listen to you can say that "the reason why we fight is this and we are still attached to it" as you mentioned it when saying: "they had not defeated us; there were different reasons, but the cause was not defeated." What does the cause of your struggle look like so far?

Maj Gen Makenga:

There are many reasons why we fight; we fight for our rights, of which we have been deprived by the power in place. ...The battle we are waging today is not of today. It is a war which has a history since 1996. In 1996, there was a revolution, that of the AFDL, which had three objectives. The first was to keep the Interahamwe away from the Rwandan border. They had come from Rwanda after having killed, after having committed genocide. They were here on the Congo border, and they were preparing to go and kill those who were left. That was the first reason. The second reason was to bring back our relatives who were expelled from the country, who became refugees in Rwanda, Uganda and elsewhere, to return to their homes. The third was to get rid of the boring Mobutu regime, which was causing problems, both in the country and in the region. All three reasons, therefore, have not been resolved. Even today! That is why we are still fighting today.

Our relatives have not come home; the Interahamwe that we are talking about, they are still here and it is they who are in charge here; bad governance, when we talk about Mobutu, we mean bad governance, and it is still there. So, as I told you about the 1996 story, there were many different agreements, but they didn't come to fruition. Because of the lack of will of the governments in place, because they are the ones causing problems, even today. But I won't go too far, I just want to tell you the story since the resumption of armed conflict; I will start with the CNDP period, where we reached an agreement with the government that was in place at the time, that of Kabila. We made an agreement, we agreed on a certain number of things, we signed, and we entered the government. We get to the middle; they leave the agreement we made. We defended the agreement by saying that we should go back to what we had agreed and stick to it, until they started imprisoning some, killing others,

Journalist:

Sir, if I don't interrupt you, the agreement which stipulated your integration into the army, what did it require that made you able to accept it?

Maj Gen Makenga:

It's a lot. But what we agreed on was that we were going to deploy [our forces] in North Kivu and South Kivu for more than five years, in order to bring security here at home, so that our relatives can return home, resettle and live in peace. We were then going to do a five-year evaluation, to see what has been achieved to move to the next stage. So, even before these years were over and nothing had been done yet, they wanted to get out of the agreement. This is

what caused the problem, this is where the M23 that you hear about was born. ...So, that's when we took Rutshuru, we took Goma, there was pressure, we withdrew, but we went into negotiations, there were things that we agreed which were not implemented, until it happened that we returned to Uganda. When we returned to Uganda, we came back as you find us here. Here we are again.... Those who are in power today, we have been with them for a long time. In 2012-2013, we were the ones who trained their cadres in Rumangabo. From 2016 to 2018, we were with them; this Tshisekedi, we were with him in the coalition, with other politicians who were in the opposition at that time.

Journalist:

Tshisekedi this president? Or his father?

Maj Gen Makenga:

This one. His father looked sick, but he used this one. Even other politicians in the opposition at that time, we were with them. So, when he came to power, we felt that our problems were solved. We sat and waited for the problems to be resolved because he knows them, we were with him; he never did anything, until we set up our delegation to go to Kinshasa, which will stay there for 14 months.

Journalist:

Regarding this agreement, Patrick Muyaya and President Tshisekedi - Muyaya is the spokesperson of the Congolese government - he himself denies it; he says that it did not exist. If you have gone there, he says that you may have been there for three months but no one knew you had come.

Maj Gen Makenga:

Aah, I think that's how they are, they lie; Tshisekedi is lying and all his people are lying; and they maybe think that everyone is stupid, but we went there officially, and we left there officially. Our presence there was known; we had many meetings; we were even travelling on passes of the Army General Staff; eeh, we also went to see the barracks called Mbanza-Ngungu, we went there; we also went to see the place called ZTM, it's in Mweso, where our forces were supposed to go for re-organization; and what we agreed upon is there and written. Because even the document requesting the budget for what we agreed to be done, is there, it was signed; it was signed by the Minister of Interior who was there at the time, called Kankonde, it is there. So, I don't think there's a way people could deny it.

Well, after the agreement, we agreed that we needed to build operational forces in North Kivu and South Kivu in order to bring security to our home area for our relatives to return from exile. After that, he wanted us to help him face Kabila... the obstacle he had. When we went to see the camp called Mbanza-Ngungu, it was so that we could install our brigade there, mixed with his people, those he calls his own. To ensure now that he is safe, and that Kabila cannot do anything against him. There at ZTM that I spoke to you about, that's where we had to install our forces, ... It's from there that our forces had to go and operate in North Kivu and South Kivu; and that is where the force would leave from which was to go to Kinshasa [for the training in Mbanza-Ngungu] as I told you.

After we had agreed, after we had agreed on the budget, after we had agreed on everything, they told us to bring our lists to see if we are Congolese. You understand that the people who ask us for lists to verify that we are Congolese, we have been with them since 2012, but that day, they told us to bring lists to verify that we are Congolese. We brought the lists. Our lists... we brought them. They realized that they are in the FARDC, that 99% are

in the FARDC and that their salary is debited regularly. Some have even been promoted within the FARDC even though they are not there. The one we have on our lists as a lieutenant, we see that there he is a major.

Journalist:

And you, the fact of discovering that a soldier who is no longer from the State, who is with you, has risen in rank there, what did you think of that?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Eh, no, we were already used to it, it's about the theft of those who... "ah, they wanted to take their money", says the journalist. They never declared that the people were not there, they said that they were there, and the money came out regularly to be eaten by those who were responsible for it. "Aah, ok," says the journalist. We have therefore given the lists; it seems they wanted to see if we are Congolese; I don't know if we recognize a Congolese by his name; I don't know; after that they started to make us wait; we waited forever for the money, until they told us: "go back, we will call you back". Our delegation returned home. After a week they attacked us. This is how the war began; this is how we are at war to this day.

Journalist:

I think it is history, as you started saying, for people to understand the origins of war. I would like to understand Tshisekedi's behaviour, I would say that he was one of you, who was in opposition, and you were going to help him against the one he described as a problem when he took power, that is to say Kabila; to help put things back in order so that your relatives can also be repatriated. So, after they attacked you and he said they were people who didn't seek peace; after these two times when you started to defend yourselves, was there another way to send him a message to ask him: "Since you were telling us that these are people who don't want peace, is it always them who continue to attack us"? Or did you give up after concluding that he was lying to you?

Maj Gen Makenga:

No, even when people fight, there is still a way to communicate. We continued to do so. But we eventually found out he was the one doing it. Because he himself told us that after a thorough follow-up, he discovered that we were Rwandans. This therefore means that it was he who was doing it, and not those around him.

Journalist:

If I talk about the fact that they found that you were Rwandans, I will not deviate from what the regime against which you are fighting, which is that of Tshisekedi, says every day. He says he is actually fighting with Rwanda; sometimes they say that it is a group which includes Congolese and Rwandans and which is supported by Rwanda and Uganda. How do you feel when they say that? That today they say that you are helped by Rwanda and Uganda?

Maj Gen Makenga:

That's what they always say, even the previous government said it, and those who are in power today say it, but they know it's not true. Rwandans are our brothers. No one can get rid of it. But there is Rwanda, there is also Congo. So, every time Congo fails to solve the problems it should solve, it blames others. It blames them on Rwanda; it blames them on Uganda; but especially Rwanda; tomorrow it will blame them on others and still others. Today it talks about Rwanda, it stops a little and talks about Uganda, but I think that tomorrow it will talk about others and others because that's how they are. But they know it's not true. They say it and they know why they say it. The reason they

say this is that they don't want to see anyone who speaks the Rwandan language in Congo, especially the Tutsis. However, you can't change anything, he [Tshisekedi] can't change anything either. The ones you don't want are Congolese. They will stay in Congo, they will not go anywhere. Identifying us with Rwanda, identifying us with Uganda and others with whom he will continue to identify us tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, he will continue to say it, but I don't think he can say it for long, because it is a lie; lies have their time, but the truth also eventually appears.

Journalist:

So, you say that he attributes this to Rwanda, but I also wonder: in reality, depending on your situation, the activities that you carry out, - I saw a place where they are building a dam-, someone could ask this: such an amount of money capable of realizing such expensive infrastructures, where do you find it if you say that Rwanda and Uganda do not help you?

Maj Gen Makenga:

First, the dam you saw is a European Union project that works here. There are things we do, few and small according to the abilities we have; but our support, we first have a cause. It is our first support. Second, it's the people. The people support our fight. Because we fight for the truth; they too know it is the truth. And people have had enough of the Kinshasa regime. They've had enough, they've had enough. In other words, the support we have is ourselves who are affected by the problem; it is the Congolese people in general who support us because they have had enough of the Tshisekedi regime; and because we have a cause.

Journalist:

Are the sponsors of this project foreign?

Maj Gen Makenga:

They are foreigners; it is the European Union. "How does it work with you when you are not the government?" asks the journalist. ...This project was already there when we arrived, it had barely started; but we created an environment that allowed it to continue. We have allowed them to continue, and if they have continued, it is because they know that they have the guarantee of security. And in fact, we give them security, just as we give it to everyone else who is in the area we control.

Journalist:

... Today, the population who lives in this area where you are located, what level of security does it enjoy? Are there any among them who are in danger? Did you put any in camps? Or are they at home where you manage their security?

Maj Gen Makenga:

People in the area we control are very, very safe. So even those in government-controlled areas are leaving and fleeing to where we are. Yes, there are areas still in difficulty, close to the front line, where Tshisekedi sows terror to harm people, kill people, destroy their property, so that they can perhaps flee and go to the camps like the others. Because there were those he took hostage and put them around Kibati in Kanyaruchinya, and others in Saké. He wants everyone to experience this situation. Or that they can flee the country. Because he has no pity, no love for the people.

Journalist:

At this point, one might ask: does a president who wants the people to flee see that the flight of the people will affect you as M23? Or does he not like the people?

Maj Gen Makenga:

He has his reasons and I guess he would be the one to answer them, but what we know about him, he doesn't love his people, he doesn't love his country, he's just there, he's like a mercenary.

Journalist:

Yes, still on this question of lack of patriotism and how Tshisekedi manifests it, ... you made the decision to withdraw in 2012 as you told me. Do you think that you are going to lead this war to the end? Or those forces that pushed you back in 2012, do you still expect that at any time they will come and push you back again? Or are there strategies to deal with it?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Eeh, that was 2013. Now it's 2024. That means things have changed. I don't think they'll see the same thing come true again. We are not attacking anyone; we do not want to attack anyone; what we do is defend ourselves and fight for our people. And we know it, we know 100% that the government in Kinshasa will never want the problems to be resolved peacefully. We too will therefore continue to defend ourselves, to the best of our abilities, and to protect those who are with us.

Journalist:

Here, when we talk about war, I don't forget to ask if in this war there are foreign prisoners who may be here in the country, who came to these fights.

Maj Gen Makenga:

We have foreigners, we have Burundians, we also have the FDLR, so they are foreigners, "they are our people", intervenes the journalist. [The FDLR are Rwandans like the journalist]. General Makenga smiles and continues. We have them too; we have the FARDC, we have others who call themselves Wazalendo. I think they don't even know what Wazalendo means; but the foreigners are these: the Burundians and the Interahamwe. If you need to see them, you will find them, they are there.

Journalist:

Perhaps you will give an image to a Congolese who left these regions during the fighting, and who now learns that you have returned; give a picture so that whoever has the means to visit certain parts can feel what is really in this part that you have and believe in the possibility of getting there, if there are parts where he can go.

Maj Gen Makenga:

The areas we control are Rutshuru, Masisi, and Nyiragongo. These areas are safe. They are secure, anyone can visit them. People are safe; take the time to see them, they are safe. I told you that there are people who are leaving areas under government control and fleeing here to us, and who are settled and are safe. I told you that there are European Union projects underway here; there are many NGOs. If many NGOs are here, it is because there is security.

Journalist:

Sir, allow me to thank you, and to appreciate the time you have given us, and the fact that you have in a certain way given an image to those who follow this struggle day by day, but I will conclude by asking the following question: the other day, the spokesperson for the Congolese government and minister of communications, who was in Goma for the funerals of those who died in the Mugunga camp, - of whom he keeps saying that it was you who bombed it in collaboration with the RDF as they write: M23/RDF-, he declared that from now on peace talks are not on the agenda and that the war will resume. Would you have experienced any special attacks different from usual these days after he said that?

Maj Gen Makenga:

What they are saying is a pretext to shoot the refugees there. It's something they usually do, something they enjoy doing. Even in 2013, they did it. This was done by this little gentleman named Kahongya, who lived in Goma, who was in charge of the Interahamwe. At that time, they did so because MONUSCO had refused to help them in the war. Seeing that they were suffering defeats, they went to MONUSCO and asked why it was not helping them in the fight. MONUSCO told them: "it was you who started the war, while you were in negotiations, we cannot help you". They then intimidated MONUSCO by threatening that they were going to throw stones at it, etc. So MONUSCO told them: "but if there is a single rocket that falls in Goma, we will help you." What they did was that Kahongya and the regional commander who was there at the time, called Bauma, directed the weapons towards Goma and fired at Goma so that MONUSCO would come and help them. It's the same thing they did the other day there.

Every day they attack us because I told you that we do not attack, we defend ourselves; they attacked us, in many different places. But everywhere they faced problems. I think out of anger, maybe they wanted the SADC and others to join the fight, ... so they shot people. But the whole world knows they are the ones who did it.

As for what they said to the effect that the path to peace... "is no longer on the agenda, they are going to war", adds the journalist. The path to peace never even existed because they never wanted it. Since 2022, certain elements of the peace process have been put in place to ensure that issues are resolved peacefully. We stopped the fighting several times; voluntarily left our positions to move back; and we accepted everything we were ordered to do. But the government never wanted. So, he [the minister] didn't say anything new; he said what they usually do, and we too will do what we usually do to defend ourselves and protect the population that we have.

Journalist:

Sir, the word "kwirwanaho" [to defend yourself], if we interpret it in our Kinyarwanda, it is like in the situation where someone wants to attack you, and you push them back. If he didn't attack you, you would stay where you are. I would like you to tell me if my understanding is correct, or if you can help me understand better.

Maj Gen Makenga:

We continue to tell the nations and others, the region, the distant nations, that we need peace. Even to the power in Kinshasa, we say that we need peace. That's why we don't attack anyone. We just protect ourselves. But when they attack us, that's when we defend ourselves. In other words, if they don't attack us, we can't fight.

Journalist:

When you defend yourself, do you stay where you are? Or do you push them further away? Because this self-defence story has been commented on by many people at different times, every time your military and civilian spokespersons talk about it. We could see that they were asking themselves: "if these people defend themselves, they are not fighting." But now you even have the coalition of the one who came to lead you [AFC, Alliance Fleuve Congo of Corneille Nangaa], who says that we are going to overthrow the power. While you, you are defending yourself!

Maj Gen Makenga:

We, we are defending ourselves. But by defending yourself, it means that you get rid of something that makes you continue to defend yourself. In other words, if they attack us, we defend ourselves. So, when we defend ourselves, we get rid of the threat. In other words, this threat which pushes us to always defend ourselves; this threat that always pushes us to stand up and want to fight for the people so that they do not die; this threat which causes our relatives to remain in exile for years and years; this threat which causes our relatives to continually carry bed mats on their heads, without knowing where they will spend the night; this threat which continues to destroy the property of the population, to kill people, we must get rid of it, as part of self-defence.

Journalist:

Sir, how is life in general? Do children study here? Have hospitals resumed their activities, at least on a basic level in your area?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Health services are working; schools are working, the other day they took the state exam. I think it's been a week since they took the exam. They are studying, except in those areas that I mentioned which are close to the front line. And these areas are few in number. But elsewhere, they study without problem. Even in an instant, you will see buses carrying schoolchildren; I think it is time for pupils to go home; you will meet them on their way back from school.

Journalist:

Do they take an exam that is sent out to be corrected by the state? Or is there a way...?

Major General Makenga:

No, it is still sent to Kinshasa. "Aah, ok," replies the journalist. What Kinshasa did was to deprive teachers in the areas where we are of their salaries. But the schools continued because people stood up, children stood up, and teachers in those areas volunteered and continued teaching. When the government saw that it refused to stop, even if it wanted to, it no longer had a choice. It sent people to bring the exams, they were taken, then they were sent back to Kinshasa.

Journalist:

I will end with a quick question; You might be able to answer me without going into too much detail given the time I have just spent with you. Do you think you can overthrow the government using weapons? In the event that they refuse the peaceful path or an agreement aimed at restoring peace in this area?

Maj Gen Makenga:

We will continue to beg, seeking peace, seeking for the problems to be resolved peacefully, until perhaps they are resolved.

Journalist:

Thank you.

Maj Gen Makenga:

*Thank you so much!*¹²⁵

As stated earlier, this interview of Major General Makenga clearly shows that it is Tshisekedi's regime which started the current conflict and which does not want it to be resolved. This reality is further confirmed by Rwandan President Paul Kagame in his inaugural speech of 11 August 2024:

Peace in our region is a priority for Rwanda. Yet, it has been lacking, particularly, in eastern DRC. But peace cannot be delivered by anyone, from anywhere, no matter how powerful, if the party, most directly concerned, does not do what is needed. Without that, the sincere mediation efforts by the mandated regional leaders can not work as intended. ...

For anyone to do what is needed for everybody to have peace and have their rights can't be a matter of favours being dished out to people. It's an obligation. In the end when it doesn't happen, that's why people stand up and fight for it....You can't wake up one day, and decide to deny whoever you want their citizenship right, and expect to get away with it....

*This is a time to reflect, on the kind of world we want our children to live in. As a global community, we have more in common than we think. ... It does not mean that we have to agree on everything. But we must respect each other's choices. All of us. ... There is no longer room for the powerful to impose their vision, about how others ought to live. Or to create narratives that falsify the truth. This must always be resisted. Even when under pressure.*¹²⁶

Speaking of 'narratives that falsify the truth' mentioned by President Kagame, it is surprising and shocking that in a report on 'the resurgence of the M23' released in August 2024, so-called researchers can assert that '*In November 2021, the M23 rebellion resurfaced in North Kivu province, Since then, it has displaced around 1.7 million people, exacerbating the humanitarian crisis. ...it is difficult to imagine any progress towards peace in the country without the dismantling of this rebellion*'.¹²⁷

The report containing these extremely serious assertions against the M23 and which deliberately reverse responsibilities to exonerate the regime of President Tshisekedi is the work of two organizations, Ebuteli and Congo Research Group (CRG). The first is based in DRC (Kinshasa and Goma) and the second at New York University. Both were created on the initiative of a single individual, named Jason K. Stearns, an

¹²⁵ Interview of Major General Sultani Makenga on *MAMA URWAGASABO TV*: 'Maj.Gen Sultan MAKENGA ATUGANIRIJE BYINSHI BITUMA M23 IKOMEZA KURWANA NDETSE NA TUMWE MUDUCE BAFITE' (*MAMA URWAGASABO TV*, 24 May 2024).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=run-WSp6ldg>. See the transcript of the original interview in Kinyarwanda in **Annex 2**.

¹²⁶ *Rwanda TV*, 'Umuhango w'Irahira rya Perezida Kagame Paul' (Tariki 11 Kanama 2024). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yi1_xmD2OuU&t=11s. In his inaugural speech, President Kagame alternated between Kinyarwanda and English. The quote is taken from a sequence in English, the transcript of which we reproduce in **appendix 3**.

¹²⁷ Ebuteli-GEC (Groupe d'Etude sur le Congo), 'La résurgence du M23. Rivalités régionales, politique des donateurs et blocage du processus de paix' (Rapport, 08/2024).

American national. He is one of the academics who I have shown to *'offer scholarly and moral vindication to the racist instigators of violence and their bigoted rhetoric'* in a previous article where I demonstrated that *'There is a surprising and troubling ideological convergence between the writings of these scholars and the propaganda material of extremist anti-Tutsi circles in the Congo and the region'*.¹²⁸

The following section will detail how the actions of this so-called researcher and other partners participate in a certain Western knowledge production on Africa and the Great Lakes region which seeks to consolidate and perpetuate anti-Tutsi racism, genocide and violence, according to a pattern of thought and a constant practice on the part of certain influential Western colonial and neo-colonial actors.

9. Anti-Tutsi racism: when UN experts and Western researchers become its propagandists more zealous than the ideologues of Kinshasa

Jason Stearns is director of Congo Research Group (CRG) and one of two members of Ebuteli's board of directors as revealed on the respective websites of the two organizations.¹²⁹ The latter's report on 'The resurgence of the M23' mentioned previously states that *'local armed groups'* supported by the Congolese government *'and the M23 recruit on ethnic bases'*, which means that *'community tensions have increased and attacks against civilians have multiplied'*. This is another deliberate lie aimed at tarnishing the image of the M23 by creating an equivalence in terms of racism and ethnic discrimination, between this movement and the Mai Mai, FDLR and other Wazalendo armed groups supported by the Congolese government.

Honest observers know that the M23 does not recruit on an ethnic basis but rather is open to all Congolese communities. Like the CNDP from which it emerged as well as the other predecessor politico-military organizations, the M23 is a political movement. If these organizations have always had specific demands for the discriminated Banyarwanda and especially the Batutsi persecuted for who they are, they have never demanded a special status for the members of these communities. They just want them to be treated like other citizens. Members of other Congolese communities who recognize the correctness of the demands of the M23 as of its predecessors and their national aim have easily joined them both in the armed branch and in political structures.

Jason Stearns himself testifies extensively to this reality in his previous writings, which shows his bad faith, his intellectual dishonesty and his criminal intent when we know that the insinuations of the report of the organizations he supervises have the consequence of sowing confusion, and thus preventing world decision-makers from understanding the danger represented by the anti-Tutsi genocidal ideology in the DRC and the region by treacherously reducing it to a simple hostility between ethnic groups, the Batutsi being themselves stakeholders to that. In a report he produced in 2012 titled 'From CNDP to M23. The evolution of an armed movement in eastern Congo', Stearns made public the 'Structure of the CNDP in

¹²⁸ Rutazibwa, 'Discussing the causes'.

¹²⁹ 'CRG. What do we do?', <<https://www.congoresearchgroup.org/en/about-us/>> (20 August 2024); 'Ebuteli. Who we are', <<https://www.ebuteli.org/about/people/jason-stearns>> (20 August 2024).

October 2008' composed of eight commissioners and seven deputy commissioners from different ethnic groups in Congo.¹³⁰ He also published the 'Leadership of the *Synergie nationale pour la paix et la concorde*', precursor of the CNDP, composed of 11 members from Tutsi, Hutu, Shi, Rega and Nande 'ethnic' groups that are dominant in North and South Kivu provinces.¹³¹

In another document entitled 'Laurent Nkunda and the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP)' which he signed as a contribution in a publication dated 2008, Stearns also shows how the regime of Joseph Kabila aided by the former Hutu governor of North Kivu province Eugène Serufuli pushed Hutu officers and soldiers to desert the rebel army (future CNDP armed wing) led by General Laurent Nkunda using ethnic division and anti-Tutsi racism as a strategy.

The logic of elections soon took hold, weakening Nkunda's support amongst the Hutu leaders. Eager to win votes, Serufuli began to switch sides and, under Kinshasa's prompting, coaxed most of Nkunda's top Hutu commanders to desert his troops, including the 81st and 83rd brigade commanders, Colonels Smith Gihanga and David Rugayi. They defected with hundreds of Hutu troops to enter army integration camps in early 2006. ...

The government also pursued its strategy of siphoning off Hutu soldiers from Nkunda's force, isolating the hard core of Tutsi combatants. They deployed two former Nkunda officers, Colonels Rugayi and Smith, now the commanders of two integrated brigades, to areas adjacent to Nkunda's troops in order to encourage Hutus to desert. Governor Serufuli flitted back and forth between Goma and Kinshasa, courting both Nkunda and Kabila, frustrated at having lost the governorship but still trying to angle a high-ranking position. During the first six months of mixage, a further 500 Nkunda soldiers deserted.¹³²

This is further proof that the M23 and its predecessors CNDP and SNCP (*Synergie nationale pour la concorde et la paix* / National Synergy for Concord and Peace) do not recruit on an ethnic basis. And even if the racist strategy of Kabila and Serufuli succeeded in pushing many Bahutu into desertion, other Bahutu remained in command and rank-and-file positions and are still part of the M23 which has continued and continues to recruit in all ethnic groups of the DRC.

Jason K. Stearns and the organizations he leads are therefore attempting to falsely present the M23 as an ethnic organization focused solely on the Tutsi community by attacking other communities, which, according to them, has contributed to the fact that '*community tensions have increased and attacks against civilians have multiplied*'. The strategy of reducing the M23 and the current Rwandan state to the Batutsi alone and attributing to them intentions and acts aimed at harming other communities is one of

¹³⁰ Jason Stearns, 'From CNDP to M23. The evolution of an armed movement in eastern Congo' (Rift Valley Institute / Usalama Project, London/Nairobi, 2012), p. 66.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

¹³² Jason K. Stearns, 'Laurent Nkunda and the National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP)', in *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs. Annuaire 2007-2008* (University of Antwerp / Great Lakes of Africa Centre, 2008), <https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/projects/great-lakes-africa-centre/publications/annuaire/>, pp. 245-267, p. 250-251; 255.

the main characteristics of the anti-Tutsi genocidal ideology, and unfortunately, many other international actors have adopted it, including the United Nations.

In the 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo' of 4 June 2024, United Nations experts affirm that *'M23 and/or RDF continued to attack predominantly Hutu areas, where they systematically abducted, tortured and executed men and destroyed villages, predominantly in FDLR-FOCA and Nyatura-CMC strongholds'*.¹³³ The mention by UN experts of *'predominantly Hutu areas'* is deliberately tendentious, and it is certainly an echo and an attempt to validate the racist propaganda of the Tshisekedi regime, whose Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Francophonie at the time, Christophe Lutundula had accused Rwanda in May 2024 of *'preparing a "sneaky genocide" of the Hutus in the east of the country'* during a meeting with European diplomats in his office in Kinshasa.¹³⁴

Reacting on the X account (former Twitter) of *Politico.cd* online newspaper that had posted its article on the Congolese Minister's declaration, a certain Jeanne Lelo had written: *'WHO SAYS HUTUS, SAYS BANTOUS!!!! SO, WE CONGOLESE ARE ALSO CONCERNED!!!!'*.¹³⁵ This means that the United Nations Group of experts on DRC, and the CRG and Ebuteli organizations led by Stearns - who himself was coordinator of this group of UN experts on DRC in the past - are fully engaged in raising awareness for the confrontation between Bantu and Nilotics, awareness dear to Justin Bitakwira and Charles Onana whom we believed until now to be the most zealous racist ideologues of the Kinshasa regime.

But the ignominy of these Western experts does not stop there. Not content with attributing genocidal intentions to the M23 and the Rwandan state, they also try to completely exonerate the Tshisekedi regime and its main allies, including the Wazalendo, in acts of genocide against the Batutsi and assimilated populations. *'The Wazalendo did not target any particular ethnic group'*, states the UN Group of Experts on DRC in its June 2024 report that hastens to add: *'Conscious of systematic public accusations by M23 and Rwanda of an ongoing genocide against the Tutsi in the DRC, the Group took steps to ensure that potential crimes against the Tutsi population were not overlooked.'*¹³⁶ What was echoed in a visibly synchronized manner by the report from the two organizations of Jason Sterns, Ebuteli and CRG two months later:

Contrary to the narratives put forward by the Rwandan government and the M23, according to which the rebellion appeared in response to the anti-Tutsi violence and the collaboration between the FDLR and the

¹³³ United Nations Security Council, 'Final report of the Group of Experts submitted in accordance with paragraph 6 of resolution 2688 (2023)' (S/2024/432, 4 June 2024), pp. 26; 219.

¹³⁴ Politico.cd, 'Kigali prépare un génocide sournois des Hutus dans l'Est de la RDC, prévient Kinshasa!' (La Rédaction, 11 mai 2024).

¹³⁵ See https://www.facebook.com/politicocd/posts/462005673015373?paipv=0&eav=AfaMQcjsjzuzp-NrA49oyTmFbpymia9gZlM3rVV5s57yp7M5BCMLkD0cvygUoN468mE&_rdr, @ Politico.cd, 11 May 2024.


¹³⁶ United Nations Security Council, 'Final report of the Group of Experts submitted in accordance with paragraph 6 of resolution 2688 (2023)' (S/2024/432, 4 June 2024), pp. 26, 221.

Congolese government, we note that it is rather the rise in power of the M23 which led to the strengthening of these phenomena.¹³⁷

Faced with this display of impertinence and infamy, these questions from Dr. Bojana Coulibaly, Manager of the African languages program at Harvard University, should give pause to anyone with common sense and morality:

A number of unanswered questions remain when looking at how the international community has been managing the DR Congo Conflict:

- Why is the UN so obsessed with M23, if per all UN reports, the M23 is the least responsible actor for the violence and insecurity in DRC?

 *In the newest UN Group of Experts report indeed, **M23** is mentioned on **126 pages**, which is 7 times more than **ADF**, the most violent armed entity as stated by the Group, mentioned on **18 pages**, 9 times more than the next deadliest armed group **CODECO** mentioned on **14 pages**, and 3 times more than the UN sanctioned group **FDLR** mentioned on **40 pages** by the Group.*

- Why is the UN, through its peacekeeping mission @MONUSCO, FIGHTING AGAINST M23, ONE single group out of 266 (per official government survey of armed groups operating in DRC)?

- Why isn't the UN, through MONUSCO, NOT supporting the only movement, M23, having LEGITIMATE POLITICAL DEMANDS, including:

1) the right to live in DR Congo free of ethnic persecution, of stigmatization, of targeted violence, looting, and destruction of property;

2) the right to repatriate 700,000 of their family members uprooted from DRC for 3 decades and living in refugee camps in Rwanda and Uganda;

3) the right of their families to benefit from social and economic public services and a political and military representation.

- Why is the UN refusing to utterly consider that its mismanagement of the conflict today (and for the last 25 years), and DRC's alliance with FDLR — group responsible for the killing of 1 million people in Rwanda in 1994 — is a palpable security threat to Rwanda, whose presence in DRC would then only be justified?¹³⁸

Just as relevant are the answers that the same analyst proposed in another posting two days later, on 23 June 2024:

*An answer seems to have emerged to the question I asked in my previous tweet about the **obsession of the @UN with #M23, cited on 126 pages** of the upcoming Group of Experts report, **or 54 pages more than the deadliest armed groups ADF, CODECO & FDLR combined**:*

¹³⁷ Ebuteli-GEC (Groupe d'Etude sur le Congo), 'La résurgence du M23. Rivalités régionales, politique des donateurs et blocage du processus de paix' (Rapport, 08/2024), p.7.

¹³⁸ See <https://x.com/CoulibalyBojana/status/1804015712664473633>, @CoulibalyBojana, 21 June 2024.

→ The Group uses the Hamitic Myth, the Interahamwe genocide ideology and the double-genocide theory (aimed to deny the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 and its continuation in DRC) as the basis of their argument. This may sound like an extreme statement, but bear with me, I am going to demonstrate:

- In the Annex 71, the Group affirms that "The Wazalendo did not target any particular ethnic group". Yet, in the same Annex the Group pinpoints cases of "public harassment, assassinations and lynchings" of Tutsi-perceived individuals. The analysis made by the Group is either a sign of flawed research methodology, not drawing from the data collected, or the manifestation of genocide denial.

- The Group indeed concludes that the Tutsi aren't targeted by the Wazalendo, yet the Wazalendo's own official spokesperson, @mulumba_jules is a Hutu-extremist who is known for spreading anti-Tutsi hate rhetoric & Hamitic conspiracy theories (the principal cause of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi), as seen in the screenshots of his Tweets enclosed. If the Wazalendo's own spokesperson is an anti-Tutsi hate advocate, we can only imagine how his anti-Tutsi propaganda translates into action on the ground by the Wazalendo criminals and UN sanctioned armed groups combattants.

- The mere attempt of the Group to try to delineate the Wazalendo entity is a fallacy. In addition to the armed groups it comprises (as listed by the Group of Experts), any individual coming forward and saying to Congolese officials "Give me a firearm and a uniform so I can go to North Kivu to 'defend the nation'", meaning "to go kill the Tutsi", as they would actually say it, is integrated. But those they call "Tutsi" are not the M23, but anybody with physical features of "a Tutsi" (as determined via the anthropometric measurements supported by the Hamitic myth or the myth of Origin in the Bible, and which is a 19th century white explorer's scientific racist invention).

- The irrationality of the Group reaches its tragic paroxysm when they try to explain why **"no Tutsi are being targeted in eastern DRC"** by the Wazalendo. They write that it is because all Tutsi have already been either arbitrarily arrested by the DRC government or uprooted by Hutu-ideology armed groups. In other words, **because the Tutsi have already been "ethnically cleansed" from eastern DRC**, there cannot be truth in the targeting of Tutsi by the Wazalendo.

→ Consequently, the Group's research methodology is utterly problematic and seems rather to be an official document of conspiracy theory and of promotion of ethnic cleansing of the Tutsi minority.

→ In Annexe 70 we fall into the mirror propaganda, which consists in turning the perpetrator into victim and victim into perpetrator, the most dominant tool used by the genocidaires, before, during, and after the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. In that Annex, M23 (and RDF) are accused of targeting the "Hutu" minority. As indicated in the Annex, those they call "Hutu targeted victims" are FDLR (former Interahamwe) and Nyatura (Congolese Hutu-extremists).

→ In fact, there is no evidence provided by the Group of any anti-Hutu hate message by M23 or RDF. Their primary and only goal is to neutralize the Hutu-extremists, who have reorganized in DRC after the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi killing 1 million people in Rwanda, and are responsible for 30 years of violence against the Congolese Tutsi, Hema, and Banyamulenge.

→ Indeed, while the Wazalendo and the DRC state working hand in hand with the FDLR have at multiple occasions expressed anti-Tutsi hate ideology, which has translated into acts of violence

targeting the Tutsi minority, the M23 and RDF have never expressed anti-Hutu hate ideology, yet they are accused of "targeting the Hutu" minority.

→ In this occurrence of mirror propaganda, the UN, its peacekeeping mission, and its Group of Experts seem to be its masterminds, and as a result, are complicit with the ethnic cleansing of the Tutsi minority in DRC.¹³⁹

It is striking to see how the United Nations, so-called experts, researchers, human rights activists and journalists from mainstream Western media adopt and amplify the racist and genocidal anti-Tutsi ideology of extremist circles in the DRC, to anesthetize the consciousness and understanding of world decision-makers and international opinion in order to prevent them from opening their eyes to the real and deep cause of the conflict in the east of the DRC and the instability which has been striking for decades the African Great Lakes region. A doctoral thesis in history defended in 2009 at the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne¹⁴⁰ shows how two reports, that of the American NGO International Rescue Committee (IRC) in 2000 and 2001 on 'Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo'¹⁴¹ and that of 2001 and 2002 of the 'Group of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and other Forms of Wealth in the Democratic Republic of Congo'¹⁴² created by the UN in 2000 'under pressure from French diplomacy' had the impact to 'reduce the weight' or even to try to delegitimize

the Rwandan argument which justified its presence in the DRC by the sole fact of pursuing the Interahamwe and the ex-FAR, authors of the Rwandan genocide of 1994. For many observers, it was difficult to justify in the name of the Rwandan genocide another human tragedy, the death toll of which was extrapolated into millions.¹⁴³

The 2001 IRC report 'estimates that 2.5 million excess deaths have occurred during the 32-month period beginning in August 1998 and ending in March 2001' compared to 'normal baseline mortality rates'.¹⁴⁴ The fifth survey of the same organization released in 2008 estimated that '5.4 million excess deaths have occurred between August 1998 and April 2007'.¹⁴⁵ But to repeat the observation of an analyst

¹³⁹ See <https://x.com/CoulibalyBojana/status/1804922648717406503?s=03>, @CoulibalyBojana, 23 June 2024.

¹⁴⁰ Aloys Tegera, *Les Banyarwanda du Nord-Kivu (RDC) au XX^{ème} siècle. Analyse historique et socio-politique d'un groupe transfrontalier (1885-2006)*, (Université de Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, thèse pour le doctorat en Histoire [Histoire de l'Afrique], présentée et soutenue en juin 2009), pp. 351-352.

¹⁴¹ International Rescue Committee, 'Mortality in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Results from Eleven Mortality Surveys' (Final draft, 2001).

¹⁴² United Nations Security Council, 'Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo' (S/2002/1146, 16 October 2002); United Nations Security Council, 'Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo' (S/2001/357, 12 April 2001).

¹⁴³ Tegera, *Les Banyarwanda du Nord-Kivu*, p. 352.

¹⁴⁴ International Rescue Committee, 'Mortality in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Results from Eleven Mortality Surveys' (Final draft, 2001), p. 2.

¹⁴⁵ International Rescue Committee, 'Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo. An ongoing Crisis' (2008. No mention of the date and place of release. The date we mention comes from other sources).

on these IRC estimates, *‘the dynamics of any human population obeys rigorous rules which leave no room “for fantasies and profitable lies”’*.¹⁴⁶ Indeed, two demographers among the three experts hired by the European Commission to carry out a control of the registration procedures of the population of Congolese nationality in the DRC in 2005-2006 for the constitution of an electoral file revisited and refuted in 2008 the IRC estimates of mortality in the DRC.¹⁴⁷ Based on two operations by the European Commission experts, namely on the one hand, the control of the registration procedures of the Congolese population from 2005-2006 which *‘proved to be extremely reliable from a statistical point of view’*, and on the other hand, the *‘dynamic reconstitution of the population by sex and age first since 1984, year of the last census, then since 1956,pivotal year of the first major demographic survey in Congo’*, the two demographers of the ADRASS organization concluded that *‘the number of deaths due to the unrest is approximately TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DEATHS’*.¹⁴⁸

A figure well below the 5.4 million deaths from IRC! The ADRASS demographers, however, want to be very ethical in their approach to revisiting the IRC figures. They seek to *‘combat all revisionism, both that which denies humanitarian catastrophes and that which seizes them for respectable reasons (mobilizing aid; yes, but therefore to the detriment of other crises?) or not (stirring up the hatred between nations and/or ethnic groups)’*. And if according to their estimate, *‘the unrest in the DRC has produced far fewer deaths, these will still be too many deaths’*, insist the two demographers.¹⁴⁹

We would like to believe that IRC made its staggering estimates of mortality in the DRC for respectable reasons, in particular the mobilization of humanitarian aid as suggested by these demographers who do well to point out that these reasons would not necessarily mean that they are ethical. But we cannot be sure, as we frequently witness schemes between international NGOs, UN experts, diplomats, international media journalists and activists of all kinds to orchestrate disinformation on the conflict in the DRC, and on Rwanda in particular. And the doubt is reinforced when we see the immediate use made of this survey of IRC published in May 2002, by the Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo of 16 October 2002.

This report from the Panel of UN Experts was certainly not established for equally respectable reasons! Counting on the IRC's *‘2.5 million excess deaths’*, this report in turn extrapolates 3.5 million deaths which it attributes to Rwanda and Uganda without any other form of trial! *‘If one assumes mortality to have continued at the same rate, this would mean that more than 3.5 million excess deaths would have occurred from the beginning of the war up to September 2002. These deaths are a direct result of the*

¹⁴⁶ Victor Mutsinzi, ‘Vérité sur les massacres de Kasika et Makobola qu’on prête aux Rwandais’ (*Igihe*, 5 octobre 2020). <https://fr.igihe.net/Verite-sur-les-massacres-de-Kasika-et-Makobola-qu-on-prete-aux-Rwandais.html>.

¹⁴⁷ André Lambert et Louis Lohlé-Tart, démographes, ‘La surmortalité au Congo (RDC) durant les troubles de 1998-2004 : une estimation des décès en surnombre, scientifiquement fondée à partir des méthodes de la démographie’ (ADRASS, Octobre 2008). https://francegenocidetutsi.org/Surmortalite_en_RDC_1998_2004.html.en.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 1, 2, 5, 17. Capital letters are from the authors' original text.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

occupation by Rwanda and Uganda.¹⁵⁰ And the panel of UN experts continued: *'The claims of Rwanda concerning its security have justified the continuing presence of its armed forces, whose real long-term purpose is to "secure property"'*.¹⁵¹ And it is here that we touch the heart of the negationist narrative of the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994 in Rwanda and against the Tutsi populations of Congo for several decades, a narrative which transforms the victims into executioners perpetrating new atrocities and plunderers of resources, and which these two reports, that of IRC and that of the panel of UN experts, have largely contributed to accredit.

The IRC survey into mortality in the DRC as well as the UN experts' report on the illegal exploitation of natural resources in the DRC have since set the tone for an increase in the production of figures on victims of the conflict in the DRC, the ultimate objective being to conceal the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi in 1994 in Rwanda and which continued against the Congolese Tutsi and assimilated populations in the DRC. During a press conference held at the DRC consulate in Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso on 3 August 2024, activist Freddy Mulumba Kabuayi, who had distinguished himself shortly before in promoting the racist anti-Tutsi book by Franco-Cameroonian Charles Onana in Kinshasa declared that *'Westerners provoked a genocide in Congo, causing 10 million deaths, 7 million displaced people and 500,000 women raped'*.¹⁵² Prime Minister of the DRC Judith Suminwa, for her part, chaired the ceremonies of *'the national day of the Congolese genocide for economic gains "Génocost"'* on 2 August 2024 in Kisangani, to *'pay tribute to the tens of millions of dead, victims of sexual violence linked to conflicts used as a weapon of war or victims of crimes against the peace and security of humanity, as well as to the people who provided them with assistance'*.¹⁵³

The date of 2 August was in fact established as *'National Day of Commemoration of GENOCOST'* in the DRC by law n°22/065 of 26 December 2022. It was commemorated for the first time in 2023 in a ceremony chaired in Kinshasa by President Tshisekedi accompanied by his wife and other officials. Curiously, it was the testimony of Désiré Goyabaki from the Hema community of Ituri assimilated to the Batutsi, whose family and himself had been victims of the atrocities of the CODECO militia supported by the Tshisekedi government, that the organizers had chosen to present at this very official ceremony. Goyabaki's testimony was to be diverted later, as we have shown above, by propagandists of the Tshisekedi regime who attributed the atrocities of which he had been a victim no longer to CODECO, but to the M23.

The choice of the city of Kisangani for the second commemoration of the 'Génocost' is no less tendentious. It recalls the clashes on three occasions in 1999 and 2000 between the Rwandan and

¹⁵⁰ United Nations Security Council, 'Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo' (S/2002/1146, 16 October 2002), p. 19.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹⁵² *Agence d'information du Burkina*, 'Burkina : Un Congolais exhorte les Africains à se mettre debout pour contrôler leurs richesses' (3 août 2024).

¹⁵³ Clément Muamba, 'Genocost : "Je rassure aux congolais que notre résistance et notre résilience viendront à bout de nos agresseurs quoi qu'il en coûte"' (Judith Suminwa)' (*Actualite.cd*, 2 août 2024).

Ugandan armies in this Congolese town, clashes which would have caused numerous civilian victims among the Congolese population and which would have contributed to 'emptying the Rwandan security argument of its content' according to certain observers who have since favoured the thesis of aggression and occupation by the armies of the two countries to 'loot and exploit the natural resources of the DRC'.¹⁵⁴ But once again, recalling the context seems very useful in distinguishing facts from manipulation. For this purpose, we will use large extracts from an unpublished study on the history of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF).¹⁵⁵

The crisis with Uganda came to light during three successive clashes between Rwandan and Ugandan troops in Kisangani in 1999 and 2000. But the dissensions went back further when Uganda wanted to create rebellions of its own allegiance within or alongside the great RCD rebellion. Thus, were born the MLC of Bemba Jean Pierre, the RCD-ML and its successors, always at the instigation of Uganda.

The basic misunderstanding had in fact set in on 23 September 1998 when Uganda decided to militarily join the RCD rebellion which had lasted for two months. Welcomed in Kisangani by the Rwandan officers who directed the operations, the Ugandan soldiers immediately requested the establishment of a new structure encompassing the Ugandan and Rwandan army and commanded by James Kazini. The Rwandans rejected the proposal, arguing that "the two armies had neither the same language of command nor the same military doctrine". They proposed, on the other hand, to fight, each in their sector, and to come to each other's aid in case of need. Military conquests in the sectors entrusted to Uganda have never been significant. On the other hand, the front extended to the Rwandan side which had even offered Uganda territories conquered by its own forces.

After the second crisis in Kisangani, the president of the RPF reported on the situation during a meeting of the Political Bureau (1 April 2000). According to him, the Kisangani crisis is not the beginning but the continuation of a "crisis that already existed" (yaje igisangaho). Its origin lies at "certain levels of the Ugandan State" (abantu bo mu nzego zimwe za Leta) whose position on Rwanda is as follows: "... little Rwanda must carry out their orders, it must always consult them and not do its own analyses".¹⁵⁶ These circles of the Ugandan government find that Rwanda "is not sufficiently grateful for the services rendered and does not show it".¹⁵⁷ On the Rwandan side, they find that "having the same political line should be enough".¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Tegera, *Les Banyarwanda du Nord-Kivu*, p. 340.

¹⁵⁵ Paul Rutayisire, Privat Rutazibwa & Augustin Gatera, 'Rwanda: The Rebirth of a Nation. History of the Rwandan Patriotic Front from the Origins to 2003' (unpublished book completed in 2012 whose research lasted from 2000 to 2004, with additional information including interview with President Paul Kagame in 2012). Content almost similar to the extracts we offer can be found in the book: Commission Nationale pour l'Unité et la Réconciliation (CNUR) [Sous la direction de Déo Byanafashe & Paul Rutayisire], *Histoire du Rwanda. Des origines à la fin du xx^e siècle* (Kigali, 2016), p. 633-635. Some of the authors of the latter book had participated in research to write the history of the RPF, which is why they were authorized to use these passages. But we preferred to refer to the version of the unpublished book because it offers more detailed notes with extracts from original reports in Kinyarwanda.

¹⁵⁶ « Babona ko ka Rwanda gakwiye gukora ibyo bavuze, gakwiye guhora kagisha inama, kakumvira gusa nta kwitekerereza » (FPR-Inkotanyi, Inyandiko-mvugo y'inama ya Biro Politike, 1 mata 2000, p.5).

¹⁵⁷ « Babona ko ngo tutabashimira bihagije ibyiza tubakesha » (*Ibid.*).

¹⁵⁸ « Kuba duhuje umurongo, amatwara ya politike, bikwiye kuba bibashimisha bihagije » (*Ibid.*).

According to Museveni (who told it to Nyerere), the Ugandan-Rwandan conflict has two causes: "the Rwandans attacked Congo without warning him beforehand, they do not follow his advice".¹⁵⁹ The first Kisangani crisis (whose report softened the tone so as not to make Uganda lose face) was unfairly presented as the cause. Some Ugandan officials advised Rwanda to ask for forgiveness (following custom) from old Museveni who would be angry with them especially since the incidents in Kisangani where his soldiers were humiliated by the Rwandans. Museveni even reportedly made the decision to no longer speak to the president of the RPF. And when the Rwandans pointed out to their Ugandan interlocutors that the provocation came from their side, the Ugandans, very steeped in their custom, responded with this image: "when during an altercation, your angry father throws at you a spear and misses, your reaction is not to take revenge by throwing the spear back at him. On the contrary, you rush to ask him for forgiveness to calm him down." In the understanding of Ugandans, this father-son relationship applies perfectly to Uganda-Rwanda relations, and the source of the conflict is the refusal of the Rwandan leadership to conform to this sort of customary code.

The conflict between the two countries has always been essentially a struggle for influence where the Ugandan leaders seemed disturbed by Rwanda's successes while wanting to maintain the place of choice at the regional and continental level in the name of a complex of superiority and a poorly defended birthright.

Despite conciliation efforts and the restraint observed by Rwanda, this conflict lasted a long time. It was all the more worrying as it was fueled, on the Ugandan side, by another very strong cultural imperative: the duty of revenge. Museveni and those close to him, all military decision-makers, have sworn to it. They will never rest until the affront of Kisangani has been washed away. And this requires for them a new confrontation from which they would emerge victorious and where Rwandan blood would be shed, in response to the three defeats of Kisangani.¹⁶⁰

The conflict therefore remained and an explosion was possible at any moment. The incident in Bunia (Ituri) in March 2002 where Ugandan troops dislodged a local rebellion (UPC-Union of Congolese Patriots) giving way to troops from Kinshasa and militiamen and ex-FAR, almost relaunched the conflict, Kigali threatening to send its troops back to Congo to prevent the advance of hostile forces towards its territory. Great Britain, whose mediation between Kigali and Kampala served to ease tensions, once again used its influence to prevent escalation.

This clarification of the context allows us to see that the fighting between the Rwandan and Ugandan armies in Kisangani in no way invalidates the '*Rwandan security argument*' for its presence in the DRC with a view to countering the genocidal forces, any more than it supports the thesis of aggression and occupation by Rwanda with a view to '*looting and exploiting the natural resources of the DRC*'.

But the denialist narrative based on the reports of the IRC and the UN panel of experts was constructed with so much ingenuity that it remains hard to resist. With "*Six million deaths offered*" by the '*International Rescue Committee (IRC)*' - to borrow the expression of an analyst¹⁶¹ - 'another human

¹⁵⁹ « Abanyarwanda bateye (Congo) batamubwiye, ntabwo bumva inama ze, ntibazikurikiza » (*Ibid.*).

¹⁶⁰ *Grands Lacs Hebdo*, n° spécial, 334, 2003, pp.97.

¹⁶¹ Victor Mutsinzi, 'Vérité sur les massacres de Kasika'.

tragedy' cleverly replaced the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in 1994. As for the panel of UN experts, its first report of 12 April 2001 asserts peremptorily in its conclusions that:

The conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has become mainly about access, control and trade of five key mineral resources: coltan, diamonds, copper, cobalt and gold. The wealth of the country is appealing and hard to resist in the context of lawlessness and the weakness of the central authority.

Exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by foreign armies has become systematic and systemic. Plundering, looting and racketeering and the constitution of criminal cartels are becoming commonplace in occupied territories. These criminal cartels have ramifications and connections worldwide, and they represent the next serious security problem in the region.¹⁶²

By this artifice, the '*serious security problem in the region*' ceased to be the security threat posed to neighboring countries by the '*negative forces*' supported by the government of the DRC as identified by the Lusaka Agreement, and especially the genocidal forces for the case of Rwanda, as well as the discrimination and persecution of Rwandan-speaking populations, notably Tutsi, to become instead the '*Exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by foreign armies*'.

However, the Ceasefire Agreement signed in 1999 in Lusaka between Angola, DRC, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe and from which derived the mandate assigned by the UN Security Council to MONUC and later to MONUSCO recalls these questions which were at the basis of the conflict in the DRC and which will not cease to constitute the '*serious security problem in the region*' as long as they are not properly addressed. The Ceasefire Agreement states the following in the preamble:

RECALLING the Pretoria Summit Communiqué dated 23rd August, 1998 re-affirming that all ethnic groups and nationalities whose people and territory constituted what became Congo (now DRC) at independence must enjoy equal rights and protection under the law as citizens;

DETERMINED to ensure the respect, by all Parties signatory to this Agreement, for the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols of 1977, and the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948, as reiterated at the Entebbe Regional Summit of 25 March, 1998;

DETERMINED further to put to an immediate halt to any assistance, collaboration or giving of sanctuary to negative forces bent on destabilising neighbouring countries.¹⁶³

Then, in paragraph 16, the Agreement reaffirms that '*all ethnic groups and nationalities must enjoy equal rights and protection under the law as citizens*', and in paragraph 22, it provides that '*There shall be a mechanism for disarming militias and armed groups, including the genocidal forces*'. Annex A of the Agreement reaffirms the

¹⁶² United Nations Security Council, 'Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo' (S/2001/357, 12 April 2001), pp. 41-42.

¹⁶³ United Nations Security Council, 'Letter dated 23 July 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council' (S/1999/815, 23 July 1999).

mechanisms for the tracking, disarming, cantoning and documenting of all armed groups in the DRC, including ex-FAR, ADF, LRA, UNRF II, Interahamwe, FUNA, FDD, WNB, UNITA and put in place measures for:

- a. handing over to the UN International Tribunal and national courts, mass killers and perpetrators of crimes against humanity; and*
- b. handling of other war criminals.¹⁶⁴*

One may wonder why the United Nations deliberately chose to deviate from these initial directions for resolving the conflict in eastern DRC to instead develop a negationist narrative while increasing initiatives of bullying and vilifying Rwanda and relentlessness against the M23 and the CNDP before it. The Final Report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo gives the example of judgement of intentions and crude accusations against Rwanda which have no equal as the hallucinations of the most renowned anti-Tutsi and anti-Rwanda extremists in power in Kinshasa like Justin Bitakwira whom we saw above. While Rwanda immediately withdrew its troops from the DRC in accordance with the Lusaka and Pretoria agreements, the report of the UN Panel of Experts does not believe in its good will and instead accuses it of *'new tactic for maintaining Rwanda's presence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo'*.

According to the UN, this tactic would consist of: replacing *'Congolese directors of parastatals with businessmen from Kigali'*; replacing *'local currency with Rwandan currency'*; keeping in DRC *'RPA battalions that specialize in mining activities'* without *'wearing RPA uniforms'* and *'under a commercial guise'*; undertaking *'an operation to obtain a large number of Congolese passports so as to give an appropriate identity to RPA officers who continue to be stationed at strategically important sites'* in the DRC; *'disguising the continuing presence of an armed force loyal to Rwanda'* by reorganizing *'the RCD-Goma forces in order to accommodate large numbers of RPA soldiers inside ANC units and local defence forces'*; make sure that, *'Instead of departing for Rwanda, large numbers of Rwandan Hutus serving in RPA have been provided with new uniforms and assigned to ANC brigades as Congolese Hutu'*. The UN panel of experts adds that *'the number of soldiers who have left the Democratic Republic of the Congo is so far only a portion of the total number of RPA troops in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, which various sources estimate at between 35,000 and 50,000'*. The panel finally states that *'Simultaneously with the RPA troop withdrawals, Rwandan officials have repatriated to North Kivu thousands of Congolese Tutsi refugees under duress'*.

... Rwanda has started withdrawing. It has prepared for withdrawal by putting in place economic control mechanisms that do not rely on an explicit presence of the Rwandan Patriotic Army. It has replaced Congolese directors of parastatals with businessmen from Kigali to ensure continuing revenue from water, power and transportation facilities. It has replaced local currency with Rwandan currency. RPA battalions that specialize in mining activities remain in place, though they have ceased wearing RPA uniforms and will

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

continue the activities under a commercial guise. The Panel's sources have reported that RPA recently undertook an operation to obtain a large number of Congolese passports so as to give an appropriate identity to RPA officers who continue to be stationed at strategically important sites in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Panel has learned of other tactics for disguising the continuing presence of an armed force loyal to Rwanda. Reliable sources have reported an initiative by the Chief of Staff of the Armée nationale congolaise, Major Sylvain Mbuki, to reorganize the RCD-Goma forces in order to accommodate large numbers of RPA soldiers inside ANC units and local defence forces made up of pro-Rwanda elements. Most of the ANC units have had RPA leadership for some time, and now, with this reorganization, a significant number of RPA soldiers will be integrated into the ANC rank and file. Instead of departing for Rwanda, large numbers of Rwandan Hutus serving in RPA have been provided with new uniforms and assigned to ANC brigades as Congolese Hutu. Rwanda has diverted attention from those soldiers staying in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by drawing particular attention to those who depart. Ceremonies have been held at points of re-entry. In fact, the number of soldiers who have left the Democratic Republic of the Congo is so far only a portion of the total number of RPA troops in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, which various sources estimate at between 35,000 and 50,000. Simultaneously with the RPA troop withdrawals, Rwandan officials have repatriated to North Kivu thousands of Congolese Tutsi refugees under duress from the camps around Byumba and Kibuye Provinces in Rwanda. Schools in the Rwandan camps have remained closed and some camp structures have been razed to encourage further repatriations. All the Panel's sources have also suggested that this movement could be part of the new tactic for maintaining Rwanda's presence in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.¹⁶⁵

Further on, the same report from the panel of UN experts makes a cynical and definitive judgment on Rwanda's alleged intentions:

On the basis of its analysis of considerable documentation and oral testimony, the Panel holds the view that the rationale for Rwanda's presence is to increase the numbers of Rwandans in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo and to encourage those settled there to act in unison to support its exercise of economic control. The recent departure of troops should not be interpreted as a sign of Rwanda's willingness to reduce its considerable involvement in the evacuation of valuable resources, to reduce the level of armed conflict or to diminish the humanitarian crisis in the region. Economic exploitation in its various forms will continue, relying on a less conspicuous armed force and alternative strategies for carrying out the exploitative activities.¹⁶⁶

The UN has therefore clearly adopted and promoted since then, the conspiracy theories of the racist anti-Tutsi ideology (and anti-Rwanda since the RPF took power in 1994), at the same time as the

¹⁶⁵ United Nations Security Council, 'Final report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo' (S/2002/1146, 16 October 2002), p. 5-6.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

negationist narrative of the genocide against the Tutsi of Rwanda in 1994 and the denialist narrative of genocidal ideology, discrimination and persecution against Congolese Tutsi for decades to this day. The UN has also constantly attempted to delegitimize, or even combat, the Congolese politico-military organizations which integrate the demands of these Congolese Batutsi and assimilated populations into their programs.

This systematic work of the UN to stigmatize Rwanda while undermining and denigrating its efforts in the search for a lasting solution to the conflict in eastern DRC has continued unabated, notably in the 41 reports produced between July 2004 and June 2024 by its Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo established by resolution 1533 (2004) of 12 March 2004, as well as in the 'Report of the Mapping Exercise documenting the most serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo between March 1993 and June 2003' released in August 2010.

All of these reports have systematically sought to question the attention that should be paid to the seriousness of the genocide against the Tutsi of Rwanda in 1994 as well as similar acts against the Batutsi and assimilated populations of Congo, and to invalidate Rwanda's security argument which justifies its occasional interventions in the DRC to counter the forces that committed this genocide. Instead, these reports concomitantly developed a denialist narrative that Rwanda's military presence in the DRC was motivated by resource plunder and would be a source of human rights violations in the DRC more serious than the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in 1994.

But the most despicable thing in the approach of all these UN experts and their associates was to attribute genocidal, racist and discriminatory intentions to a Rwandan government born from the victory of the RPF which had stopped the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994; implemented a policy of reconciliation and national unity; launched the reconstruction of a country in ruins and developed a foreign policy centered on mutually beneficial cooperation that respects the dignity of Africa.

10. Anti-Tutsi racism: an ideology of colonial inspiration and neo-colonial instrumentalization

Seeking to delegitimize and destroy political actors who represent African genuine political agency has been characteristic of the West since the colonial era to this day. Western knowledge production on Africa and Rwanda created the Hamitic hypothesis, the Hutu supremacy ideology and the anti-tutsi racism whose false postulates resulted into discrimination, political violence and genocide, and continue to negatively influence the perception and policies on Rwanda and the Great Lakes region of Africa at large where they continue to fuel violence. From colonial era to present time, the Hutu-Tutsi divide (and Bantu-Nilotic today with Kinshasa propaganda) stemming from those ideologies serves as a tool for the control of political

power in the interests of the West, generally under the guise of social justice, human rights and democratic governance.

We use the concept 'West' to encompass mainly the United States of America, Canada sometimes, and mostly Western Europe with former colonial powers and the European Union as an organization, but also all the *'hegemonic forces that dominate global social structures through economic flows, powerful forms of meaning-making and/or explicit coercive measures'*.¹⁶⁷ We prefer the category to that of 'Global North' as opposed to 'Global South' in vogue today, even if it seems to make fun of the position of the cardinal points, particularly in the case of Rwanda and eastern DRC which interest us here. By 'West', we refer above all to the claim of intellectual and cultural superiority of the indicated powers and their systemic domination of the globe¹⁶⁸, a meaning that derives less from the ideological conflict between 'West' and 'East' during the Cold War and is more inspired by post-colonial thinkers.¹⁶⁹

If the West has chosen to use the racist, discriminatory and genocidal ideologies mentioned above to try to perpetuate its control over the Great Lakes region, it has also been able to create local followers to amplify and implement these ideologies. As a decolonial thinker who rightly distinguishes what he calls "epistemic location" from "social location" points out, *'The success of the modern/colonial world system consists in making subjects that are socially located in the oppressed side of the colonial difference, to think epistemically like the ones on the dominant positions.'*¹⁷⁰ Thus, when the Kinshasa regime and its ideologues Charles Onana and Justin Bitakwira oppose the Bantu to the Nilotic, they think of Africa in the manner of the colonial and neocolonial West. The same applies to the *'primitive politics'* based on ethnicity that *'bring together Tshisekedi, Ndayishimiye and the FDLR'* as President Paul Kagame rightly pointed out in an interview with *Jeune Afrique* last March.¹⁷¹

At first contact with the Great Lakes region, the West implemented the Hamitic hypothesis which *'states that everything of value ever found in Africa was brought there by the Hamites, allegedly a branch of the Caucasian race'*.¹⁷² According to the first explorers and missionaries, *'it was in Urundi and mainly in Ruanda'* that the Hamites identified to the Batutsi *'gave their full measure and founded empires bearing a particular mark'*.¹⁷³ But in comparison, Rwanda was considered *'the pearl of the "Ost-Afrika" colony'* of

¹⁶⁷ Sebastian Haug, Jacqueline Braveboy-Wagner and Günther Maihold, 'The 'Global South' in the study of world politics: examining a meta category', *Third World Quarterly* 42, 9 (2021), pp. 1923-1944.

¹⁶⁸ Andrés F. Castro Torres & Diego Alburez-Gutierrez, 'North and South: Naming practices and the hidden dimension of global disparities in knowledge production' (Working paper WP 2021-014, Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Rostock - Germany, 2021).

¹⁶⁹ Mainly by Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin Modern Classics, London, 2003).

¹⁷⁰ Ramón Grosfoguel, 'Decolonizing Post-Colonial Studies and Paradigms of Political-Economy: Transmodernity, Decolonial Thinking, and Global Coloniality', *TRANSMODERNITY: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World*, 1,1 (2011).

¹⁷¹ François Soudan et Jeanne Le Bihan, 'Interview. Paul Kagame : « Tshisekedi est capable de tout, sauf de mesurer les conséquences de ce qu'il dit »', *Jeune Afrique*, 25 mars 2024.

¹⁷² Edith R. Sanders, 'The Hamitic Hypothesis; Its Origin and Functions in Time Perspective', *The Journal of African History* 10, 4 (1969), pp. 521-532.

¹⁷³ Louis de Lacger (du clergé d'Albi), *Ruanda. Première partie. Le Ruanda ancien* (Kabgayi, 1959), p. 58.

Germany comprising Burundi and today Tanzania as well, because *'Urundi has no government, every great chief is king there, so it is very difficult to govern. It is not the same in Rwanda where the king has full authority'*.¹⁷⁴ Africa was therefore *'a continent which knew empire builders at a time when large areas of Europe stagnated in the Dark Ages'* as Edith Sanders recalls.¹⁷⁵ But since modern racism established a hierarchy between the races, such achievement and other traces of 'civilization' could not be the work of the Blacks. The authors were the Hamites, of the 'Caucasian race', therefore of white and foreign origin. And it is here that the first attempt is made to delegitimize traditional Rwandan power, wrongly identified as exclusively Tutsi, therefore Hamite and of foreign origin.

But on the other hand, colonial ideology attributed to the "higher" races the duty to civilize the "lower" ones, more commonly known as 'the white man's burden'.¹⁷⁶ However, while being of the 'Caucasian race', the Batutsi nevertheless remained Black, therefore an integral part of the 'white man's burden' and had to be civilized by the White colonizers and missionaries. It is at this level that the ambiguities and tensions appear in the relations between Westerners on the one hand and traditional Rwandan power and the Batutsi in general with whom it is wrongly conflated on the other hand. These ambiguities and tensions are at the origin of a problematic collaboration and a muted anti-Tutsi racism which attempted a new delegitimization of traditional Rwandan power by accusing it of being an oppressive power of the Tutsi minority on the Hutu majority, and sometimes, displayed a clear desire to destroy this power and the Batutsi with whom it is generally identified.¹⁷⁷

In 1899, just two years after the official start of the German protectorate over Rwanda, Doctor Richard Kandt, then an explorer and future Imperial Resident of Rwanda from 1907, could write: *'Rouanda is a country full of hopes when we could destroy the power of the Watusi'*.¹⁷⁸ The German colonial administration had to quickly temper this violent hostility against traditional power and the Batutsi by simple opportunism; it was very poor in personnel and therefore measured the importance of having a strong indigenous power in Rwanda for the effectiveness of its indirect rule. The Belgian colonial administration under the mandate of the League of Nations after the defeat of Germany in the First World War and later under the trusteeship of the UN maintained this policy in broad terms, further ethnicizing the indigenous administration in favor of the Batutsi while exercising more direct control over it compared to the German period. But the hatred and anti-Tutsi racism of Europeans did not disappear.

¹⁷⁴ Stefaan Minnaert, *Le Rwanda vu par le père Brard (1898-1906). Contribution à l'histoire de l'évangélisation du Rwanda. Ecrits et rapports du fondateur de la mission catholique de Save* (Kigali, 2021), p. 126.

¹⁷⁵ Sanders, 'The Hamitic Hypothesis', p. 531.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 528-529.

¹⁷⁷ See Rutazibwa, 'Rwanda: how post-independence regimes'.

¹⁷⁸ Copie de la lettre du Docteur Richard Kandt du 7 juin 1899 à Mgr Gerboin, A.G.M. Afr., N° 100164-100165; in Stefaan Minnaert, *Premier Voyage de Mgr Hirth au Rwanda (de novembre 1899 à février 1900). Contribution à l'étude de la fondation de l'église catholique au Rwanda* (Editions rwandaises, Kigali, 2006), p. 511.

In 1902, the founder of Save, the first Catholic mission established in Rwanda in 1900 was able to express his hostility in a long report to his Superior General in which he described the centralized Rwandan monarchy he identified to the Batutsi as *'unfavourable to our work'*.¹⁷⁹ He regretted that the Bahutu he considered as *'aborigines'* and *'slaves of the Batusi'* lacked a leader *'to make their masters take the road to the north'* on the *'banks of the Nile'* in the land of the *'Gallas'* in Ethiopia from where the Batutsi would have come according to the interpretation of the Hamitic hypothesis by this French missionary.¹⁸⁰ His report continued by displaying his distrust against the Batutsi and traditional Rwandan power in these terms:

The Batwa are small, stocky, with an unsympathetic face, of a wild nature.... The Bahutu resemble all the blacks of Equatorial Africa, and if they were white, we would take them for peasants of Europe; they are strong, enduring, more intelligent than other blacks perhaps, The Batusi are therefore the great lords of Rwanda; they are handsome men with very regular faces; many absolutely have the Jewish type. ... They are an intelligent, but touchy race, very proud by nature and even more proud of their power and authority; they believe themselves to be the first nation and the greatest men in the world; They do some politeness to the Europeans out of policy, but if they could throw them all into the water, they would have done it a long time ago, they consider themselves much superior to them. ...

*Today the Batusi no longer have a future, the appearance of Europeans will ruin their power everywhere; besides, they are few in number and the breed is rather decreasing, although there is little emigration. ... In Rwanda, for the moment, the Batusi are so afraid that the whites know their country and their customs, that it is preferable not to question them, because that is to incite them to lie. ...It takes years and great kindness to gain the trust of black people; ... It is therefore not surprising that they are very reserved with us, that they do not easily believe what we tell them. ... We talk to them about the wonders of Europe, the greatness of our nations, the power of kings, the abundant food: they seem delighted to please us, but deep down they believe their sorcerers are much superior to our artists, their country much larger than the nations of Europe, their king more powerful, their food much preferable, and the Whites inferior to the Blacks.*¹⁸¹

This hostility against the Batutsi remained constant among the missionaries and other Europeans despite the official colonial and missionary discourse and policies which continued the ethnicization of the indigenous administration in favor of a few Batutsi. The controversy expressed in the Hackars report of 11 October 1924 and the letter from the Apostolic Vicar of Ruanda Mgr Léon-Paul Classe to the Resident of Ruanda of 12 September 1927 is a good illustration. The first contests while the second defends the

¹⁷⁹ Lettre du Père Brard du 8 février 1902 à Monseigneur Livinhac, A.G.M. Afr.,02/1 et N° 098523; in Stefaan Minnaert, *Le Rwanda vu par le père Brard (1898-1906). Contribution à l'histoire de l'évangélisation du Rwanda. Ecrits et rapports du fondateur de la mission catholique de Save* (Kigali, 2021), pp. 79-127, p. 101.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 97, 99, 108.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 95-99, 112.

promotion of the Batutsi in the native leadership auxiliary to colonial administration, but the two documents have in common a racist vision of Rwandan society.¹⁸² Another document commonly known as 'Document de Rwesero' reveals that a White Father wrote to the synod of the Catholic church of Rwanda gathered in Nyakibanda in 1945 complaining about the Batutsi on this particularly hateful tone:

*We, the parish priests favor the Batutsi against the Bahutu; help the Batutsi continue their centuries-old oppression over the Bahutu. [...] Yet, it should be first (our) obligation to help the most vulnerable, the most oppressed (the Bahutu), [...] the social class which is the most hard-working, the largest in numbers, the healthiest and the most interesting....the Batutsi are starting to despise the work of mwalimu [teacher, ndlr] because it is the work of the mission and not of Serkali [government, ndlr] ... Some are now a little ashamed to be commanded by the Fathers. ...*¹⁸³

But it was at the beginning of the 1950s and especially between 1959 and 1963 that hatred and anti-Tutsi racism of the Westerners resurfaced with great intensity and this time, with genocidal violence. If in the initial period, anti-Tutsi racism associated with the Hamitic ideology served the attempt to delegitimize and destroy Rwandan traditional power that the Westerners had found in place, in the years 1951-1963, it will serve the project of delegitimization and destruction of Rwandan nationalists who were demanding independence, all against a backdrop of genocide supervised by the Belgian colonial administration against the Batutsi as a group, once again improperly identified with political actors that the colonizers and missionaries did not want.¹⁸⁴ The Catholic missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) had a decisive influence during this period, since the Christian party PSC -Parti social Chrétien- (in French) or CVP - Christelijke Volkspartij- (in Flemish) dominated Belgian politics from 1947 to 1968 when it split into two constituencies based on linguistic differences.

The Catholic missionaries and the party used existing institutions or created new ones to implement their policy on Rwanda. It is in this context that the Centre Catholique Africain (African Catholic Center) was created by influential White Fathers to bring together Catholic organizations in Belgium to have a unified view and line of communication on a number of issues especially regarding colonial matters.¹⁸⁵ August Edmond De Schryver of the Parti Social Chrétien (PSC) was asked to lead the centre and he accepted. He soon became Belgian Minister for the colonies, but had earlier led the « Groupe de travail » (Working group) in Ruanda-Urundi in April and May 1959 to collect ideas and formulate a new policy for the administration of the Belgian colonies. This resulted in the "Déclaration Gouvernementale"

¹⁸² See Raphaël Nkaka, *L'emprise d'une logique raciale sur la société rwandaise, 1894-1994*, (Université Paris I, unpublished PhD dissertation, 2013), pp 98-101.

¹⁸³ 'Document de Rwesero', as quoted in Privat Rutazibwa, *Rwanda. Contre l'Ethnisme* (Editions du CRID, Kigali, 2017), p. 72.

¹⁸⁴ For the genocidal role of Belgian colonial rule in Rwanda, see two previous articles: Rutazibwa, 'The genocide against the Tutsi'. <https://doi.org/10.21428/3b2160cd.f58c1e1a>; and Rutazibwa, 'Rwanda: how the post-independence regimes'. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378032542_RWANDA_HOW_THE_POST-INDEPENDENCE_REGIMES_FROM_1962TO_1994_WERE_NEO-COLONIAL_RACIST_AND_GENOCIDAL

¹⁸⁵ Jean Berckmas Kimenyi (Secrétaire du Roi Rudahigwa), *De la déconstruction du Rwanda aux massacres des Tutsi en 1959. Témoignage d'un proche collaborateur du Roi Mutara III Rudahigwa* (Kigali, 2019), p. 312.

(Government declaration) of 10 November 1959 before the Belgian Parliament which was also reinforced by the "Décret de la Tutelle" (Trusteeship decree) of 25 December 1959 defining the new Rwanda-Burundi administration policy. The same De Schryver gave a conference at the Centre Catholique Africain in June 1959 whose aim was to have a single line on the "Déclaration gouvernementale sur le Ruanda-Urundi" in preparation.¹⁸⁶ Belgian politicians from other parties obviously adhered to the new anti-Tutsi policy of end-of-colonization which was approved at the highest levels in Brussels. But we will especially explore the determining role of the White Fathers as revealed by some of their archives, which until then were little known to the public.

In a letter to the assistant of the Superior General dated April 1951, Father Xavier Seumois, rector of the Major Seminary of Nyakibanda sounded the alarm against the nationalism of Rwandan seminarians by demanding, to counter it, the appointment in his team of a European White Father who worked in Rwanda, with '*long years spent in contact with the environment and a "social situation" in sight*'; endowed with '*truly exceptional qualities, favorable to the opening of hearts*', because, he estimated, '*the Mututsi will always speak without fully revealing himself. It is only in exceptional circumstances, favorable to the opening of hearts, that he will be able to say unequivocally what he thinks*'.¹⁸⁷ And the rector's pleading continued:

*The state of minds, the effervescence of nationalism, requires that there be in Nyakibanda a father from Rwanda, capable, thanks to his qualities, of exercising real influence. We are living in a most difficult time, and I feel that we have no control over the substance of mentalities. It is clear that it is Abbots who are at the helm of the nationalist movement. Recently, Father Alexis openly declared to a European that Rwanda was capable of administering itself. ... These spirits are very influential ... They are imposing, to the point that it would seem that a good number place the hope of the nation in them. Their influence on the minds of the seminarians is great. The majority of Banyarwanda completely lack personality; they cannot imagine that ideas expressed by a priest could be tainted with error. It would not occur to them to seek advice in these matters and, obeying no other psychological reflexes than group and dependency complexes, they "swallow" everything and allow themselves to be carried away. The tactic is to surreptitiously win over one or another seminarian who will naturally spread these ideas among his colleagues in the seminary. (It is curious in this regard to note that the main leader whom we dismissed immediately found protection with Abbot Alexis and was attached to him as his secretary). The situation is serious, and it seems to me that we must make all the sacrifices to counterbalance this bad influence in the seminary.*¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁷ Lettre du P. Xavier Seumois du 10 avril 1951, A.G.M. Afr., N° 526207 bis.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.* The original text in French reads:

L'état des esprits, l'effervescence du nationalisme, demandent qu'il y ait à Nyakibanda un Père du Ruanda, capable, grâce à ses qualités, d'exercer une véritable influence. Nous vivons une époque des plus difficiles, et je sens que nous n'avons pas prises sur le fond des mentalités. Il est clair que ce sont des Abbés qui sont à la tête du mouvement nationaliste. Dernièrement l'abbé Alexis déclarait ouvertement à un Européen que le Ruanda était capable de s'administrer lui-même. ... Ces esprits sont très influents, ...ils en imposent, au point qu'il semblerait qu'un bon nombre place en eux l'espoir de la nation. Leur influence sur l'esprit des séminaristes est grande. La majorité des Banyarwanda manque tout à fait de personnalité ; ils ne peuvent imaginer que des idées, émises par un prêtre, puissent être entachées d'erreur. Il ne leur viendrait pas à l'idée de demander conseil en ces matières et, n'obéissant à d'autres reflexes psychologiques qu'aux complexes de groupe et de dépendance, ils « gobent » tout et se laissent entraîner. La tactique est de gagner subrepticement l'un ou l'autre séminariste qui naturellement répandra ces idées parmi ses confrères du séminaire. (Il est curieux à ce propos de noter que le principal meneur que nous avons renvoyé ait aussitôt trouvé protection chez l'abbé Alexis et lui soit attaché en qualité de secrétaire).

L'heure est grave, et il me semble que l'on doit faire tous les sacrifices pour contrebalancer au séminaire cette mauvaise influence.

For this Belgian missionary, thinking that 'Rwanda was capable of administering itself' was an idea 'tainted with error', and a doctrinal error with regard to the Catholic faith. It is for this reason that two months earlier, this same rector had expelled from the Major Seminary of Nyakibanda Rwandan seminarians accused of nationalism, whose number was so large that the highest officials of the society of the White Fathers who approved the operation described it as '*bloodletting*'. It is to this expulsion that the rector alludes in the quote above when he is indignant at the fact that 'the main leader whom we dismissed immediately found protection with Abbot Alexis and was attached to him as his secretary'. Father Alexis Kagame was a Rwandan catholic priest famous for his numerous writings on Rwandan history and culture.

The dismissal of seminarians for nationalism is described as "bloodletting" in a correspondence of June and July 1951 between Father André Perraudin, a White Father of Swiss nationality then professor at the Major Seminary of Nyakibanda and future archbishop of Kabgayi who will play a disastrous role in the "Rwandan revolution", and the Mother House of the White Fathers. Father Perraudin's letter of 6 June 1951 begins with the customary greeting of "Monsignor and Venerated Father" followed by a long paragraph of base flattery towards his superior, before continuing:

I do not specifically have to give you news from the Seminary, because they are surely transmitted to you regularly by our Father Rector. I even hesitate to tell you my impressions: I have only been here for such a short time, barely ten months. In short, I am still learning and more and more I realize that the work is very delicate and more difficult than I imagined. I teach the course of the Sacraments and missiology. According to the request made to you in the past, this missiology course consists rather of the study of certain current issues of an immediately practical nature; for example, I am currently trying to study in front of my students the question of the evolution of true civilization. I refer above all to social encyclicals, to the lessons of natural law by Jacques Leclerc, to the work of J. Folliet on the right to colonization, to the books of Father de Montcheuil: Church and the current world, aspects of the Church, this for the principles, and I try to follow studies on this subject in colonial magazines and books.

The difficult thing is to give practical conclusions, given the current conditions of indigenous society and more precisely its evolution in contact with a Western civilization that is not only theoretical but concretized in Western people and things. Because you don't have to be a great cleric to notice in this country a sort of latent colorbar, bilateral moreover, almost instinctive which is not precisely designed to create a climate of trust. Nationalist ideas are not sleeping either. However, I try to see things a little clearly myself and to enlighten my students as much as I can. My "neutral" quality makes things a little easier for me. I have the impression that these questions are of great interest to our Seminarians; they touch very closely; and I know that they are a real concern for the Apostolic Vicars.

As for the general progress of the Seminary, I have the impression that things are going better since the bloodletting in February of which you were kept informed.

I also have the impression that a large part of the evil comes from outside, from a sort of opposition against the seminary or even against everything that is European, that part of the clergy does not fear to

*demonstrate openly with a lightness that is very unpedagogical and ecclesiastical. We realized this in particular during the February dismissals. The behavior of the missionaries themselves and undoubtedly ours too is perhaps not without reproach. A part of these difficulties will probably always remain despite the best will in the world, because to eliminate them, it would be necessary to eliminate all the differences between black people and us, which is not yet close to being achieved.*¹⁸⁹

At the request of the Superior General of the White Fathers Monsignor Louis Durrieux, his assistant responded to Father Perraudin's letter on 12 July 1951 by using the expression "bloodletting" to designate the expulsion of the 'nationalist' seminarians of February 1951. His response also takes up the expression "neutral" used by Perraudin in reference to his Swiss nationality in comparison with his Belgian colleagues in the context of political and colonial relations with Rwandans at the time, and it stops for a moment on one of the two courses taught by Father Perraudin, that of missiology, to provide specific advice. We will also return to this missiology course by Father Perraudin. But first here is the extract from the response of the Mother House of the White Fathers to Perraudin's letter:

Dear Brother,

Monsignor the Superior General has received your letter of 6 June bringing him your good wishes and promises of prayers. He asks me to thank you warmly and to express to you all his satisfaction with the good work that you have always done since you became a member of the Society and your religious spirit. The good Lord will not fail to bless You because of these provisions and He will especially help You in the delicate work entrusted to You.

We are not at all surprised by Your observation that the work entrusted to You is more delicate and more difficult than You had imagined. Everywhere it is a very difficult job, but in Rwanda it is even more difficult than elsewhere. ... The Missiology courses that You give force You to address delicate questions and to make clarifications, which are necessary. It is better to treat these questions with frankness and not act as if there were no problems to resolve. Simply give them Catholic doctrine without hiding anything. I know well that it is not always so easy to give practical solutions, even when the principles are clear, but as You say: Your quality of "neutral" makes the thing a little easier and You just have to try to always be as objective as possible.

*Fortunately, things are going better as far as the general progress of the seminary is concerned since the bloodletting in February. However, everything is not yet perfect, undoubtedly. It will take a lot of effort and a lot of virtue for the ideal of truly cordial and effective understanding and collaboration to be achieved. You will work on it with all Your strength and without fail, because you have to get there. The future of the Church in Ruanda depends largely on it, so it is an ideal worth pursuing. There will still be many setbacks and difficulties, but all this should not discourage us. So, dear Father Perraudin, continue to give yourself completely and the good Lord will bless your efforts.*¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ Lettre du P. Perraudin du 6 juin 1951 à Mgr Durrieu, Supérieur Général, A.G.M. Afr., N° 526210.

¹⁹⁰ Lettre de la Maison-Mère du 12 juillet 1951 au P. Perraudin, A.G.M. Afr., N° 526229.

Upon reading Perraudin's letter cited above, a researcher was curious to know the authors that this White Father cites as references for his missiology course, and in a biographical summary that we reproduce below, this researcher shows that one of Perraudin's three reference authors had written that *'peoples of lower civilization are generally unhappy'* and *'are often exploited by tyrants'* and that thus, *'the substitution of European domination for indigenous domination was for the peoples a true liberation'*. Perraudin's second reference author for his missiology course thought that *'there are, in the world, civilized peoples and barbarian peoples'* and that *'savage peoples need help from outside which directs them towards civilization. It is a duty of charity'*.

Jacques Leclercq (1891-1971) is a clergyman of Belgian nationality. In his book, *Leçons de droit naturel, Volume I, Le fondement du droit et de la société* (1927) [Lessons in Natural Law, Volume I, The Foundation of Law and Society (1927)], he wrote: *"It is true that a more civilized people can have a right of guardianship over a less civilized people.... People of lower civilization are generally unhappy. They live amid deprivation, danger and are often exploited by tyrants. Public support for the social order is frequently nothing more than the conviction of the uselessness of resistance. To replace a despot who oppresses the people is not to violate the right of the latter to self-determination, and in many cases, the substitution of European domination for indigenous domination has been for the people a real liberation."*

Joseph Folliet (1903-1972), of French nationality, is a French priest, Catholic activist, sociologist and writer, co-founder of the Compagnons de Saint François and founder of *la Vie catholique illustrée*. He became aware of the questions raised by colonization, to which he devoted two doctoral theses. He is the author of the book *Le Droit de colonisation: étude de morale sociale et internationale* (1932) [The Right to Colonization: A Study of Social and International Morality (1932)]. According to him, there are, in the world, civilized peoples and barbarian peoples, peoples with developed civilization and others with restricted civilization. The circulation of material goods is essential from country to country for the common good and for the own good of each nation. The same goes for spiritual goods: *"Men, due to their nature and destiny, tend to produce and communicate goods capable of satisfying the spiritual aspirations of the human compound."* » There is therefore for Christians a great duty of international benevolence that civilized people must exercise towards the uncivilized or little civilized. Joseph Folliet makes the following comparison in this regard: when a child falls into the water, a helping hand must pull him out immediately; thus, wild peoples need help from outside which directs them towards civilization. It is a duty of charity.

Yves Moreau de Montcheuil (1900-1944), of French nationality, is a Jesuit priest, philosopher and theologian close to Henri de Lubac. Resistance fighter, chaplain of the Vercors maquis, he was shot by the Nazis. According to him, the Church has the right to give directives or advice. It does this, either through the conscience of man or in the form of influence on the State.¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹ I sincerely thank the author of this note and other colleagues who generously shared with me for my research, notes and hundreds of pages of archives scanned in Rome and Geneva during their own previous research.

These precepts of colonial ideology elevated to the rank of doctrinal principles of the Catholic Church will guide the White Fathers and especially Perraudin in his missiology course and in his actions at the helm of the influential Catholic Church of Rwanda. From professor, he was quickly promoted to rector of the major seminary of Nyakibanda. Appointed Apostolic Vicar of Kabgayi by the Vatican in 1955 then crowned bishop the following year, he became archbishop of the same diocese in 1959, the highest office in the Catholic Church in Rwanda which then had only two dioceses, a title he retained until his retirement in 1989. Among these precepts mentioned above, the most favorite of Perraudin and his colleagues seems to have been the following: *'To replace a despot who oppresses the people is not to violate the right of the latter to self-determination, and in many cases, the substitution of European domination for indigenous domination has been for the people a real liberation'*. Thus, they were going to use all means to present the indigenous leaders auxiliary to the colonial administration as despotic.

The systematic campaign of defamation of the indigenous institutions auxiliary to the colonial administration was launched in the catholic newspaper *Presse Africaine* which appeared in Bukavu in Congo, with the serial publication of an interview entitled 'Un abbé rwandais parle' (a Rwandan priest speaks) on 21, 28 July and 3 August 1956. The document 'Un abbé rwandais parle' accused Mwami¹⁹² Mutara III Rudahigwa, the chieftains and sub-chieftains of brutal acts that had never taken place, and of wanting the Whites to leave Rwanda for independence. Belgian newspapers reproduced its allegations against the native leaders, with *La Libre Belgique* daily publishing an article on 2 August 1956 which read: *'Graves accusations d'un prêtre indigène contre les autorités coutumières du Rwanda. Politique anti-belge du Mwami. Des crimes atroces auraient été commis impunément par certains chefs'* (Serious accusations by an indigenous priest against the customary authorities in Rwanda. Mwami's anti-Belgian policy. Atrocious crimes allegedly committed with impunity by certain chieftains). The article continued:

*One chief in the north ordered to bury his people alive because they had angered him; other Black people saw their wives and children locked in barbed wires and then burnt to death. We must continue our civilizing action in Africa, we must hear the voices calling for us, begging us not to leave, and coming from the most important of Rwandans.*¹⁹³

The slander of the Rwandan native leadership in the media of the Catholic Church continued, especially in *Kinyamateka* and *Temps Nouveaux d'Afrique*, with the same allegations being repeated by the Belgian media. Mwami Rudahigwa even went so far as to ask Bishop André Perraudin for right to reply to the Church media, but Perraudin refused.¹⁹⁴ Rwandan priests condemned the document 'Un abbé rwandais parle' through their spokesperson Father Joseph Sibomana who later became Bishop of Ruhengeri, then Kibungo. Their reaction was published by *Temps nouveaux d'Afrique* of 2 September 1956:

¹⁹² Mwami (singular) / Bami (plural): Kinyarwanda word for king, though he was no longer sovereign under colonization.

¹⁹³ Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*, p. 158 ; Nkundabagenzi, *Rwanda Politique*, p. 17.

¹⁹⁴ Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*, p. 160.

My colleagues, who have gathered for a study session, ask me to protest to you against the articles published in the columns of your newspaper under the title 'Un abbé rwandais nous parle'. They declare they do not identify themselves with them and deplore the use of their name to sow mistrust and division.¹⁹⁵

Rwandan chieftains also condemned the *Presse Africaine* articles, and their reaction was published on 5 October 1956 by *La Libre Belgique*. They were saddened by the allegations of burying and burning people alive and surprised by the accusation of seeking independence, and they reminded the following:

In Rwanda, the repression of crimes and misdemeanors is in the hands of Belgium, the tutelary power. We recognize the integrity of her justice and it surprises us that colonial or Belgian newspapers, which must know her well, could have gone so far as to suspect her of culpable weakness (...). They advance as an accusation that our Mwami wants the emancipation of his country. An unextinguished dynasty, having reigned for nine centuries, supported by the governed inhabitants, can legitimately think that the happiness of the country can only be complete in freedom.¹⁹⁶

The year 1956 when this media campaign of defamation of the indigenous institutions auxiliary to the colonial administration started coincided precisely with the beginning of the open expression of ethnic positions by some missionaries like Mgr Perraudin and settlers like Albert Maus, then President of the organization of the colonists of Ruanda-Urundi, inciting the Bahutu to revolt against the Batutsi generally identified with the indigenous auxiliaries to colonial administration whom they described as oppressive. In a May 1956 letter to his Superior General, Mgr Perraudin speaks of *'increased tensions between Bahutu and Batutsi: the Bahutu are raising their heads more and more and can no longer let themselves be pushed around'*.¹⁹⁷ Some weeks before, the Hutu-Tutsi issue was first raised by the Belgian Albert Maus at the Ruanda-Urundi Council (Conseil du Vice-gouvernement) in Bujumbura where he demanded that in Rwanda and Burundi people be placed in administrative positions on the basis of what he called "castes" Hutu / Twa / Tutsi; and suggested that within the Bujumbura assembly (Conseil de Vice-Gouvernement), there be a *'sub-category, composed of four indigenous and European members, for the distinct representation of the Bahutu'*.¹⁹⁸ At the time, the council condemned his proposal, most notably Mwami Rudahigwa who declared that *'Such representation constitutes a policy of segregation within the people, segregation which I cannot adopt'*, proposing instead *'four representatives appointed by the Governor from among the natives'* who are neither members of the European or indigenous administrations and other established

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ Mgr André Perraudin, Lettre à Mgr Durrieu, Kabgayi, 15 mai 1956. As quoted in Paul Rutayisire, 'Rudahigwa et les missionnaires', *Dialogue*, n° 188 (avril-juillet 2009).

¹⁹⁸ Fidèle Nkundabagenzi, *Rwanda Politique* (CRISP, Bruxelles, 1961), pp. 13-15.

consultative councils, *'to ensure a clearer representative expression of the opinion of those administered'*.¹⁹⁹

This led Maus to write a letter of resignation to the Deputy Governor General of the Belgian Congo and Governor of Ruanda-Urundi Jean-Paul Harroy on 25 April 1956, telling him that he was *'very painfully impressed'* to see *'a general fear of the members'* of the General Vice-Government Council *'of even slightly scratching the Mututsi colossus'*. Drawing on the writings of other Europeans, including Jean Jacques Maquet, Maus stated in the letter that *'the social structure of Ruanda-Urundi is... a "caste" regime where*

*there are approximately 100,000 Batutsi pure or almost pure who are hierarchical in various ranks of nobility, then approximately 500,000 assimilated Batutsi, that is to say Batutsi mixed with Bahutu, poor or fallen Batutsi, enriched Bahutu calling themselves Batutsi. It is an intermediate class between the nobility and the people. Finally there is this people, these 3,500,000 pure Bahutu, peasants, formerly taxable serfs and slaves at mercy, today still so imbued with servility towards the lordly race that the presence of the Mututsi immediately makes them lower their eyes and give way, otherwise drop their products, in the market or on their own hills, at ridiculous prices. This is the social class, still terribly exploited today, for which I requested, as a first chance of liberation, a distinct and legally assured representation.*²⁰⁰

Albert Maus had earlier been a catholic priest in the congregation of Scheutist Fathers and missionary in Congo where he worked in the education sector. His ideas as educator were that Whites should *'Curb the desire to learn (...) among blacks, force a large number to leave school as quickly as possible leaving them hungry [to learn]'*.²⁰¹ One may wonder whether Maus' claim to be the defender of the "pure Bahutu" was motivated by a sincere desire for their true development, when we know that for Blacks in general, he pleaded for their continued ignorance! Established as colonist in Burundi since 1945, he became president of the *Union des colons du Ruanda- Urundi* (UCORUDI). He was instrumental in the creation of the Hutu extremist political parties PP (Parti du Peuple) in Burundi and APROSOMA (Association pour la promotion sociale des masses) in Rwanda.²⁰² The legislative elections in Burundi having been won on 18 September 1961 by his political enemy Prince Louis Rwagasore at the head of the nationalist party UPRONA (Union pour le progrès national), Albert Maus *'could not digest his defeat and killed himself on 31 December 1961'*.²⁰³

However, the Banyarwanda were until then still united in their timid demand for administrative autonomy then political independence and especially in their denunciation of Belgian colonial oppression. For example, it is striking to note that Joseph Habyarimana Gitera, future founder of APROSOMA with the

¹⁹⁹ Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*, p. 156.

²⁰⁰ Nkundabagenzi, *Rwanda Politique*, p. 14.

²⁰¹ Donat Murego, *La révolution rwandaise, 1959-1962: essai d'interprétation*, (Université catholique de Louvain, thèse de doctorat en sciences politiques, 1975), p.624. Verified source, but initially found in Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*, p. 50.

²⁰² Gahama, 'La République rwandaise'.

²⁰³ Gahama, 'Le Burundi à l'épreuve'.

support of Maus, had in 1959 published the 10 commandments of the Bahutu and other racist anti-Tutsi writings and insults to the Mwami Rudahigwa while expressing his praise for *'The Belgian state and the Church of Rwanda [that] have joined forces to liberate the Bahutu and the humble people from the slavery of the Batutsi'*,²⁰⁴ whereas in a petition to the UN in 1953, he had expressed the opposite. Writing to the third Visiting mission of the UN scheduled in 1954, Gitera said that *'the natives were disappointed with the achievements of Belgium'*; that *'the well-being of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories is at stake because the Belgians are not interested in it'*, and that *'the UN has a share of responsibility'* because *'it has entrusted the Trusteeship to a country which does not have the means and the capacities'*. Gitera had also denounced in the same 1953 petition *'acts of barbarism committed by the Whites towards the Indigenous people without any defense'*.²⁰⁵

The White Fathers like other Europeans described, as we have seen, precolonial Rwandan political system as an exclusively Tutsi rule, oppressive towards the Bahutu reduced, according to them, to the rank of slaves, even if this was sometimes contradicted by others of their own writings but above all, by the more scientific observations of the Polish anthropologist Jan Czekanowsky made in 1907 and published in 1917.²⁰⁶ This false perception of Rwandan society was reused with intensity, especially as independence approached, for propaganda purposes, with a clear desire to divide the Bahutu and the Batutsi and to incite the former to genocidal violence against the latter as a group, identified not only with the Mwami and other Rwandan auxiliaries of the Belgian colonial administration, but also with the UNAR party (Union Nationale Rwandaise / Rwandan National Union), the political party by far the most majority, the only nationalist and the most influential which demanded independence and whose majority of members were nevertheless Bahutu.²⁰⁷ In their propaganda, missionaries and colonialists presented the nationalists as Tutsi wishing to maintain minority and oppressive rule. The other three political parties of a national character were APROSOMA, RADER (Rassemblement démocratique républicain / Republican Democratic Rally) and PARMEHUTU (Parti pour l'émancipation du peuple hutu / Party for the Emancipation of the Hutu People). All the three were initially of lesser influence until the beginning of the genocidal massacres for PARMEHUTU, and all were created by Europeans from whom they got instructions.²⁰⁸

The overall strategy aimed to prolong, if not colonial rule, in any case the influence of the colonial power, missionaries and settlers after nominal independence, by relying on the number, -the Hutu majority- according to a very particular interpretation of democracy, and in the name of a so-called social justice. The latent anti-Tutsi racism described above in the first phase of colonization under the triumph of

²⁰⁴ Aprosona – Parti social hutu- ishyaka rya Abahutu, 'Uko Abahutu bagomba kwica ku ngoyi ya Abatutsi n'uko u Rwanda dushaka ko rumera muli iki gihe kiri imbere', *Ijwi rya Rubanda rugufi*, 27/09/1959.

²⁰⁵ Pétition de Joseph Habyarimana Gitera, Astrida, 25 Mai 1953. As quoted by Commission Nationale pour l'Unité et la Réconciliation (CNUR) [Sous la direction de Déo Byanafashe & Paul Rutayisire], *Histoire du Rwanda. Des origines à la fin du xxè siècle* (Kigali, 2016), pp. 354, 356-357.

²⁰⁶ See Rutazibwa, 'Rwanda: how post-independence regimes' for large excerpts of Czekanowsky's book and missionaries' reports.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*, pp. 355-356.

the Hamitic ideology which officially exalted the Mututsi, was now expressed in a blatant manner under the triumph of the new ideology of Hutu supremacy, as a violent and genocidal anti-Tutsi racism. Let us note in passing that anti-Tutsi racism is underlying and transversal to Hamitic ideology and the ideology of Hutu supremacy, and that it goes beyond their respective periods of influence (colonial for the first, and post- independence until 1994 for the second) to project itself to the current period. In a 2022 interview, Rwandan historian, the late Paul Rutayisire observed:

There are several factors that make the ideology of hatred based on "ethnicities" become a tool to kill. In Rwanda, there is currently no hegemonic power that supports such an ideology. The national context which pushed for this no longer exists. So, it has an effect on people's existence. The exacerbation of this ideology does not develop. I would say that we are in a state of peaceful coexistence. But if a political upheaval occurs, it could explode.

All things considered, in Rwanda, we are no longer the center of expansion of this racist ideology of the 1990s or even before (end of colonization, beginning of the 1960s). Rwanda is no longer the epicenter. On the contrary, it drives a new dynamic to dismantle this ideology. In the region, it's something else. I could be wrong, but I think that in Burundi, they are even more sick of this ideology than us and that they still have it for a long time. The Congo has become the new epicenter of anti-Tutsi racism from what I see on social media.²⁰⁹

Violent actions were also carried out against the nationalists, especially the Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa and the UNAR party, intended to isolate and destroy them, which the White Fathers and Belgian colonial administration achieved. Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa died in July 1959 in Bujumbura in very suspicious circumstances where Rwandan opinion at the time saw the hand of Mgr André Perraudin and the Belgian colonial authorities, and the UNAR ended up disappearing with the execution in Ruhengeri in December 1963 under the orders of Belgian officers, of its last leaders remaining in the country including Michel Rwagasana, then Secretary General of UNAR and first cousin of Grégoire Kayibanda, leader of PARMEHUTU who had become in the meantime president of Rwanda.

The tactic was therefore to accuse the indigenous auxiliaries of the colonial administration, although under the total control of the Belgian colonial rule, of being Tutsi, despotic and oppressive towards the Bahutu; to accuse UNAR of being Tutsi as well; to incite the activists of the so-called Hutu parties, mainly PARMEHUTU and APROSOMA to burn the houses of the Batutsi without distinction of social class, pillage and destroy their property, kill some of them and push the others to exile, under the pretext of revolt against a so-called Tutsi, feudal and tyrannical power. The violence started on 1 November 1959 and spread across the country over several days without colonial security forces intervening to stop it. Mwami Kigeli V Ndahindurwa who had succeeded his brother Rudahigwa asked to restore security in the country himself, because the Belgian colonial administration had not done so until then, but he did not

²⁰⁹ Interview, Paul Rutayisire, Kigali, 19 November 2022.

obtain authorization. He then requested at least the publication of a written circular asking all local leaders to protect the area under their jurisdiction by fighting against murder, arson and looting, which the Belgians allowed, before their planes responsible for distributing these circulars threw the packages into the swamps of Nyabarongo and Akanyaru.²¹⁰

Officials at the Mwami's court finally took the initiative of sending an order to four chiefs in the center of the country where violence was high, '*ordering them to attack PARMEHUTU-APROSOMA which, supported by the Public Force, was beginning to worry and seriously disrupt national life*'.²¹¹ In a single day, 7 November 1959, the Territories of Gitarama, Nyanza and Astrida were pacified. When the Belgians realized that the criminals were beginning to be dominated and that security was beginning to return, Resident André Preud'homme placed Rwanda under military occupation on 7 November 1959, prohibiting more than five people from gather and establishing a curfew from 6:00 p.m. to 5:30 a.m. On 9 November 1959, Deputy Governor General of Belgian Congo and Governor of Ruanda-Urundi Jean Paul Harroy met Mwami Kigeli V Ndahindurwa at the Nyanza territorial office and informed him that he was deprived of the power to restore security in the country. He told him that since that day, he had '*established a state of exception*' and that he had '*appointed Logiest as "Military Resident", the sole person responsible for restoring security*'.²¹² Jean Berckmas Kimenyi, former secretary of both Mutara III Rudahigwa and Kigeli V Ndahindurwa remembers:

*To better demolish national institutions, the authority decreed a state of exception, placed under the direction of a brutal man, the very Catholic BEM Guy Logiest. ... In a few weeks of repression and restructuring, the Administration had taken control of its diabolical plan. Lucifer had taken up residence in Rwanda.*²¹³

It is in fact Colonel Logiest who will supervise, on behalf of Belgium, the execution of the first genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

The place where my father lived, Nyagisozi, Cyabakamyi sector in the current Nyanza district, was attacked on 9 August 1961 by people from Musagara in Bunyambiriri and from Muyunzwe. It was safer for gangs of killers to go and kill people they didn't know elsewhere, to avoid distress if they had to kill neighbors they knew. The killers found my grandfather Boniface Manzi Sebhura and his little brother where they were grazing their cattle. They killed my grandfather at a place called Nyarusange after taking all his clothes. It was a man named Siwenzi Oscar, a Hutu neighbor, who covered his body and buried him, assisted by his wife and his mother, Kanshara Elisabeth. The latter had my paternal grandmother as her baptismal godmother, and one of Siwenzi's children also had my paternal uncle Aloys Mugwenderi as his

²¹⁰ Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*, p. 361.

²¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 368.

²¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 369-370; Patrick Lefèvre & Jean Noël Lefèvre, *Les militaires belges et le Rwanda (1916-2006)*, (Racines, Bruxelles, 2006), p. 45.

²¹³ Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*, p. 370.

baptismal godfather. The attack took place when my father and other young family members were not at home. It was through Siwenzi Oscar that my father was informed of Grandfather's death.

Things continued to get worse and my father decided to run away with his family. They spent a few days in Nyanza, the then royal capital where security was still relatively assured. The first place he thought of going into exile was Tanzania, but it was ultimately in a truck bound for Congo that he got on, with his family and my grandmother. They spent almost a year in Nyamitaba, Masisi in North Kivu where Grandmother died. It was in 1962 that my father and others who were with him decided to settle in Bibwe and join other Rwandan refugees in the camp that the UN had just opened for them. They moved to Bibwe on Assumption Day, 15 August 1962, and that's where I was born almost three years later.²¹⁴

Certain documents show the particular role of the White Fathers in this first genocide against the Tutsi of Rwanda towards the end of Belgian colonization under the trusteeship of the United Nations. In a letter dated 10 November 1959 to his Superior General, the White Father who was in charge of Catholic Action throughout Rwanda, supervising among others, organizations such as the Leagues of the Sacred Heart; the Legion of Mary and the Xaverians, recognized that

*The big difficulty I am encountering at the moment is the political and racial element (Batutsi-Bahutu). It was the legionary leaders of Kabgaye (Grégoire Kayibanda and Calliope Mulindahabi, respectively President and Secretary of the Kabgaye Comitium) who triggered this entire Bahutu revolt which is bloodying Rwanda for the moment. I would not dare accuse them because I am sure that they considered themselves in a state of self-defense in the face of Batutsi's continuous provocations and the indolence of the Belgian government in repressing these provocations. ... in their visits to the presidia and the Curiae of the country, they took the opportunity to make, after their legionary work, propaganda for their political party.*²¹⁵

The two leaders of the Legion of Mary mentioned were direct employees of Mgr André Perraudin at the bishopric of Kabgayi. They were at the same time the senior leaders of the racist PARMEHUTU party whose creation was the work of missionaries well identified within this bishopric,²¹⁶ with the blessing of Mgr Perraudin who in a pastoral letter of February 1959 said that *'the Church ... admits that a social class fights for its legitimate interests by honest means, for example by grouping itself into an association'*.²¹⁷ But the missionary also takes care to mention the 'Batutsi's continuous provocations' according to the usual tactic that we have seen elsewhere of creating an equivalence between the victims and the executioners, in some way making the Batutsi responsible for their misfortune.

²¹⁴ Privat Rutazibwa, 'Ikiganiro ku buzima bwa Papa Ngirumpatse Joseph' [A look at the life history of Ngirumpatse Joseph, my Father, detailing how he experienced the 1959-1962 political violence in Rwanda and the refugee life in DRC. A presentation to a gathering to mark the end of the mourning period of a great witness of 20th century Rwanda, who passed away in June 2021 at the age of 102 years]. (Kigali, Olympic Hotel, 03 January 2022).

²¹⁵ Lettre du Père Wenceslas de Renesse au Supérieur Général. Nyakibanda, le 10 novembre 1959. A.G.M. Afr., No 741/062881.

²¹⁶ Hildebrand Karangwa, *PARMEHUTU (1959-1973) : imwe mu nkomoko za jenoside yakorewe Abatutsi mu 1994* (Kigali, icapwa rya kabiri, 2022) ; Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*.

²¹⁷ Mgr André Perraudin, 'Super Omnia Caritas' (Mandement de Carême, Kabgayi, 11 février 1959).

Concerning the role of Bishop Perraudin in particular, the correspondence from his Superior General is very revealing. In a letter from the assistant to the Superior General dated 1 August 1959, we can read:

*The big news is that which reached us by your telegram a few days ago, the death of Mwami. On this occasion, we pray especially for the rest of his soul but also for you, Monsignor, because this can perhaps cause you a lot of trouble. This is certainly a very difficult transition for Rwanda, especially since such an event occurs at a time when the Belgian government was about to make its new policy known.*²¹⁸

A researcher finds it '*curious that the death of [Mwami] Rudahigwa coincides with the announcement of new Belgian policy [on Ruanda-Urundi]!*²¹⁹

In a letter dated 26 March 1960 to Mgr Perraudin, the Superior General of the White Fathers, the Dutchman Léon Volker wrote:

We understand that you are aware of the numerous petitions which have been made to the UN and in which the Catholic Church and your very person are implicated. ... According to the habits of major international organizations, each of these petitions is translated into different languages, mimeographed and distributed in numerous copies.... From a very direct source, we learned that the serious accusations in these petitions do not fail to strongly impress the many members of the national delegations. Even, certain Catholic delegates seem not to exclude the veracity of the accusations against the Church and against your person. In the authoritative opinion of UN circles, it seems appropriate for there to be a drafting from you addressed directly to the UN, which would clarify certain things. ...

This petition will have all the more authority as you emphasize your Swiss nationality. It seems useful that this petition mentions the general doctrine of the Church, which you have followed in political and social matters in addition to more detailed clarifications on your attitudes and precise responses to personal accusations. In any case, this same authorized source told us that at least there would have to be a formal and solemn refusal of the accusation of having been involved in any way in the so-called assassination of Mwami.

*In the annals of the UN, there is already an example of a procedure of this kind which bore fruit. A South African bishop was accused of racial segregation by a petitioner. He responded to it himself with another petition, communicating the Church documents on this question and denying the facts. I even believe that an African priest went to the UN on this occasion and successfully defended his Bishop and the Church. The above leads us to believe that it would be useful for a "sure" and "right-thinking" African to make a similar petition. This would counterbalance the many petitions I alluded to above.*²²⁰

The comparison made by the Superior General of the White Fathers between apartheid in South Africa and anti-Tutsi racism in Rwanda under the colonial domination of the Belgians and the White

²¹⁸ Lettre du Père Cauwe à Mgr A. Perraudin, Vicaire apostolique de Kabgayi. Rome, 1^{er} août 1959.

²¹⁹ Private correspondence, 19 April 2024.

²²⁰ Lettre du Père Léon Volker, Supérieur Général, à Son Excellence Monseigneur Perraudin, Archevêque de Kabgayi, Ruanda. Rome, 26 mars 1960. A.G.M. Afr., N° 1849/60/69.

Fathers is very relevant. Abbot Jean Baptiste Gahamanyi had played this role of 'a "sure" and "right-thinking" African' by sending a petition to the UN Trusteeship Council dated 22 April 1960 to defend Mgr Perraudin. He presented himself as a 'Tutsi priest'. Besides, he was the little brother of the former chieftain Michel Kayihura who was vice-president of the High Council of the Country, therefore second personality after Mwami Rudahigwa in the auxiliary customary hierarchy of the colonial administration, but who had already fled the country to escape the Belgians. The White Fathers had therefore found in him a pawn of precious value. A year later, Abbot Jean Baptiste Gahamanyi was rewarded by becoming bishop of Butare! He would subsequently distinguish himself by strictly applying the racist directives of his mentor Perraudin in the two minor seminaries²²¹ as well as within the Benebikira and Bizeramariya religious congregations²²² under his jurisdiction.

The White Fathers used other Tutsi priests in their propaganda, such as Abbot Stanislas Bushayija who published two articles in *La Revue nouvelle* in December 1959 and May 1960 under the influence of the White Fathers Dejemeppe and Mosmans. In the first entitled 'Aux origines du problème bahutu au Ruanda' (At the origins of the Bahutu problem in Rwanda), the editorial staff of the Belgian Catholic newspaper presents him as 'an authentic Mututsi' and Bushayija reproduces in the article the main assertions of Hamitic ideology which pose the Mututsi as a being fundamentally marked by duplicity, who conquered and enslaved the Bahutu by trickery. Defenders of anti-Tutsi genocidal racism in Rwanda and the region have continued to draw inspiration from this article, and even a defense lawyer in the genocide trials at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in Arusha invoked it to justify the genocidal violence of his client against the Batutsi in 1994 in Rwanda.²²³ However, Bushayija did not have the same chance to be rewarded as Gahamanyi: he wrote in 1960 to ask to become a white father²²⁴, but his request was rejected.²²⁵

The Superior General of the White Fathers had to make a trip to the United States of America during which he conducted contacts for the defense of Bishop Perraudin, and in a letter dated 22 September 1961, he was able to reassure him by saying: '*Being in America I had the opportunity to enlighten certain people on other questions which bother you and I hope that it will not have been in vain*'.²²⁶

²²¹ 'La mort des séminaires au Rwanda'. A document signed by 10 Rwandan priests who took refuge in Burundi in 1973. Available at <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjG8fCnqt-DAXVfbvEDHS4kAYkQFnoECBcQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Ffrancegenocidetutsi.org%2FMortsSeminaires1973.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3BARf4a09Jb7IFXHsJ0sdG&opi=89978449>

²²² Lettre de l'Abbé Alexis Kagame à son Excellence Jean Baptiste Gahamanyi, Evêque de Butare, le 7 février 1974.

²²³ The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Case No.: ICTR-00-56-T, Chamber II. The Prosecutor of the tribunal v. Augustin Ndindiliyimana, François-Xavier Nzuwonemeye, Innocent Sagahutu, Augustin Bizimungu. Cross-examination of Alison Des Forges, witness for the Prosecution, by Mr. Seydou Doumbia, council for the the Accused Innocent Sagahutu, 16 October 2006.

²²⁴ Lettre du Père Provincial Alphonse Van Hoof au Supérieur Général, Nyakibanda, le 2 juillet 1960. A.G.M. Afr., N° 727 /4009/89.

²²⁵ Lettre du P. Provincial A. Van Hoof au Supérieur Général, Nyakibanda, le 1er septembre 1960. A.G.M. Afr., N° 727-5513-95.

²²⁶ Lettre du Père Léon Volker, Supérieur Général, à Son Excellence Monseigneur Perraudin, Archevêque de Kabgayi, Ruanda. Rome, le 22 septembre 1961. A.G.M. Afr., N° 5230/61/122.

But it is above all the letters of Father Alphonse Van Hoof, provincial of the White Fathers in Rwanda, to his Superior General which show even more clearly this tenacious and persistent hatred of the White Fathers against the Batutsi, at least with regard to the official policy of this religious organisation, and their involvement in the first genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in the late 1950s and early 1960s. In a letter written on 14 April 1960 in Rwaza in northern Rwanda, we can read these extracts:

These poor Batutsi, the majority of whom, held back by blinded leaders, do not want to accept the new situation created by the Bahutu revolt, will end up being expelled from all corners of Rwanda... And if only all our Abbots saw this clearly, but among them also a good number of Batutsi, and also four or five Bahutu (more fanatic than the Batutsi!) do not want to resign themselves to admitting the new regime. According to them, it is the Whites and some leaders who are to blame for the revolt; ... These Abbots support the Batutsi whose aspirations to take control of everything encourage them in their feeling of... hatred.

Monsignor Perraudin and the White Father missionaries, according to these Abbots, are guilty like other Whites of the humiliation suffered by the Batutsi. As you know our Batutsi I will not surprise you by saying that in front of us they are still as polite and friendly as before, but their hearts are full of animosity. Let's thank God that until now they didn't have a leader leading them, because we would be in trouble. However, ideas seriously dangerous for the unity of the Church in Rwanda have already been expressed. May the Holy Spirit protect the Church of Rwanda! At this crucial point we can also have full confidence in Monsignor Bigirumwami who is certainly "homo vere catholicus" [latin for 'a truly Catholic man'], although he does not seem to understand anything about politics.²²⁷

In another letter two weeks later, the provincial of the White Fathers in Rwanda could write:

I will take this opportunity to give you the latest news from here.

Since Maundy Thursday there have been no more huts burned or Tutsi chased away. They tried to reintegrate as many Tutsi into the population as possible, but taking into account the wishes of the Hutu population. Thus in Mugombwa 2000 Tutsi returned home; 1000 were transported to Bugesera. In Byumba 3 to 4000 returned home; the other 3500 had to be transported to Bugesera because the Hutus did not want them, but one night all of them had disappeared; they had fled to the English in Buganda. A certain number of Nyundo refugees returned to their homes, others had to leave the country.

On 1 May, Monsignor Perelli, the Apostolic Delegate, imposed the pallium on Monsignor Perraudin. The party was very well organized and a success. The population took part in the celebration wholeheartedly, but it was the Hutu population. Apart from the people of Rader who are few in number, the Tutsi were not present, so to speak.

However, a certain glimmer of objectivity is rising in more and more Batutsi heads in recent times, whereas previously they only thought of Unar. Face to face with Father Louis Gasore, Vic. Gen. from Nyundo, he told me: "It should not have won the elections (Unar), because it would have been bad for the Church".

²²⁷ Lettre du Père A. Van Hoof, provincial, au Supérieur Général. Rwaza, le 14 avril 1960. A.G.M. Afr., No 727/2564/93.

...there are currently talks between 'sure' Tutsi to arrive at the founding of a party which would entirely separate from Unar. They would like to take approximately the program of J. Birori (son of Baranyanka in Burundi), which is the party of Christian democracy. However, we may fear that they will not be able to postpone the elections too long. We would regret it because this party could bring back to us a good number of Tutsi who at the moment do not know who to turn to, because they do not have confidence in the Rader, and who then follow the Unar.²²⁸

Father Van Hoof could still write the following to his Superior General on 24 July 1960 from Nyakibanda:

My Very Reverend and Venerable Father,

Even today I can announce good news from Rwanda despite the tragic events in Congo. Since the Congolese soldiers were disarmed, we have not suffered any unpleasant reaction, except the sneer of the unarist Batutsi at the misfortune of the Belgians, but we learn this indirectly. According to their habits that you know, they do not express their feelings and they continue to be polite towards us.

The municipal elections continue almost without difficulty. ... This week the elections were held in the Territory of Astrida and Shangugu (opposite Bukavu) and there too the victory is for Parmehutu and Aprosoma, ... Last Sunday Parmehutu already had 60% of all votes of Rwanda on its behalf. Elections for municipal mayors have already taken place in many places. In general, we have no reason to complain about elected officials, and if they remain what they are now it will even be very good. In the Kanyanza mission where there are four communes, three of them have chosen praesidia presidents of the Legion of Mary as mayor!!!²²⁹

The senior leader of the White Fathers in Rwanda finally wrote a letter to his Superior General on 1 September 1960 in which he tried to exonerate the behavior of the missionaries in the tragic political events taking place in Rwanda, while recognizing that certain White Fathers *'had openly expressed their contentment'* for the violence that *'our people'* inflicted on *'those who opposed the revolution'*, and *'took pleasure in the humiliations suffered'* by the Batutsi considered *'their adversaries'*.

It seems to me that in the difficult circumstances in which we have lived and are still experiencing, the conduct of the confreres has been and is generally satisfactory. No one has in any way incited acts contrary to charity or justice. I do not know any colleague who wants to direct party leaders in the purely political domain. Except for one [In the margin of the letter is written "De Schrevel"²³⁰], all insisted on following the directives of the Ordinaries in the best spirit. We can regret, however, that we have not all and in all circumstances experienced the appropriate reactions in an ideal way for missionaries. This is why we have

²²⁸ Lettre du Père A. Van Hoof, provincial, du 11 mai 1960. A.G.M. Afr., N° 727 - Nr 2949.

²²⁹ Lettre du Père A. Van Hoof, provincial, au Supérieur Général. Nyakibanda, le 24/7/60. A.G.M. Afr., N° 727-4651-89.

²³⁰ According to certain sources (see Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction*), Father De Schrevel and Mgr Deprimoz, Bishop Emeritus of Kabgayi were among the rare White Fathers who disapproved of the violence committed against the Batutsi. We therefore understand why the provincial of the White Fathers prefers to point the finger at him as the only one who breaks the rules.

*not always been sufficiently understandable, at least in our words, towards those who suffered from the revolution. It even happened that one or the other openly expressed in the community their satisfaction that our people were going smoothly in their action against those who opposed this revolution. And sometimes, although rarely, they took pleasure in the humiliations suffered by those whom they rightly or wrongly considered to be their adversaries.*²³¹

These justifications and confessions of the provincial of the White Fathers in Rwanda were motivated by a very severe circular letter that Monsignor Aloys Bigirumwami, Bishop of Nyundo had addressed to the missionaries of his diocese on the occasion of communicating to his collaborators the letter sent to the Archdiocese of Kabgayi and the Diocese of Nyundo, - the only two catholic dioceses in the country at the time - by Cardinal Agagianian, Proprefect of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, who transmitted an exhortation from the Pope through the bishops of the two dioceses to

*address a paternal but pressing appeal to all your clergy, native or foreign, so that they never have anything in view other than the supreme interests of the Church, that is to say, the glory of God and the salvation of souls. They must therefore refrain from interfering, directly or indirectly, in these purely political quarrels and struggles.*²³²

Bishop Bigirumwami wrote the following to the missionaries of his diocese, almost all of them White Fathers: *'He is not a missionary, the one who wants to enter into our skins and into our tribal affairs.'* His circular letter continued: *'You can no longer afford to be this faded salt and this extinguished light.'* The provincial of the White Fathers in Rwanda then tried to soften the interpretation of these very harsh words from the Bishop of Nyundo, by informing in advance his Superior General who risked being lectured by the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, because the provincial thought: *'It is indeed possible that Monsignor [Bigirumwami] sent them a copy [of his circular letter] at the same time as his response to their letter.'*²³³ After clumsily trying to soften Monsignor Bigirumwami's words, Father Van Hoof nevertheless conceded:

And yet it is not impossible that he wanted to teach us a lesson, since he accused us on several occasions of being one of the causes of the Bahutu revolution. Then again recently he said that he does not understand how we are not doing everything in our power with the government so that we put an end to all the violence of the Bahutu. ...for a Mututsi it is really difficult to understand the Bahutu uprising. They still think that the

²³¹ Lettre du Père A. Van Hoof, provincial, au Supérieur Général. Nyakibanda, le 1er septembre 1960. A.G.M. Afr., N° 727-5513-95.

²³² A. Perraudin, Archevêque de Kabgayi, 'circulaire hors série réservée aux prêtres de l'Archidiocèse de Kabgayi' (Kabgayi, 6 juillet 1960). A.G.M. Afr., N° 095348.

²³³ Lettre du Père A. Van Hoof, provincial, au Supérieur Général. Nyakibanda, le 1er septembre 1960. A.G.M. Afr., N° 727-5513-95.

*Bahutu basically had nothing against them and that it was the whites and certain few leaders who excited them.*²³⁴

The provincial of the White Fathers in Rwanda concluded his letter by rejoicing that the situation inside Rwanda 'was not bad' for the missionaries and for the Belgians without worrying for a single moment about the fate of the Batutsi who were killed, dispossessed, banished to Bugesera or exiled. He was simply worried about a possible revenge that would come from outside to disturb the tranquility of the 'Belgian colonialists'.

*Let me tell you again before ending this letter that the situation inside Ruanda is not bad for us. However, it could be that from outside they are preparing revenge and that at the same time they hurt the Belgian colonialists. Deus scit and Deus providebit!*²³⁵ [latin expression that translates as "God knows and God will provide"]].

These archives of the White Fathers thus reveal previously unpublished information but which confirms what many Rwandans already knew, from the numerous testimonies of those who were witnesses or survivors of the first genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. In November 2022, as part of my research, I interviewed a couple of Catholics who were from the Catholic mission of Mushishiro in the former chieftaincy of Ndiza where the so-called Rwandan revolution began in November 1959. The wife, born in 1942, told me this:

*Many of us learned [the catechism] on our own as adults in order to be baptized. When the time for baptism came, many schools gathered at the mission. The parish priest was Duschamps, and another who was his deputy was called Canoni, also a white man. That day, it was Canoni who asked the following question: "What relationship is there between the sparrow and the wagtail?" When you answered that they are both birds, he said that you had failed. That day, the pupils returned home having failed.*²³⁶

The White Fathers had already started raising awareness among young pupils about 'the racial difference' between the Bahutu and the Batutsi using such comparisons through the catechism. The same source added that when the massacre of the Batutsi had just begun, Father Duschamps taught that '*killing a Mututsi is not a crime for which one must go to confession; the Mututsi is a snake, killing him is not a sin*'.²³⁷

But alongside this violent awareness of hatred against the Batutsi that many Bahutu did not necessarily adopt, the Belgian colonizers used a rumor, more effective to motivate Bahutu peasants to kill

²³⁴ *Ibid.*

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

²³⁶ Interview, Kanyeshara Prosper & Uwantege Triphonie, Kicukiro (Kigali), 14 November 2022.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

their Batutsi compatriots. They were told that it was the Batutsi who killed Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa, and that it was his little brother, the new Mwami Kigeli V Ndahindurwa who had given the order to avenge him by killing, burning the huts and evicting the Batutsi.²³⁸ Even if in their propaganda, the colonizers and other missionaries tried to present the Rwandan monarchy to outside opinion as a matter for the Batutsi alone, they were at the same time well aware that all Rwandans identified with this institution and respected it a lot. Our witness, the lady from Mushishiro explains how her young family had the painful experience of the cynical use that Europeans made of this completely fabricated misapprehension.

*Planes arrived on the day our house was to be destroyed. There was a neighbor on the other side of a small stream, a Muhutukazi [Hutu woman]. She said to me: Do you know what these planes do? I answered: no! She then said: they are looking at the place of residence of the Batutsi, it is said that they are the ones who killed Rudahigwa. I was pregnant with my first child; she had two children.*²³⁹

Kanyehara Prosper, the husband, born in 1936, also confirmed to us that it was in Ndiza that the massacres of the Batutsi had begun in November 1959 and that the parish priest of Mushishiro, Father Duschamps, regularly participated in nocturnal meetings to raise awareness among the Bahutu before the massacres.

Gatabirwa and Matsiko (sub-chieftains) were killed during a meeting in Ndiza; the carnage immediately continued. ... Before the massacres, when these politics started, the neighbor you were talking to started talking badly. ... There was only one primary school (in Rutaka -of-Muhanga) opposite Buringa. At 6:00 p.m., the meeting began in this school. ...a meeting of the Bahutu. As soon as the schoolchildren returned home, the meetings started.

*During the meetings in Rutaka, there was Father Duschamps, who left Mushishiro, went down Buringa, then returned and arrived in Mushishiro at dawn. Father Duschamps always passed by the door of our house around 11 p.m. There were other meetings held in Bahutu homes. It was those who had studied among the Bahutu who organized the meetings.*²⁴⁰

The colonial legend of the Belgians and the White Fathers managed to obscure for a long time this first genocide against the Tutsi of Rwanda by speaking instead of “Rwandan revolution” or “Hutu revolution”. The White Fathers in particular justified their crimes by citing a supposed commitment to justice. ‘... there were too many injustices, there was - what is more serious - an unjust system to which the social doctrine of the Church could not subscribe,’ wrote one of their ideologists, Father Aelvoet, in 1961.²⁴¹ But it clearly appears that they were rather devoted to the colonial project, to the point of getting involved

²³⁸ CNUR, *Histoire du Rwanda*, p. 410 ; Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*, p. 357.

²³⁹ Interview, Kanyehara Prosper & Uwantege Triphonie, Kicukiro (Kigali), 14 November 2022.

²⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁴¹ Walter Aelvoet, ‘L’Eglise au Rwanda’, *Vivante Afrique*, n° 212, janvier-février 1961, pp. 4, 54.

in a genocide to destroy nationalists and the Batutsi with whom they were identified for greater effectiveness of the colonial strategy of division.

The Pope will honor God and humanity by abolishing this genocidal society of Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) outright and redirecting its current members to other religious families or occupations of their choosing. He will also be able to declare genocide perpetrators the White Fathers Léon Volker, Superior General at the time of the first genocide against the Tutsi of Rwanda, André Perraudin, bishop of Kabgayi, Alphonse Van Hoof, provincial of the White Fathers of Rwanda and others. Such a gesture will contribute to reestablishing the historical truth and disavowing the racist ideology of which local followers still feel encouraged by the consideration that their Western genocidal sponsors have continued to enjoy until now.

The second justification of the colonialist-genocidaires was the promotion of democracy. August Edmond De Shryver, who was appointed Belgian minister for the colonies on 2 September 1959 held a conference earlier on 16 June 1959 at the Centre Catholique Africain in Brussels, and stated the following:

*If Belgium decreed independence and created Democracy in a logical way, it would be supreme injustice because the masters of the moment would impose their domination on the Bahutu. Any democracy therefore seems impossible if the Belgians do not stay there, and in large numbers, because a democracy introduced and supported by the Tutsis is incompatible with the demands of social justice.*²⁴²

However, a few years earlier, during a visit to Belgium in September 1955 of the Bami of Rwanda and Burundi, Mutara III Rudahigwa of Rwanda had presented to the Ministry of Colonies around thirty political reforms which were under discussion within the CSP (Conseil Supérieur du Pays / Superior Council of the Country), including the election of members of the sub-chieftaincy councils. It was the Belgian officials of the Ministry of Colonies, guided by racist schemes, who opposed it, in these terms: *'the CSP proposes to replace pure and simple election by the population. Agents of the Ministry of the Colony pointed out to the interlocutors that the composition will be disrupted because the Hutus are more numerous. The argument did not seem to impress the interlocutors'*.²⁴³ Another internal note from the same Ministry further clarified the position of the Mwami of Rwanda: *'The King of Rwanda clearly expressed the opinion that he did not fear such an eventuality and that he wanted to take into account the real preferences of the inhabitants'*.²⁴⁴

The same Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa also asked the customary authorities who had been appointed until then, to resign in favor of democratic elections. In a meeting held on 5 April 1959, the customary cadres voted in favor of this proposal with the exception of only two, a chieftain and a sub-

²⁴² Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*, p. 292.

²⁴³ Paulus J.P., Note pour le Ministre, 26 Septembre 1955. As quoted in CNUR, *Histoire du Rwanda*, pp. 323-324, 325.

²⁴⁴ Première Direction de la Deuxième Direction Générale, Note pour Monsieur le Ministre, 28 avril 1956. As quoted by NURC, *Histoire du Rwanda*, p.325.

chieftain of Rusenyi Chieftaincy in the Kibuye Territory.²⁴⁵ The Belgian colonial administration refused this resignation without explanation, because it took away from this same colonial administration its main weapon, namely the argument of division and awareness of ethnic hatred which was based on the fact that the majority of the indigenous auxiliaries of the colonial administration were Batutsi at that time, following the policy of ethnicization of education and administration adopted earlier by the colonizers and missionaries.

We can therefore easily distinguish, contrary to the declarations of De Schryver, which of the Belgian authorities and the Rwandan leaders at the head of whom was Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa were truly democrats. Indeed, one of the propaganda writings of the time, strongly supported by the colonial administration and the missionaries, spoke of a *'mututsi and muhutu problem'* *'created by the presence of two distinct racial groups', 'one of which played, over the centuries, the role of dominator and the other that of dominated'*.²⁴⁶ The author of the article targeted in particular the *'customary authorities'* made up of *'chieftains and sub-chieftains, but also and by extension, the judges and clerks, the assistants of the sub-chiefs, ... the indigenous police officers, the agricultural monitors and veterinarians, nurses'* who formed, according to him, *'the current category of the strong, which often does not fail to abuse its privileged position and, in front of whom finds itself, without means of defense, all the mass of the common people'*.²⁴⁷

It should be remembered that during colonization, *'Customary officials had gradually become civil servants in the service of the European administration: they could be promoted, punished, dismissed and transferred. ...The European staff...controlled the smallest detail of political and administrative life, including the king's court at Nyanza'*.²⁴⁸ Theoretically dependent on the Mwami according to customary law, the chiefs and sub-chiefs in reality depended on the European colonial administration. A law of 1925 placed Ruanda-Urundi at the rank of province of the Belgian Congo at the same time as it replaced the post of Royal Commissioner with that of Vice Governor General of the Belgian Congo, Governor of Ruanda-Urundi. This therefore depended on the Governor General of the Belgian Congo who in turn depended on the Minister of Colonies, then on the Prime Minister up to the King of the Belgians. Under the Vice Governor General of Belgian Congo and Governor of Ruanda-Urundi was the Resident, *'solely responsible for relations with the native king and political direction'*.²⁴⁹ Under the Resident were the administrators of the territories having under their orders assistant territorial administrators and territorial agents. The chiefs and sub-chiefs received orders from the latter.

In this new administrative system, the European administrator has multiple functions. He controls several chieftancies. It is he who centralizes everything; he sanctions and monitors the execution of the orders he

²⁴⁵ Kimenyi, *De la déconstruction du Rwanda*, pp. 284-285.

²⁴⁶ Gaspard Cyimana, 'Plaidoyer pour le menu peuple au Rwanda-Burundi', *Revue Nouvelle*, 15 mars 1959.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁸ CNUR, *Histoire du Rwanda*, p. 261,263.

²⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 262.

gives. ... To have his orders carried out, the administrator exerted pressure and extreme blackmail on native executives by several kinds of sanctions: dismissals, fines, canings, etc. ... The real relations between the territorial authorities and the natives were mainly played out at the territorial level. The only order that the King could give to the chieftains was to say that the orders of the Belgian administration had to be obeyed.²⁵⁰

This illumination of the context allows us to better understand the meaning and depth of the words and questions of Monsignor Aloys Bigirumwami, then bishop of Nyundo, in a Belgian newspaper in September 1958. Responding to the 'Manifeste des Bahutu' (Bahutu Manifesto), another sadly famous racist propaganda document of the Belgian colonial administration and the White Fathers and other European priests signed by their Rwandan puppets, the Bishop of Nyundo asked the following questions and gave the following suggestions:

The Bahutu address themselves, don't they, to the Batutsi? But does it apply to all those who wear the Batutsi label? Is it for a small group? Is it specifically to the provincial heads who are only a handful of 52 people in Rwanda? Is it to the sub-chieftains and their assistants, barely reaching the number of a thousand? ... The root of the problem seems to be the fact that, given the current evolution of Rwanda, many people, Bahutu, Batutsi, undoubtedly also the Batwa, would like to take an active, effective part in political, social and economic affairs of the country. Why, then, not address directly those responsible for the destiny of our country, that is to say the Mwami, the Resident, the Governor of Ruanda-Urundi or the Belgian Government?²⁵¹

At the first contact with Rwandan society, the Europeans decreed that Bahutu, Batwa and Batutsi were three distinct races and that power was in the hands of the minority Batutsi alone, who would have acquired it as conquerors from abroad and having reduced the majority Bahutu in slavery. Racist propaganda took up and amplified this false perception towards the end of Belgian colonization. Speaking of the myth of origins, Brard, the White Father who founded the first Catholic mission in Rwanda explains:

It is also to Kihanga [Gihanga] that we trace the origin of the three races which inhabit Rwanda. ... As we see, the blacks, who reason little, resorted to the fable to explain their origin which they assumed to be common, although it clearly appears that there are three absolutely distinct races.

... the Batwa are the first inhabitants of Rwanda, ... The Bahutu upon their arrival in Rwanda subjugated the Batwa and enjoyed their conquest until the appearance of the Batusi. ... Since then, the Bahutu have been the slaves of the Batusi.²⁵²

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 263.

²⁵¹ Mgr A. Bigirumwami, 'Etat de la question sur le problème des Batutsi, Bahutu et Batwa', *Témoignage chrétien*, édition belge, 5 septembre 1958. As quoted by Nkundabagenzi, *Rwanda politique*, pp. 40-41.

²⁵² Lettre du Père Brard du 8 février 1902 à Monseigneur Livinhac, A.G.M. Afr.,02/1 et N° 098523, in Stefaan Minnaert, *Le Rwanda vu par le père Brard (1898-1906). Contribution à l'histoire de l'évangélisation du Rwanda. Ecrits et rapports du fondateur de la mission catholique de Save* (Kigali, 2021), pp. 93-94 ; 96, 97.

Regarding social relations and the exercise of power before and at the beginning of colonization in Rwanda, the anthropologist Jan Czekanowsky observed during his research in 1907 that Rwandan society was structured into four social classes based on wealth and not on ethnicity; that *'there are a truly significant number of Bahutu'* in the echelons of power; and that *'the institution of slavery does not play a role'* in Rwanda.²⁵³ Belgian priest and historian Stefaan Minnaert, former archivist of the White Fathers in Rome but currently a diocesan priest in Belgium, also made the following observation in 2008:

*Once settled in Rwanda... the White Fathers see that there are poor and rich people among the Bahutu and the Batutsi. In their writings, they maintain confusion about the mass of the population and the political elite. They designate this mass (composed of poor Tutsi and Hutu) by the term "the Bahutu"; and the political and economic elite (composed of wealthy Tutsi and Hutu), by the term "the Batutsi".*²⁵⁴

Father Alphonse Brard himself recognizes that the poor Batutsi are by far the most numerous, even if he persists in the error of considering that the ruling class and the middle class are made up solely of Batutsi.

*Among the Batutsi the ruling class and the middle class are the few, the poor class is by far the most numerous. ... In the poor class we no longer meet the pure kitusi type: ... The great Batutsi chiefs despise their poor brothers, they let them work like the Bahutu, they do not live with them, do not ally with them. They leave them in the same rank as the vanquished race.*²⁵⁵

Rwandan sources also demonstrate, with examples sometimes surprising for minds formatted with divisive ideologies of Western origin, that Rwandan society was truly well integrated, particularly in the institutions of power. Hamitic ideology with its irreducible differences in the physical and moral traits of different components of Rwandan society had indeed greatly exalted the Batutsi and created among the Bahutu the self-contempt which pushed some to pass themselves off as Batutsi, a phenomenon called *Kwihutura*. Likewise, the ideology of Hutu supremacy resulting from the "Rwandan revolution" exalted the Muhutu and exercised violence and discrimination against the Mututsi so that some Batutsi who remained in Rwanda took identity cards bearing the label "Hutu" to try to escape persecution and access certain rights. The examples we are going to see show that before colonization, Banyarwanda from different groups felt valued and could enjoy great consideration without having to change their 'ethnic' identity.

²⁵³ Jan Czekanowski, *Forschungen im Nil-Kongo-Zwischengebiet, vol. 1, Ethnographie, Zwischenseengebiet Mpororo, Ruanda* (Klinkhardt & Biermann, Leipzig, 1917). Excerpts translated into English by Bachmann Klaus, *Every day life in early colonial Rwanda. Insights from German and Polish sources* (Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2020), pp. 63-64.

²⁵⁴ Stefaan Minnaert, 'Les Pères Blancs et la société rwandaise durant l'époque coloniale allemande (1900-1916) : une rencontre entre cultures et religions', in Paul Rutayisire, Jean-Philippe Schreiber et Deo Byanafashe, *Les religions au Rwanda : défis, convergences et compétitions* (Editions de l'UNR, Butare, 2009), pp. 53-101, p. 67-68.

²⁵⁵ Lettre du Père Brard du 8 février 1902 In Minnaert, *Le Rwanda vu par le père Brard*, pp. 99-100.

We thus learn that 'Chief Bisangwa' was a 'Hutu raised at Court'.²⁵⁶ Bisangwa was the commander of the *Ingangura-rugo* warriors, the royal guard and one of the main elite units under King Kigeli IV Rwabugili, the last independent king of Rwanda. Alexis Kagame recounts his heroic end during the expedition in July 1896 against the Belgian soldiers of the Congo Free State (known by its French acronym EIC) who had invaded Rwanda and settled in Shangi in Kinyaga chieftaincy.²⁵⁷ The conversation between Chief Bisangwa and Prince Muhigirwa, son of Rwabugiri, is a moving episode where this famous leader demonstrates bravery, a sense of honor and loyalty that defies even a prince.

The first engagement took place at sunrise. The attackers succeeded in killing some Blacks in the camp and the alarm was raised. The rapid-fire weapons easily overcame the numbers. In a matter of moments, the Rwandans suffered losses greater than any ever recorded in a single battle. ... Chief Bisangwa tried to regroup the fugitives of his company to return to the attack, but he did not succeed; something incredible had just happened in an instant: our heroes found that there was no shame in fleeing from such weapons. Unable to admit it on his own account, Chief Bisangwa headed towards the camp, followed by his devoted servant, called Serubyogo.

He met Prince Muhigirwa who was fleeing without return. The Chief called out to him: "O son of Rwabugili! you dare to flee"? The prince replied: "Even if the King himself presented himself, I would admit to him that I was fleeing. I will never again fight the Europeans: they have just, in a few moments, dispossessed me of my beautiful army which, however, had not been attributed to me by them"! To which Bisangwa replied: "Fleeing from abroad, I understand that, because then we return to Rwanda. But fleeing from Rwanda, where do you want us to go and live? The saying goes: He who has drunk the milk of the Court repays it with his blood! [in italic in the text] If I cannot defeat the Europeans, I will not return to the Court to tell the King that I fled them on the very soil of Rwanda!"

Having said this, he advanced towards suicide towards the camp, while only Serubyogo accompanied him carrying the bow and the quiver. A few moments later, the leader fell, hit by a bullet in the forehead, and the same projectile felled the faithful servant.²⁵⁸

Chief Bisangwa was replaced by his little brother Sehene to command the *Ingangura-rugo*.²⁵⁹

Kagame recounts another no less moving episode during the battle for the succession of Rucunshu between King Mibambwe IV Rutalindwa, successor designated and enthroned by King Rwabugili, and the camp of the future king Yuhi III Musinga. This time it involves a Mutwa, Semunkima, a brave and prominent member of the royal guard, whose loyalty and sense of honor recall those of Chief Bisangwa.

²⁵⁶ Gamaliel Mbonimana, *L'instauration d'un royaume chrétien au Rwanda (1900-1931)*, (Université Catholique de Louvain, thèse de doctorat en Histoire contemporaine, 1981), p. X.

²⁵⁷ Alexis Kagame, *Un abrégé de l'histoire du Rwanda de 1853 à 1972*. (Tome II) (Editions universitaires, Butare, 1975), p. 112.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 117.

The residence of Mibambwe IV was finally surrounded and his followers set it on fire themselves. The King committed suicide before being consumed by fire. ... the Mutwa Semunkima, a member of the Urwililiza company, fought without sparing himself and killed at least ten of Musinga's supporters.

Finally seeing that everything was lost, that his master's hut was already on fire, he did not think of running away afterwards. He sang the beautiful warrior song entitled Mhundu, of which he changed the initial verse at that moment, adapting these words to the well-known tune: Inyagira-bahunde ntiyansiga = the Hero who surprises- the-Bahunde cannot leave me alive. It was the beginning of Mibambwe IV's warrior ode. It was singing like this that he entered the burning hut.²⁶⁰

The Rwandan historian, usually very discreet about the 'ethnic' identity of historical figures, also mentions the famous Seruteganya, a very influential Hutu official at the court of Rwabugili, falsely accused of being the lover and even of having made the queen mother Murorunkwere pregnant. An intrigue which will end in a tragedy in which the queen mother, Seruteganya, and his four sons will perish. The extracts we offer on this character will be a little long but not boring; we want to further enlighten the reader on the context and mentality of the time. Furthermore, the historical writings of Father Alexis Kagame are rather very pleasant reading. In addition to the fact that he wrote with talent, he had, to write this book that we cite, the exceptional privilege of recording in 1945 the stories dictated by a dozen Abiru, guardians of traditions and rituals relating to governance, by order of Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa. He was also able to interview 19 key informants, '*direct, eyewitnesses... of the facts they report*',²⁶¹ including the famous Ruhinankiko, a contemporary of King Rwabugili who was of his age, and one of the two uncles of Mwami Yuhi III Musinga having played the leading role for his enthronement after the Rucunshu coup d'état.

The Court then proclaimed a great expedition against Ndorwa. The commander-in-chief of the expedition was Rubuga, son of Senyamisange. A rich loot was raided around the locality called Mirama (opposite the current border post of Kagitumba). This locality gave its name to the Mirama expedition. As Gisaka, recently conquered, had been impoverished by raids, the spoils of the expedition were directed to this region and distributed to all those who had taken part. ...

Mirama's expedition...had been directed against Ndorwa, in its area called Mhororo. There were Bahima Notables there, loyal subjects of the Court, whose livestock had been included in the raid. Two of them, Mucocoli and Rwandenzi, had presented themselves to the commander-in-chief of the expedition to claim their property, but without success. They had hastened to arrive at Court before the return of the expedition and they had won their case. The Court sent an authorized messenger to Rubuga, ordering him to hand over their flocks to the two Notables.

They had a neighbor who was not disturbed by the expedition, whose name was Gisilibobo. Events had undoubtedly made him understand that it paid to be on good terms with the Court, because other expeditions could return to the area. So, he presented himself with a beautiful gift of submission: a herd of 30

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.124, 125.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

heifers of the same colour urwirungu = ash-brown. Prince Nkoronko, who undoubtedly wanted to probe his former wife's feelings towards him, requested this herd as a fief. The Queen mother refused it to him and instead, attributed the herd to a gentleman named Seruteganya, son of Kivura.

This Seruteganya was a Muhutu, a high official responsible for the tannery service at the Court. He was not a newcomer since under the previous reign he had been the subject of a song, the first verse of which was preserved by the Memorialists. We have detailed elsewhere, moreover, the number of benefits he held (*Hist. des Armées bovines*, n° 41-42, 78-179). The new Queen Mother had made him her confidant. The disgruntled Prince Nkoronko sought how he would take revenge for this affront, by wanting to reach the said official who had nothing to do with it. ...

A Party was thus gradually formed against Seruteganya, because he had started to make people jealous. ... The accusation against Seruteganya was very delicate: it was insinuated that he boasted of having become the Queen Mother's lover and it was hoped that the young monarch would eventually shoot him down. When, following these denunciations, the conspirators noted that the King was showing animosity towards Seruteganya, they thought of giving him the final blow by letting the monarch understand that, according to some, it was whispered that the Queen mother was pregnant.

A pregnant Queen Mother was an extremely serious matter. ... Kigeli IV summoned his three wives, daughters of Nzirumbanje, and asked them the question: "... Tell me the truth: is she really pregnant? » The three women who were in the plot responded evasively and suggested that the fact was real. The conspirators had hoped that the King's first reaction would be to kill Seruteganya, even if it meant being undeceived after the fait accompli.

The King reacted differently, because for him it was no longer a question of Seruteganya, but of a pregnant Queen mother, who was his own. The royal court was located in Giseke. The monarch abruptly left the locality, ordering the servants to set out immediately to join him. The Queen Mother, who could not explain this unexpected departure, set out two days later to join her son. He was quick to cross the Nyabarongo as quickly as possible. Having crossed the river, he published the decision to be communicated urgently to all those responsible for the fords: all boats had to be "moored" to the eastern bank and no one could pass from one bank to the other. ...

When the Queen Mother arrived at the Nkingo near Rugobagoba, at Seruteganya's, the man named Mbonymbuga, son of Nyamwishyura, beat at the top of Mount Kamonyi the drum he had received from the monarch in order to publish the following sentence: "Seruteganya is exiled from Rwanda with his sons, and they must have crossed the border within eight days, under penalty of extermination". Traditions report that the Queen Mother then gave the order to pursue this man and bring him to her. But the monarch's envoy managed to escape the pursuers.

On arriving at Runda, in the vicinity of the river, the Queen Mother was able to learn that it was impossible to cross. ... She progressed along the river towards the North and the next day, arriving at the ford called Nketsi, she came across a group of canoeists that the King's order had not yet reached, and who were carelessly serving the passengers. The Queen Mother thus passed east of the river, with her numerous retinue, and went to camp at Mbilima near Matovu..., visibly planning to pursue her son and explain herself with him; she had finally learned the reasons for the conflict.

Kigeli IV quickly learned that his mother had crossed the river. He called a large council of elderly Chiefs and asked them the following question: "What should we do when a snake is entwined in the neck of a churn"? Chief Rwakagara replied: "We must, by all means, keep the snake away to kill it away, without harming the churn". But Chief Remera, son of Vuningoma, replied: "When the snake does not want to move away, we must still kill it, at the risk of breaking the churn at the same time". ... The King visibly opted for Rwakagara's advice, because he sent several Chiefs to Mbilima with orders to pay court to his mother, then arrest Seruteganya by surprise with his sons and execute them; then to bring his mother back to him. The main chiefs chosen for this purpose were Prince Nkoronko, his nephew Rwamhembwe, and the notable Nyamushanja who represented his father Rwakagara.

Along the way, however, the chiefs held a council: "Shall we kill Seruteganya and his people," they said to each other, "and then shall we bring the queen mother who will kill us to avenge them?" They decided not to compromise individually with the Queen Mother, and to present themselves to Mbilima as attackers. In this way, Seruteganya will want to defend himself and will die with weapons in his hands; the Queen Mother cannot attribute this death to a specific person.

So decided, so done. While the warriors presented themselves in the attitude of attackers, Seruteganya and his subordinates received them in this capacity. Finding himself surrounded and unable to escape, Seruteganya said to the Queen Mother, "They are after me and my sons, but not you. So go out and go to them: as soon as you are with the King, everything will be explained and you will avenge us." The queen mother left the house; three warriors among the attackers, ... rushed inside the enclosure to meet the queen mother. But all three were killed there by Seruteganya's archers. It was then that Murangira, son of Seruteganya, came out of the hut and struck the queen mother with a sword, saying: "It is her son who is killing us, and she would go away like that, without our blood being avenged? » Soon the house was set on fire, and Seruteganya perished in the flames with his family, including his sons Sebugigi, Murangira, Mutwarancuro and Ndengera.²⁶²

We could multiply the examples of the Bahutu and Batwa who were part of the Rwandan ruling class before and even at the beginning of colonization. But we will give this last example of Bacondo and Bugonde, two Hutu warriors from the time of King Kigeli IV Rwabugili who Alexis Kagame mentions in his story on the revolt of Nkundiye, wren of Idjwi island which subsequently became a territory of the DRC to the sharing of colonial borders.

Nkundiye, wren of Ijwi Island, had gradually gained the trust of Kigeli IV who, ultimately, had given him real authority over the islanders. The island's Militia, Inzira-bwoba...divided, on the Rwandan model, into two Companies: Inkera-mihigo = the Radiants-for-great-achievements and Abatububa = the Walkers-heads- held-high, took part in the expeditions alongside the other Rwandan armies, and the wren had the rank of army chief. He had witnessed the setbacks suffered by the Rwandans in Bunyabungu, but also the incessant massacres that Kigeli IV carried out in his entourage. Fearing one day becoming the King's victim and now

²⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 23,29-33.

judging himself strong enough to put Rwanda in check like his peers in Bunyabungo, he revolted and proclaimed the independence of the island. ...

The King learned of the revolt in Rwamagana, one day when a festival was being celebrated, not that of the First Fruits, because there was not only that one. He saw two men in the crowd: Bacondo son of Ntasingirwa and Bugonde. They were two Bahutu living in Kinyaga, but well known to the King, because they were great warriors. Recognizing Bacondo and knowing that he lived on the bank of Lake Kivu, the King addressed him with his warlike praise and asked him: "Is this peace"? "It is by no means peace", replied the other, "Nkundiye revolted and he must have invaded Kinyaga perhaps these days"! The King immediately got up from his seat, without another word, leaving the Chiefs who surrounded him there. Grabbing Bacondo's hand and the two followed by Bugonde, he set off in this way interrupting the festivities. As soon as it was clear that he was leaving for good, there was a general commotion: the servants of the Court were packing their bags in all haste to quickly join the King, while the Chiefs immediately followed him, having given orders for their luggage to follow immediately.²⁶³

Through ignorance or bad faith, the Europeans did not want to recognize or maintain this dimension of an integrated Rwandan society. Instead, they projected their own narrow-mindedness onto the Rwandan monarchy by presenting it as a mono-ethnic Tutsi ruling class. But they knew well that in Rwanda, as elsewhere on the African continent and even in the world, we cannot build a kingdom or any viable political entity with a small spirit of withdrawal, exclusion and discrimination. With such a spirit, Rwanda would ultimately not have been what it was when the Europeans arrived: a respected kingdom. They then set about destroying it.

The stories of the first explorers like Henry Morton Stanley, or the representatives of the future German colonial power like Gustav Adolf Count von Gotzen, the first European to have visited the court of Rwanda in 1894, did not, however, ignore this integrated dimension of power and the Rwandan people. Quoting the Arab Hamed Ibrahim met in Karagwe in 1876, Stanley could assert that '*The Rwandans are a great nation*'.²⁶⁴ Von Gotzen who later became the first imperial governor of German East Africa even came prepared to wage war against a '*powerful kingdom of Rwanda*'²⁶⁵ and in his memoirs, he expresses a little his regret at having been welcomed peacefully by King Rwabugili who did not allow him to display his biceps.²⁶⁶ His successors in Rwanda even spoke of '*limited bravery*'.²⁶⁷ However, Rwabugili did not welcome them peacefully out of cowardice. His counterpart of Karagwe had advised him not to resist the

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.

²⁶⁴ Stanley, H. M., *A travers le continent mystérieux. Découverte des sources méridionales du Nil* (Paris, 1879. T.1), as quoted by Gudrun Honke, Gamaliel Mbonimana, Emmanuel Ntezimana, et Sylvia Servaes, *Au plus profond de l'Afrique: Le Rwanda et la colonisation allemande 1885-1919* (Peter Hammer Verlag, Wuppertal, 1990), p. 82.

²⁶⁵ Reinhart Bindseil, *Le Rwanda vu à travers le portrait biographique de l'officier, explorateur de l'Afrique et gouverneur impérial Gustav Adolf comte Von Götzen (1866-1910)*, (Berlin, 1992), pp. 42-81.

²⁶⁶ Honke, *Au plus profond de l'Afrique*, p. 85

²⁶⁷ Akten des Kaiserl. Gouvernement von Deutsch-Ostafrika betreffend Jahresbericht 1909–13

RUANDA vol XVIII–XII nr. I A 8. As quoted by Klaus Bachmann, *Every Day Life in Early Colonial Rwanda. Insights from German and Polish Sources* (Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2020), p. 29.

European colonizer militarily or risk seeing his dynasty destroyed²⁶⁸, and the omens of the soothsayers had already shown Kageyo in Western Rwanda as the place where the first European had to be welcomed peacefully by the king.²⁶⁹

For the Rwandans as for the other peoples of the region, there was no shame in submitting to someone more powerful than you. It was a rule well internalized in this region marked by centuries of wars of conquest and annexation of small political entities by more powerful kingdoms. And from this point of view, the European colonial conquest was not perceived as a moral or political transgression. The big difference is that European colonization - in Rwanda in any case - did not aim at the conquest of new territories and their political integration. It only aimed at the exploitation of resources or other benefits and above all, the destruction of a part of the population that it rightly or wrongly perceived as an obstacle to the colonial project. And this unfortunately still persists today among certain Westerners with colonial mindset.

The Germans initially envisioned to 'destroy the power of the Watusi' as we saw above, but they did not carry out the threat. The Belgians planned and implemented the destruction of the Rwandan monarchy and the first genocide against the Tutsi starting in 1959. At the request of Vice Governor General of Belgian Congo and Governor of Ruanda-Urundi Jean Paul Harroy, Colonel Guy Logiest came from Stanleyville (Kisangani) and on 24 October 1959 developed a plan that he called "*Troubles généralisés*" (generalized disorders), a series of military operations²⁷⁰ which supervised and supported the APROSOMA and PARMEHUTU militias in the first phase of the genocide against the Tutsi that began on 1 November 1959. In collaboration with Major Louis Marlière who served as his chief of staff and who had come from the *Force Publique* headquarters in Leopoldville where he had a reputation for being a specialist in the fight against "guerrilla operations in the revolutionary wars", Logiest drafted a report on the state of affairs in Rwanda on 20 November 1959. They also outlined in detail the measures to be taken by Belgian colonial administration in order to defeat those striving for independence.

In their document, Logiest and his colleague say that '*the authoritarian regime of monarchy [...] that the Tutsi ... representing 15% of the population ... want to maintain, has to be replaced by the democratic regime ... that the Hutu representing 85% of the population... want to establish. ... That is the only way to achieve lasting peace*'. The document also states that '*UNAR should be neutralized*'. '*The traditional regime must be dismantled along with the Tutsi militias, and the King because of his value as a symbol*'.²⁷¹ After the November 1959 riots and after giving orders in a meeting of 17 November 1959 to continue replacing in the traditional administration the Batutsi who had not fled or been killed, Logiest went to meet with the King of Belgians Baudouin in Bujumbura on 18 November 1959. '*The King listened to him attentively, without asking him questions, but nothing showed that he disapproved of what Logiest*

²⁶⁸ Kagame, *Un abrégé de l'histoire du Rwanda*, p. 94

²⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 96

²⁷⁰ Patrick Lefèvre & Jean Noël Lefèvre, *Les militaires belges et le Rwanda (1916-2006)*, (Racines Bruxelles, 2006), pp. 39, 42-43.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

was doing'.²⁷² Logiest also sought to get approval for his policy on Rwanda by the new minister for the colonies, August Edmond De Schryver, who visited Ruanda-Urundi in those days. Logiest explained to him the policy he had begun to implement in Rwanda and how he wanted it to continue as reflected in the above-mentioned document he had prepared in collaboration with Major Marlière.

When De Schryver left Rwanda, Vice Governor General Harroy sent a message to Logiest informing him that *'the minister was surprised and very pleased with his policy. He told him on the plane that he planned to follow Logiest's policy to the end, and that the solution would be to appoint Colonel Logiest to the post of Special Resident of Rwanda, until the elections'*. Harroy went on to tell Logiest that that very evening, Minister De Schryver immediately told it to General Janssens, the chief of staff of the *Force publique* in Léopoldville (Kinshasa) and persuaded him to 'lend' Logiest for six months to perform civilian duties. Harroy also confirmed this request in a letter to General Janssens. On 4 and 5 December 1959, Logiest received telegrams informing him that he had been transferred from Congo to Rwanda, in the duties of Special Civilian Resident. In those new assignments, Logiest was given extraordinary powers, so that General Janssens pointed out to the CSP (Conseil Supérieur du Pays) that *'he has unlimited power, he is allowed to forbid any meeting, to imprison and hang whomever he wants'*.²⁷³

It is clear, then, that the policy pursued by Belgium in Rwanda at the end of colonization was a policy devised and agreed upon by various institutions, and supported by the highest Belgian authorities up to the monarch. Colonel Logiest as one of those who had conceived it and who was in charge of implementing it, was given full latitude to continue to persecute and attack UNAR members and the Batutsi without hindrance. Belgium should recognize its responsibilities in the first genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda from 1959, and clearly condemn as genocide perpetrators the personalities who were involved in it such as King Baudouin, Minister De Schryver, Vice Governor General of Belgian Congo and Governor of Ruanda-Urundi Harroy, Special Resident Logiest and others. As in the case of the White Fathers, such a gesture will help to eradicate the ideology of genocide in the Great Lakes region if its current supporters see that the first to have developed and implemented this ideology in Rwanda are disavowed.

To cover up the genocide that they had planned and committed, the Belgian colonizers and the White Fathers used the mask of democracy in their propaganda by systematically opposing what they called the Hutu majority and the Tutsi minority. Thus, both the monarchy and the nationalists of the UNAR were portrayed as Batutsi, and those they encouraged and supported to commit acts of violence were called Bahutu who fought for their emancipation while most acted out of coercion, at least at the beginning. On 29 and 30 July, 1 and 2 August 1961, the priests of the Kigali Sainte famille mission wrote in their diary that *'gukora [meaning setting houses on fire, expelling, looting, wounding and sometimes killing Batutsi. 'Gukora' translates literally by 'to work'] is taking place in different communes of Kigali. The priests*

²⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 52.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

openly accused the Belgian colonial administration and its PARMEHUTU puppets of being the ones inciting violence. They also pointed out that the security forces were doing nothing to stop the atrocities.

For several days tension had been rising in the surroundings of Kigali where since November 1959 the Bahutu and the Batutsi had continued to live together, despite many attempts by the Administration and political leaders to do here too what was called "a purge." ... This Saturday 29, members of Parmehutu begin the expulsion (with attacks and looting) of Batutsi and Bahutu non-members of Parmehutu in Remera, Kacyiru. ... Sunday [30 July 1961]. ...In the afternoon, the "work" (gukora = expel, pillage, injure and sometimes kill) is done in Gisozi. We have around 5,000 refugees at the mission. In Kimihurura they also "work". Monday [31 July 1961]. They "work" in Gisozi, Kimuhurura, Gikondo, Nduba, Bumbogo. Many injured. New refugees. They exceed 600. ... We start to go by car to look for the injured. ... 1 August 1961. ... They "work" in Kicukiro. Father Superior, while circulating, notes that the Bahutu who "work" all say that they do this reluctantly, but that they have orders!

... the communes of Rutunga [probably Rutongo?] and Kicukiro are the central point today. There are deaths. In Gahanga there are fights. All this under the orders of the mayors. The municipality of Remera continues to "work". We have not seen any serious intervention by what we call the Forces of Order to restore it. They let it happen! However, the Bahutu still tell the Father Superior and Abbot Charles who circulate to give the sacraments and transport the injured that they would stop of their own accord, but that every evening instructions are given for the "work" of the following day; with threats that the houses of those who refuse to "work" will be demolished.²⁷⁴

The priests also tried to tell this to the then colonial leader of Rwanda, Special Resident Colonel Guy Logiest, with two civilians ready to testify that they were being coerced into attacking their Tutsi neighbors. Logiest showed them that he took no interest in what they were trying to get his attention to. The priests were worried that the authorities might harm them, but they chose to do their work in accordance with God's law. Here is what they wrote in their diary on 3 August 1961:

People say that the instructions were given yesterday evening, and two say they are ready to go and testify in Kigali about these constraints. Father Superior meets Colonel Logiest, Resident. The interview is disappointing. We must choose in favor of our priestly duty, but it is clear that this will get us into trouble. We cannot, under the pretext of wanting to be good with the administration, or with a political party, approve or appear to approve acts which are only violations of the Law of God.²⁷⁵

The diary of Sainte Famille parish continued its daily chronicle on the violence in Kigali where we see the priests asking their Christians to 'not add to the sins already committed' that of taking part in the arbitrary acts of banishment of their Batutsi neighbors. The diary also notes on 7 August 1961 that in this

²⁷⁴ Daire de Kigali (1953-1965). A.G.M. Afr., N° 650-762.

²⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

region where many Bahutu members of UNAR had started by resisting their fellow PARMEHUTU, the fighting had stopped because the non-Parmehutu had decided to flee with their families.

Sunday [6 August 1961]... We are still moving around the hills, especially to try to prevent the diabolical plan of those who want to bring "work" to the commune of Gicaca where the peace has not yet been disturbed. Overall, Sunday is quite calm. ... We also warn our Christians so that they do not add to all the sins already committed, that of the arbitrary refusal, by the "councils of the people" to reinstate people in their property. ...7 August 1961. ... The calm brought by Sunday continues. The fight ends "for lack of fighters". Everyone who is not Parmehutu has understood that it is better to leave certain communes in time with wife and children. In our parish, two communes were spared: Nyarugenge (mayor who followed his conscience rather than the slogans of the party), and Gicaca (mayor Rader).²⁷⁶

Bahutu members of UNAR were also subjected to strong sensitization which pushed many to change sides. As PARMEHUTU was given power by the Belgian colonial authorities, its leaders put pressure on Bahutu and ordered them to leave the UNAR party and join PARMEHUTU, sometimes with death threats, as revealed by other sources of that time. In Remera municipality, its PARMEHUTU mayor held meetings in different places on 28 July 1961 to plan attacks against the Batutsi. He would conclude all of his meetings with the following words: *'As a Muhutu, I warn my brothers who are in Unar that they will not be spared and that the hills of Kinyinya, Nyarutarama, Gaculiro and Kibagabaga hosting the cores of Unar will be particularly targeted.'*²⁷⁷ The next day, 29 July, bands of PARMEHUTU activists led by municipal councilors attacked the hills mentioned. *'Shortly after, Councilor Rutayisire summoned the members of Unar Seromba, Muhashyi, Ikwabu, Miruho and ordered them to renounce Unar to join "their breed brothers of Parmehutu".'*²⁷⁸

The destruction of the Rwandan monarchy (death of Mwami Rudahigwa, then persecution and exile of his successor Ndahindurwa) and of the nationalist party UNAR coincides with the first genocide against the Tutsi of Rwanda. The three events are closely linked. The Rwandan monarchy and the UNAR party were the only actors able to best represent the authentic interests of the Banyarwanda at the time of decolonization. The Belgian colonizers and the White Fathers worked to destroy them because they constituted an existential threat against the colonial interests which wanted to maintain themselves in Rwanda. The Batutsi were rightly or wrongly considered the main support for the monarchy and the UNAR, which is why they had to be exterminated. This genocidal logic of the colonizers continued during the liberation war of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) against the neo-colonial regime of Habyarimana, heir

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁷ Pour le comité de l'UNAR, Rwagasana Michel, Secrétaire Général et Rutsindintwarane Joseph, Conseiller Politique de l'UNAR, *Rapport sur les incidents du territoire de Kigali*, Kigali, le 11 août 1961, Archives africaines, A 63 RW A92. As quoted by Philibert Gakwenzire, *Les politiques de discrimination, persécutions et génocide des Tutsi en commune de Rubungu et de Gikomero (1960-1994)*, (Université Libre de Bruxelles, thèse de doctorat en Histoire, 2017), p. 84.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

to PARMEHUTU, and it still persists today in the hostility that certain Westerners dedicated to the current Rwandan political power resulting from the victory of the RPF.

The Europeans who had started to build Hutu-Tutsi divisions on the basis of the Hamitic ideology pushed them to the limit, transforming them into an ideology of hatred and genocide against the Tutsi. The fact that the Batutsi were particularly targeted by the colonialists has a reason. The first Whites confused the Batutsi with the customary authorities, and this error became a principle. Colonial extremists, who sought to destroy the traditional authority guilty of claiming Rwanda's independence, continued the initial mistake of confusing the Batutsi with traditional leaders. Authors Gabriel Périès and David Sarvenay describe how the French army and political establishment supported the Rwandan army and militias in the massacre of the Batutsi during the confrontation of the Habyarimana regime with the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), based on the “doctrine of the revolutionary war” started in Indochina and tested in Algeria and South America, as well as in Rwanda since 1959. It is a means of fighting the enemy in a “total war” aiming at the extermination of all those who could have contributed support for the enemy.²⁷⁹

In Rwanda, this counter-insurgency military doctrine has taken on a racist dimension. The French and the then Rwandan government army (ex-FAR) deemed it necessary to kill the Batutsi so that the RPF that was wrongly conflated to them could not find where to recruit fighters and get help. The colonialists also felt that if the Batutsi were attacked and some were killed and others fled, the monarchy and traditional power would lose support. Someone gave the example of killing fish by first drying the water they swam in! So, those who killed the Batutsi at that time were in fact looking for Rwanda. And they got it because the colonialists and Western missionaries continued to flourish there when nationals were massacred, deported or exiled. Since then, Rwanda was governed by those who agreed to be the instruments of the colonialists by promoting the ideology of racist hatred until the 1994 genocide. What is astonishing and shocking is that Western researchers and media have continued to portray these racist and genocidal political regimes as legitimate and democratic under the pretext that they represented a supposed Hutu majority.

Under the same logic, these Western knowledge producers have constantly sought to delegitimize the RPF (and the current political power in Rwanda) by describing it, not as a political organization and a liberation movement open to all Rwandans, which fought and defeated a political system that was racist and neo-colonial; stopped a genocide and established governance respectful of all citizens, but rather as an autocratic organization (and regime) based on a supposed Tutsi minority. Thus, the American René Lemarchand described it as *'full-fledged Tutsi-dominated dictatorship'*, and his Belgian colleague Filip Reyntjens accused it of *'discrimination against Hutu, or even Tutsi survivors of the genocide'*.²⁸⁰ Taking up a

²⁷⁹ Gabriel Périès, David Sarvenay, *Une guerre noire. Enquête sur les origines du génocide rwandais (1959-1994)*, (La Découverte, Paris, 2020).

²⁸⁰ René Lemarchand, 'Consociationalism and power sharing in Africa: Rwanda, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo', *African Affairs*, 106/422 (2006), pp. 1–20; Filip Reyntjens, 'Rwanda, évolution politique en 1996-1997', in *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs, Annuaire 1996-1997* (L'Harmattan, Paris, 1997), p. 44.

thesis dear to Reyntjens, the Frenchman Serge Dupuis speaks in intentional confusion about the '*Kigali regime*', the '*hegemonic elite*', the '*leaders of the RPF*' and the '*narrowness of their political base in post-genocide Rwanda, where the Tutsi population represents between 10 and 15% of the population*'²⁸¹, deliberately ignoring the reality which is that the RPF is the dominant political party, made up mainly of Bahutu.

Clearly, the racist Western view of Rwanda and the Great Lakes region has difficulty supporting the slightest presence of the Mututsi in the structures of power, from the first colonial contact to this day. And to definitively ensure that the Mututsi does not have access to political power, political organizations or power identified with him are automatically labeled as inherently andemocratic and against human rights, and it is decreed that he is in the minority and therefore disqualified in the name of a strange conception of democracy. However, he is a citizen, and as such he has all the rights, even that of exercising political power. But even in situations where the Mututsi was totally excluded from political power and deprived of other rights as in Rwanda in 1973, or when he exercised limited power in a political environment dominated by the Bahutu as in Burundi in 1965, this did not spare him from the genocidal threat. Simply because in Rwanda and the Great Lakes region, Hamitic ideology, the ideology of Hutu supremacy as well as anti-Tutsi racism are fundamentally genocidal.

It is therefore these ideologies, developed and successfully implemented in Rwanda, which have been exported throughout the region and which are currently sowing violence with great intensity in the DRC. In previous publications, I have shown how the M23 rebellion was created by UN experts, Western diplomats in Kinshasa as well as human rights activists in New York.²⁸² The 2012 report of the UN Group of Experts (GoE) led by Steve Hege revealed that in their previous mandate, they had drawn attention to '*the expanding and disproportionate power that ex-CNDP commanders and units held within the FARDC-led Amani Leo operations for the Kivus*'.²⁸³ The same UN GoE expressed concern in a previous report for the elections planned in the DRC in 2011 and 2012 due to the deployment of Kinyarwanda-speaking officers in North and South Kivu which gave them '*the capacity to influence the electoral process in favor of their candidates*'.²⁸⁴

Like the UN GoE, some Western diplomats in Kinshasa were unhappy with the results of the elections in North and South Kivu, which candidates supported by Kinyarwanda-speaking ex-CNDP officers had won. As donors of President Joseph Kabila's regime at the time, they '*decided that a re-run [of the November 2011 elections] would not be feasible, but that they could take advantage of Kabila's perceived weakness to push for other reforms. One of these was the arrest and transfer of Ntaganda to the*

²⁸¹ Serge Dupuis, 'Le rapprochement France - Rwanda: droits de l'homme et intérêts nationaux' (Fondation Jean Jaurès, 15/02/2023).

²⁸² See Rutazibwa, 'Paix et sécurité'; Rutazibwa, 'Discussing the causes'.

²⁸³ United Nations, Security Council, 'Interim Report (S/2012/348) of the Group of experts (GoE) on the Democratic Republic of the Congo' (21 June 2012), paragraph 66.

²⁸⁴ United Nations, Security Council, 'Final report of the Group of Experts on the DRC (UN document S/2011/738)' (2 December 2011), paragraph 78.

International Criminal Court (ICC)'.²⁸⁵ The 2012 UN GoE report mentioned above also reveals that in early 2012, 'Amid renewed international and local pressure for the arrest of Gen. Ntaganda, FARDC sought to seize upon the situation to gradually weaken the CNDP role and influence in the army'.²⁸⁶ Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch (HRW) sent messages to President Paul Kagame and Foreign Affairs Minister Louise Mushikiwabo on 8 April 2012 seeking Rwanda's cooperation in the arrest of General Bosco Ntaganda.²⁸⁷

Yet, on the same day, at the request of President Kabila, a meeting had taken place in Rubavu in Rwanda between a delegation of the Congolese government and former Kinyarwanda-speaking CNDP officers under Rwandan facilitation which recommended moderation, warning both parties that in the event of a confrontation, they could give free rein to the FDLR who constituted a serious threat to the security of Rwanda.²⁸⁸ But President Kabila slyly ignored Rwanda's recommendation, which his delegation had however accepted, and chose to follow his Western advisors with a military solution 'to weaken the CNDP role and influence in the army'. The attack failed to arrest General Bosco Ntaganda but managed to trigger persecutions and murders against Kinyarwanda-speaking soldiers; which led to the creation of the M23 on 6 May 2012 to defend themselves and resist.

The obsession and relentlessness against the presence of Batutsi (and Kinyarwanda-speaking people more broadly) in security organs and in administrative bodies therefore do not only characterize Congolese extremists like Justin Bitakwira that we already know. They are also and above all the work of these Western actors that we have just seen, namely UN experts; Western diplomats; human rights activists; and so-called researchers whose actions and narratives are marked by anti-Tutsi racism; hostility against post-genocide Rwandan political power and against the Congolese Tutsi; and by great sympathy for the FDLR genocidal forces. Steve Hege, coordinator of the U.N. Group of Experts on the DRC from 2010 to 2012 could make this horrible plea in favor of the FDLR just after the end of Operation *Umoja Wetu* which brought together the Congolese and Rwandan armies to dislodge the FDLR from the Congolese forests and repatriate them with their families.

The FDLR feel deeply betrayed by the Congolese government's new collaboration with Rwanda and this will continue to negatively impact their treatment of the local population. Were it not for the military expertise of ex-FAR officers, who trained the majority of Mai- Mai groups in the Kivus, the RPF might have toppled the government of Laurent Kabila. Throughout the recent conflict with Rwanda's proxy army of the CNDP, the FDLR's role as a principal defender of the Congo was reaffirmed. Retribution against those communities

²⁸⁵ Jason Stearns, 'From CNDP to M23. The Evolution of an Armed Movement in Eastern Congo' (London, 2012), p. 42.

²⁸⁶ United Nations, Security Council, 'Interim Report (S/2012/348) of the Group of experts (GoE) on the Democratic Republic of the Congo' (21 June 2012), paragraph 69.

²⁸⁷ NANOJV, 'Les 3 tweets qui donnent le signal de l'assaut contre le Rwanda suivis d'une stupéfiante anomalie oubliée'. Publié sur le site d'information parisien NANOJV le 15 août 2012.

²⁸⁸ The minutes of the meetings held in Kigali and Rubavu were published as annex to the *Rwanda's Response to the Allegations contained in the Addendum to the UN Group of Experts Interim Report*, 27 July 2012. See also the interview of then Rwandan Defence Minister James Kabarebe that appeared in the Belgian newspaper *Le Soir* of 29 August 2012.

whose Mai-Mai forces recently sided with the FARDC/RDF cannot be ruled out. Furthermore, while the operations claim to have dislodged the FDLR from main villages, history proves that the disruption of their regular commercial and subsistence activities often leads to increased exactions on civilians.²⁸⁹

It is imperative that individuals like Steve Hege, Jason K. Stearns, Kenneth Roth and others who sparked the conflict in eastern DRC in 2012 and who continue to fuel it with their false and racist narrative can be prosecuted.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this petition, I mentioned with disapproval the comments of the German ambassador in Kinshasa on the conflict in the east of the DRC after his audience with the Congolese minister of defense on 7 March 2024. While concluding, I would like to quote this time an excerpt from the common-sense speech given on 17 October 2022 by German Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office Katja Keul at the conference “New Perspectives on German Colonial Rule - A Scholarship Programme for Cooperative Research”.

Colonial rule left deep wounds in many countries, especially in Africa, ... It has caused or aggravated numerous conflicts, global inequalities and regional instabilities that we are seeing today. For a long time, Europeans regarded Africa as a continent of crises and poverty. But let's be honest. Many of the conflicts that do indeed exist on the continent are the direct result of European colonialism. ... Colonialism was a system of injustice. And this system was upheld by individuals and state entities. We have ignored this chapter of our history for far too long. As a society. As a government. And also as the Federal Foreign Office.²⁹⁰

I personally appreciated the Minister of State's address as powerful and sincere. But I will appreciate more if her vision applies concretely to the conflict in the DRC and if it truly permeates Germany's foreign policy on Rwanda and the Great Lakes region. Germany should even, in my opinion, given its historical role in the convening of the Berlin Conference (and incidentally, one of the three European colonial and neocolonial powers in Rwanda, but fortunately the least harmful as it left without committing genocide) and drawing on its experience of dealing with its colonial past with today's Namibia, consider an initiative to coordinate reflection and action of reparation with regard to Rwanda, involving all Western countries and Western organizations having played a role in the tragic colonial and neocolonial history of Rwanda, namely Germany, Belgium, France, the Roman Catholic Church and the organization

²⁸⁹ Steve Hege, ‘Understanding the FDLR in the DR Congo: Key facts on the disarmament and repatriation of Rwandan rebels’ (Peace Appeal Foundation, 24 February 2009).

²⁹⁰ Speech by Minister of State Katja Keul at the conference “New Perspectives on German Colonial Rule - A Scholarship Programme for Cooperative Research”, Berlin, 17.10.2022.

that will have replaced the UN. Rwanda does not need to demand this reparation. It has rebuilt itself and will rebuild itself with or without it. On the other hand, these Western countries and organizations need to take this action for their own redemption.

Other countries and world leaders should also change their vision of the conflict in the DRC and understand its deep nature and its real stakes. Non-Western powers like Russia and China are generally appreciated in Africa for their non-colonial past and their foreign policies devoid of arrogance and hypocrisy. But they should add a certain ethics: it is not appropriate to rent war planes and mercenaries, sell combat planes and drones to a genocidal and irresponsible regime like that of Kinshasa. Other actions recommended to world leaders in relation to the conflict in eastern DRC are included in the section that follows. I preferred to address each world leader directly, with the exception, for ethical reasons, of the head of state of the DRC for his involvement in the genocide in his country; and of UN officials, the heads of state of Burundi, Tanzania, South Africa and Malawi for their military support to the genocidal regime in Kinshasa.

II. Recommended actions to world leaders

1. It is imperative that Congolese President Felix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo be apprehended and tried for the crime of genocide, as well as other accomplices within his regime.
2. It is time to disband the United Nations for its military support of a genocidal regime and militias in DRC, and to criminally prosecute those involved in the decision-making process.
3. The heads of state of South Africa, Tanzania, Burundi and Malawi must also be prosecuted for complicity in genocide in DRC, as well as all those who intervened in the respective decision-making processes.
4. It is time for Rwanda to release Congolese General Laurent Nkunda whom it sacrificed to make peace with the DRC - a sacrifice that successive Congolese authorities have made useless - so that he can join his comrades in their liberation struggle.
5. The Rwandan authorities should seize the African Union (AU) to reflect seriously on an ultimate solution for a definitive peace for Rwanda and the populations concerned on the other side of the current border where massacres and persecutions of a genocidal nature already take place on a recurring basis, as the Congolese state seems determined to make the conflict intractable.
6. The Pope will honor God and humanity by outright abolishing the **society** of the White Fathers (also known as Missionaries of Africa) because of its involvement in the first genocide against the Tutsi towards the end of Belgian colonization, and by declaring genocide perpetrators the White Fathers Léon Volker, Superior General at the time, André Perraudin, bishop of Kabgayi, Alphonse Van Hoof, provincial of the White Fathers of Rwanda and others who were personally involved.

7. Belgium should recognize its responsibilities in the first genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda from 1959, and clearly condemn as genocide perpetrators the personalities who were involved in it such as King Baudouin, Minister for the colonies August Edmond De Schryver, Vice Governor General of Belgian Congo and Governor of Ruanda-Urundi Jean-Paul Harroy, Colonel Guy Logiest and others.

8. It is imperative that individuals like Steve Hege, Jason K. Stearns, Kenneth Roth and others who sparked the conflict in eastern DRC in 2012 and who continue to fuel it with their false and racist narrative can be prosecuted.

9. Germany should, given its historical role in the convening of the Berlin Conference and being the least harmful of the three European colonial and neo-colonial powers in Rwanda as it left without committing genocide, consider an initiative to coordinate reflection and action of reparation with regard to Rwanda, involving all Western countries and organizations having played a role in the tragic colonial and neo-colonial history of Rwanda, namely Germany, Belgium, France, the Roman Catholic Church and the organization that will have replaced the UN.

Berlin, October 2024.

Annex 1.

Transcript of large extracts from Bitakwira's interview on *Bosolo Television*:

'Processus électoral et sécuritaire : le décryptage de Bitakwira', (BOSOLO NA POLITIK OFFICIELLE), 25 juillet 2023,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ztbPXeolKU>.

Journaliste : Monsieur Justin Bitakwira, allez ! Bonjour et bienvenu !

Bitakwira : Bonjour, sango Israel Mutombo !

Journaliste : Content de vous recevoir encore aujourd'hui, eh ! Depuis la dernière fois je pense, jour pour jour, on a presque six mois ou une année, je ne sais pas....

Bitakwira : Je crois bientôt huit mois.

Journaliste : Bientôt huit mois, depuis votre dernier passage.

Bitakwira : C'était au mois de décembre.

Journaliste : Mais c'est toujours un plaisir de vous recevoir aujourd'hui, eh !

Bitakwira : Moi aussi. Eh ! Ma vocation aussi c'était d'être prêtre. Comme je vous vois en soutane, ça me rappelle beaucoup de choses.

Journaliste : Vous regrettez de ne pas continuer ?

Bitakwira : Je ne le regrette pas parce que, chacun de nous a un destin. Voila ! J'assume le mien.

Journaliste : Vous assumez le vôtre ! Est-ce que ozo kanisa lelo, au moment où on est en train de parler, soki okanisi vie ya ki prêtre ; les souhaits que vous aviez auparavant ; qu'est-ce qui vous motivait pour devenir prêtre ? Même dans l'ambition, c'était quoi ?

Bitakwira : unhhhh ! Je crois que mon déclin est parti de cette vocation de prêtre. Parce que, vous aurez l'occasion de visiter mon village ; vous ne pouvez pas vous imaginer qu'un village aussi caché que celui-là, puisse mettre au monde le Bitakwira dont on parle aujourd'hui. Donc, après ma sixième année primaire, on a fait un concours de toutes les écoles catholiques ; moi aussi comme tous les élèves je suis allé passer le ... concours. C'était en 74. Au mois d'août ; je suis aux champs avec ma mère ; on vient nous apprendre qu'il y a un Blanc accompagné de deux noirs qui serait chez nous à la maison, et nous on habitait une case. Et quand nous sommes arrivés avec ma mère, comme on avait toujours fréquenté la même classe avec mon défunt grand-frère ; le prêtre dit qu'il est venu chercher Bitakwira. Pourquoi ? Il ouvre son colopin [sic], pour dire que Bitakwira est passé le premier de toutes les écoles catholiques du diocèse d'Uvira, et on l'a choisi pour aller étudier au petit séminaire de Mungombe. C'est au Sud-Kivu dans le Mwenga. Je ne savais pas de quoi il s'agissait, et il a laissé le papier d'état des besoins. Vous savez, au village on se brosse avec les makala. Maintenant sur le papier, l'état des besoins du prêtre, je devais m'habiller comme un Blanc : pantouffles, chaussettes, sous-vêtement, culotte, pantalon, singlet, brosse à dent, dentifrice ; et les parents étaient obligés d'en acheter ; le lendemain je suis allé au petit séminaire pour aller étudier. Tout mon avenir part de là. Donc, vous voyez que je ne peux pas le regretter. Que le destin est venu me tirer de... comment je peux appeler ça ? Le destin est venu me tirer de ... du néant.

Journaliste : Mais vous n'avez pas capitalisé cette opportunité qui vous a été offerte par le destin ? Il fallait continuer, aujourd'hui vous seriez peut-être collègue d'Ambongo, de Monsengwo d'heureuse mémoire ?

Bitakwira : Non, je suis arrivé jusqu'au noviciat, et un prêtre m'a importuné. Et je crois, depuis le bas âge je suis quelqu'un de Je ne suis pas du genre colérique, non. Mais je suis quelqu'un qui n'aime pas le mépris.

Journaliste : Vous n'avez jamais été esclave d'opinion.

Bitakwira : Non non. Et j'avais décidé de plier tous mes bagages le même jour, et j'ai pris une autre orientation. Je ne regrette ...

Journaliste : Mais malgré cela vous êtes resté catholique ?

Bitakwira : Non pratiquant.

Journaliste : Catholique pratiquant ?

Bitakwira : non pratiquant.

Journaliste : Non pratiquant. Finalement vous n'êtes pas fixe, par rapport à la confession religieuse. Tantôt vous êtes catholique -non-pratiquant-, une fois vous étiez avec Mukuna que vous avez quitté la dernière fois parce que vous avez dit vous-même que c'était pour une histoire d'argent ; on demandait trop d'argent dans l'église ? C'est ce que vous avez ...

Bitakwira : Non, là c'était un geste politique que je suis allé poser. Ça n'avait rien à voir avec la spiritualité.

Journaliste : Ça n'avait rien à voir.

Bitakwira : avec la spiritualité.

Journaliste : Alors, aujourd'hui on vous situe où ? Vous êtes témoin de Jéhovah, vous êtes Kimbanguiste ? Vous êtes ...

Bitakwira : Je suis toujours catholique non pratiquant.

Journaliste : Cela veut dire quoi ? Catholique non pratiquant, cela veut dire quoi ?

Bitakwira : Eeh, je fais les œuvres de charité, j'aide les enfants vulnérables, parce que la foi sans les œuvres, elle n'est rien non plus. Mais si vous essayez de vous informer sur moi, vous verrez que je suis même plus catholique que ceux qui pratiquent.

Journaliste : Vous croyez en Dieu ?

Bitakwira : Unhh, au créateur.

Journaliste : Dieu créateur, c'est ça ?

Bitakwira : Au créateur.

Journaliste : Il y a une différence entre créateur et Dieu ?

Bitakwira : Oui, dans mon patois il y a un nom qui ne signifie seulement que créateur.

Journaliste : lequel ?

Bitakwira : ... Umulumbi...

Journaliste : ... Cela veut dire quoi ?

Bitakwira : Celui qui crée.

Journaliste : Celui qui crée. Il n'a pas un nom ?

Bitakwira : Chaque patois a une appellation de Dieu.

Journaliste : Exactement.

Bitakwira : Maintenant, le Dieu dont vous parlez ici c'est pour les Français.

Journaliste : unh !

Bitakwira : Mais il y a un Dieu de moi Mufuleru. Il y a un Dieu du Mushi. Il y a un Dieu des Bakongo, il y a un Dieu des Baluba, il y a un Dieu des Indiens, ...

Journaliste : On n'a pas un seul Dieu ?

Bitakwira : Chaque patois a un Dieu.

Journaliste : a une appellation, ou a un Dieu ?

Bitakwira : Je dis, je préfère créateur, parce le terme créateur me convient dans mon patois.

Journaliste : Si vous mourez aujourd'hui, où est-ce que vous allez passer votre éternité ?

Bitakwira : Je suis déjà mort pendant trois secondes. Je n'avais rien vu. ...

Journaliste : ... Vous ne savez pas où vous serez après votre mort !

Bitakwira : Non, je dis : je suis mort pendant trois secondes, mais je n'ai rien vu.

Journaliste : ... là où vous étiez entrain de partir ?

Bitakwira : Je n'ai rien vu. C'était seulement le noir, noir.

Journaliste : Vous avez perdu connaissance ou vous êtes mort ?

Bitakwira : en tout cas, ... j'ai fait un accident ; c'est en 2013 ; un accident de circulation dans mes montagnes-là ; j'ai fait huit tonneaux. Comme c'est moi-même qui étais au volant, mais j'avais attaché la ceinture. Mon policier, bien formé, au premier tonneau, lui il saute. Et moi je suis allé au fond, fond, fond. Maintenant la voiture suspendue, et moi-même suspendu. Maintenant, le moment que le policier atterrit là où je suis allé ... m'arrêter, tout le véhicule, coïncé complètement, délabré. Le policier finalement est venu pour récupérer le cadavre. C'est comme ça qu'il va détacher la ceinture. En me détachant la ceinture, comme moi je ne savais plus je suis où, je considère que je suis mort pendant quelques secondes. Je n'ai rien vu. Maintenant quand il prend le cadavre, il veut mettre à l'épaule, -lui savait que réellement je suis mort- et personne ne pouvait s'imaginer qu'avec tel accident, tu peux t'en sortir. Quand il a détaché la ceinture, - il veut porter le cadavre sur son épaule -, j'ouvre les yeux et je vois que c'est mon policier, Junior, je dis, je le reconnais. « Papa, ozo loba ? » On est où ? « On allait à Katala, mais on a fait l'accident ». C'est à quel niveau ? « Non, je ne connais pas le village ». Je lui dis : attends un peu. Il a attendu. Je fais mon mouvement, je me rends compte que mon mouvement est normal. Et c'est comme ça que je suis descendu de moi-même. Il a commencé à applaudir : « Nzambe azua lukumu ».

Journaliste : Grasia Nzambe, le créateur.

Bitakwira : ... je ne renie pas les autres appellations. Parce que je te dis qu'en Chine, les Chinois n'appellent pas le créateur Dieu.

Journaliste : Très bien ! Là, même la grand-mère ne ... pouvait rien faire ?

Bitakwira : La grand-mère ?

Journaliste : Ouais, ouais ! ...

Bitakwira : Eeh !... Les gens ont pensé que j'étais un sorcier ! Parce que je n'ai même eu aucune égratignure. Tout le monde a crié.

Journaliste : C'est de la grâce de Dieu.

Bitakwira : Du créateur.

Journaliste : La grâce du créateur !

Bitakwira : Du créateur ! Accompagnée de la grand-mère, certainement.

...[la conversation se poursuit sur la grand-mère de Bitakwira]

Journaliste : Allez, nous sommes en direct, on va parler de l'actualité politique, ...un peu de toilette pour nous permettre de faire l'entrée, avec beaucoup de considération, Messieurs et dames, Justin Bitakwira, Ministre honoraire des relations avec le parlement « et développement rural », [ajoute Bitakwira] ... est notre invité ce matin.

La dernière fois que je vous ai reçu ici, ozalaki comme un joueur qui n'a pas, qui est à la recherche d'une équipe de football. Puisque vous n'étiez pas très clair ; si vous appartenez à un camp politique nini. Ezalaki : « je parle en tant que Congolais, en tant qu'intellectuel, je suis chef coutumier. Mais nous dire si vous êtes de l'opposition, ou vous êtes dans l'Union Sacrée, vous ne vous êtes pas prononcé sur cette question lors de la dernière émission. Aujourd'hui, qu'est-ce qu'on peut retenir de vous. Vous êtes dans l'opposition ? Ou vous êtes de l'Union Sacrée ?

Bitakwira : Je n'ai jamais fait de la politique de l'autruche. Et je ne fais rien en cache-cache, politiquement parlant. Non seulement je murissais, j'observais ; c'est avec fracas que j'ai quitté le FCC pour des raisons évidentes. Et le FCC lui-même là où il est, il sait que non, « nous avons péché contre Bitakwira ». Ils savent. Ceux qui me suivent le savent. « Le FCC » ? demande le journaliste. Oui, j'avais des raisons de partir.

Journaliste : Vous n'avez pas été considéré, au FCC ?

Bitakwira : Pas considéré. Moi j'ai rang de général. « Ou peut-être vous avez été mal compris », intervient le journaliste. Non, j'ai rang de général en politique. Mais il y a des majors qui pensaient qu'ils étaient plus gradés que moi. Je dis bien des majors, en politique.

Journaliste : Vous voulez parler des caciques du PPRD-FCC ?

Bitakwira : Eeh ! Ça, c'est déjà passé ; ça appartient à l'histoire. Mais je dois dire que j'ai adhéré, solennellement et officiellement à l'Union Sacrée. « Ah, maintenant vous êtes de l'Union Sacrée », intervient le journaliste. Oui, je suis à un regroupement qu'on appelle 'Forces politiques et sociales', allié à l'UDPS, FPAU ; mais je resterai toujours critique. Je resterai toujours critique.

Journaliste : Mais vous avez un camp politique. Qu'est-ce qui vous motive ? Après observation, après introspection, après avoir mûri votre pensée -tout ce que vous avez dit ici-, qu'est-ce qui vous motive finalement pour adhérer dans l'Union Sacrée ?

Bitakwira : Non non, moi je suis eh, un des alliés les plus, les plus visibles du Président Tshisekedi. Je dois vous le dire. Eh, ce que je fais avec lui, je ne l'ai pas fait avec le Président Kabila pendant 18 ans ou 14 ans ; je ne l'ai pas fait. Eh, je suis aussi comme un conseiller du Président de la République. Quand j'ai à émettre un avis, je le lui fais, sans problème. Et je t'avais dit qu'il y a un proverbe chez moi qui dit qu'on ne peut pas aimer les plumes du corbeau et détester sa chair. Est-ce que tu me comprends ? « Si, je comprends », rétorque le journaliste. Oui, parce que beaucoup de bantous ne savent pas le sens du proverbe. Et en disant ça, c'est comme si je clôturais le débat sur cette question.

Journaliste : Si, mais, c'est à l'intention de l'opinion. Il faudra expliciter pour permettre à tout le monde de comprendre.

Bitakwira : Non, tout le monde comprend quand je dis qu'on ne peut pas aimer les plumes du corbeau et détester sa chair. Donc, quand tu aimes la veste de Bitakwira, il faut d'abord aimer la personne.

Journaliste : Si vous aimez la rose, il faut supporter ses épines.

Bitakwira : Oui. Heureusement, tu es aussi un bantou ; peut-être que tu as fréquenté un peu le village, parce que ceux, ceux qui sont nés en ville sont à moitié bantous.

Journaliste : Qu'est-ce que vous avez [sic] pas pu faire avec Kabila, et que vous êtes en train de faire avec Tshisekedi ? Je suis curieux.

Bitakwira : Non. D'abord sous Tshisekedi je n'ai aucune fonction. Mais j'ai de la considération. Ça je dois vous le dire. J'ai de la considération. « Du Président de la République » ? intervient le journaliste. Oui oui, j'ai beaucoup de considération. « Et de sa famille politique aussi », ajoute le journaliste. Ah, certainement certains peuvent ne pas me supporter, mais quand même, je suis incontournable dans la phase actuelle de l'histoire de notre pays.

Journaliste : Est-ce que Bitakwira est un problème politique, ou Bitakwira est la solution politique ?

Bitakwira : Non, je suis une solution politique. Parce qu'il y a des secrets que je détiens sur l'avenir de ce pays, dont personne n'a jamais entendu parler. Donc, je suis une solution politique.

Journaliste : Si vous êtes une solution politique, discute avec Kabila ? Je pense qu'avec cette expertise, toutes ces connaissances que vous avez et le secret, on aurait dû résoudre certains problèmes, oyo e déranger population plusieurs années ? Pourquoi il y a eu des problèmes qui sont restés non résolus malgré la bonne foi de l'ancien président de la république et de sa famille politique ? Oyo obandaki ko faire partie à l'époque, mais le problème n'a jamais été résolu. Je parle de l'insécurité, mais on va y arriver avec beaucoup de détails. Le problème social aussi.

Bitakwira : Vous savez, on peut avoir des solutions, à condition de se faire entendre par les deux oreilles. Parce que si quelqu'un t'écoute avec une oreille, c'est que déjà il se méfie de toi. Et ça sort sans entrer. J'ai donné plusieurs fois des conseils. Que dans les négociations politiques sur la guerre de l'est, quand on va recruter, ceux des délégations, qui n'y ont jamais été, c'est déjà fragiliser la délégation. Alors, de tous ces temps ici, du temps de Kabila, ça peut être même maintenant, nous sommes en train d'observer qu'on part dans certaines discussions pour aller résoudre les problèmes de l'est, et il n'y a personne de l'est, dans la délégation. Tu comprends ? « On va parler de cette question de l'est. D'ailleurs c'est pour cela que je vous ai invité. On va parler ; on va rester là-bas. Mais avant cela, tobenga nano ko epuiser matière coté ya processus électoral. Qu'on en finisse... » intervient le journaliste. Mais c'est toi qui m'a emmené dans, dans la demande : j'appartiens à quel camp politique ?

Journaliste : Si si, c'était une petite brèche. Maintenant on a ... affaire à un membre de l'Union Sacrée, proche du Président de la République, qui joue aussi le rôle du conseiller du chef de l'Etat, bien que vous n'êtes pas nommé. Ça on a déjà une idée, nous savons comment est-ce que nous allons aborder certaines questions importantes tout à l'heure. Mais restons d'abord avec vos ambitions politiques, échéance électorale ezo ya, awa awa le 20 décembre sauf imprévu, il y aura élection ; vos ambitions politiques.

Bitakwira : Mes ambitions politiques ? Bon, je les exprimerai lors de la campagne électorale. « Très bien », réagit le journaliste. Oui oui. Ça serait prématuré, en ma qualité d'opérateur politique de ce rang, de commencer à les étaler maintenant. [...inaudible]

Journaliste : Vous êtes quand-même candidat ?

Bitakwira : Oui, certainement je serai candidat. Et c'est après, après l'élection que je vais exprimer mes ambitions politiques, ou alors pendant la campagne.

Journaliste : Comment vous analysez les différentes positions, des uns et des autres ; que ce soit de l'opposition ou du pouvoir ? Parlez d'abord de l'opposition. Dans un passé récent ici, on a tous vu le bloc de l'opposition. Babandi ba marches na bango, reportées à maintes reprises, finalement différentes marches autorisées. Nous avons vu la marche du 20 acceptée, mais bapesi itinéraire mususu ; tokeyi na meeting ya Sainte Thérèse, reportée, reportée, finalement le meeting a été accordé, bakéyi de l'autre côté. On va parler de plusieurs choses en cette histoire, mais restons d'abord avec la position de Fayulu. Monsieur Fayulu se retire du processus momentanément. Il dit : « je ne peux pas déposer ba candidatures na biso ; nous ne pouvons pas rester dans le processus ; il pose des préalables : le fichier n'est pas crédible, il faut l'audit externe, bazo luka mpe bureau spécialisé étranger oyo bakoki kosala eloko wana. Ça n'accepte pas. Ils sont reçus par Kadima. Katumbi n'était pas physiquement, mais remplacé ou de, représenté par son Secrétaire général, bakutani basololi na Kadima. Muzito aussi est reçu ... à son tour ; chacun donne son point de vue. On a deux points de vue : Katumbi pense que, peu importe la forme, il faut qu'on aille aux élections. Fayulu dit : « on ne peut pas aller aux élections soki fichier ba audit yango te ». Muzito dit : « le processus électoral, eu égard des éléments qu'il a obtenu de Kadima, ils ont inspiré confiance tel que nous pensions avoir des élections au mois de décembre ». Et le pouvoir tient à ce qu'il y ait les élections en 2023. Bitakwira, le sage du pays, Bitakwira, la voix par laquelle la solution ya mboka ekoki kobima, quelle est votre lecture par rapport ya ba positions des uns et des autres ? Qu'on reporte les élections ? Qu'on fasse les élections ? Qu'on résout [sic] le problème de la crédibilité ; tous ces problèmes évoqués par l'opposition ? Qu'est-ce que vous analysez, ou comment analysez-vous cette situation ?

Bitakwira : En dehors de Katumbi, que je n'ai jamais rencontré, -je l'ai déjà vu mais pas rencontré. «Vous l'avez vu ou ? » demande le journaliste. En 2006 il était à l'assemblée nationale. « Ok », retorque le journaliste. Mais je ne l'ai jamais rencontré. Tous les autres acteurs, je les connais. La plupart, je, je, on se voit. « Muzito, Sesanga, Fayulu, Matata », intervient le journaliste. Sesanga c'est un grand ami à moi. « Ok », réagit le journaliste. Je commence par le point de vue de Fayulu. Fayulu c'est un ami, que j'ai rencontré à plusieurs reprises, nous avons échangé, je sais ce qu'il a comme sentiment sur le processus. Et, personne ne l'ignore, qu'il l'a dans sa peau comme c'est lui le président élu, et que le Président Tshisekedi c'est un président nommé, par Kabila. Et, dans la vie, dans la vie, on peut avoir une chance, mais ce n'est pas le destin. Or, le destin va au-delà de la chance. Je me rappelle quand j'ai rencontré le Président Tshisekedi la première fois, c'est pas [sic] un secret d'Etat, non. Parce que je le connaissais bien avant qu'il ne soit Président de la République. Je lui dis : Excellence Monsieur le Président de la République, dans la vie, dans la vie, quand le destin de quelqu'un sonne, il peut passer par la fenêtre, il peut passer par la porte, et il se retrouve au salon. « Peu importe la voie », intervient le journaliste. Peu importe la voie, c'est le destin de chacun, de nous. Et là Fayulu va me, j'espère qu'il va me comprendre attentivement. ... Le destin va au-delà de la chance. Alors j'ai dit au Président de la République : le destin de quelqu'un peut passer par la fenêtre, comme il peut passer par la porte, il faut savoir qu'on en faire. Dès que vous l'avez. Savoir quoi en faire. C'est l'essentiel. Celui qui pose la question : comment vous êtes arrivé ici ? C'est mon destin. Maintenant il faut savoir comment le gérer. Le destin là. Donc Tshisekedi est ... dans son destin. Et personne ne peut lui enlever là pour l'instant. Parce que la signature de Dieu va au-delà de nous tous. La pensée de Dieu va au-delà de nous ... êtres humains. Alors maintenant ... mon ami Fayulu, que j'aime bien, il doit mettre de l'eau dans son vin. Pour effectivement dire aussi à la majorité présidentielle, à la CENI, que ce pays nous appartient à tous. Ça n'appartient pas à un bloc, ça nous appartient à tous. Dieu nous l'a donné pour que nous nous arrangions à nous entendre en cas de problèmes. Donc le bloc de l'opposition doit être entendu. Si il y a aucun moindre consensus, dans ces élections, je crois qu'on aura encore reculé de deux ou de trois ans en arrière. Mais s'il y a un moindre consensus, pour que la majorité ne dise pas : qu'ils viennent ou pas, nous y allons ; c'est pas bon. Donc chacun doit mettre de l'eau aussi, dans son vin, pour que la CENI essaye d'écouter tous les sons de cloche, essaye de les examiner ; s'il y a des réponses à donner, il faut les donner. S'il y a pas de réponses à donner, il faut donner les raisons pour lesquelles il y a pas de réponses. Ça c'est mon conseil que moi je donne.

Et si le chef de l'Etat me pose la question je lui dirai que je veux aussi qu'il y ait des élections dans le délai. Mais on ne va pas y aller sans moindre consensus. Sinon je serais hypocrite, je serais flatteur.

[... suite des questions et réponses sans grande importance, sur le processus électoral.]

Journaliste : Monsieur Bitakwira, est-ce qu'on peut aujourd'hui, être fier d'aller aux élections le 20 décembre 2023 au moment où une partie du pays n'a pas pu s'enrôler, l'état congolais ne contrôle pas, ça fait plusieurs mois, et avoir un président de la république après ces élections, se réjouissant avoir la légitimité du peuple congolais ? Il faudra aujourd'hui d'abord conditionner la tenue des élections avec la résolution de la question de l'insécurité de l'est de la République du Congo, ou on peut aller aux élections même si on n'a pas résolu la question d'insécurité, et continuer à travailler pour résoudre dans le temps, mais en même temps, respecter le calendrier électoral. Ou le cycle électoral si vous voulez.

Bitakwira : C'est pourquoi, autour de ces discussions politiques, même le bloc de l'opposition n'est pas conscient qu'il y a une partie du pays qui est ... occupée. Ils ne sont pas conscients. Moi d'abord je suis de l'est, là où on tue matin, midi et soir. Fait pas m'embarrasser. Mais comme acteur politique, le jour où le Président Tshisekedi entre dans une phase où il n'y a plus de légitimité, ça sera le Président le plus faible. C'est comme ça qu'il a intérêt, même pour libérer l'est, il a intérêt d'être toujours légitime. Il a intérêt, d'être toujours légitime. Parce que s'il n'est plus légitime, il y a des actes qu'il va poser, les gens vont commencer à dire est-ce que tu es encore valide ? C'est comme ça qu'il a intérêt de garder la légitimité. Et les gens doivent être compréhensifs, que, pour faire face au Rwanda, on n'a pas besoin d'un président qui n'a plus de légitimité. Parce qu'on va parler de cette guerre. Je fais partie de celui qui se bat, pour que tout le monde ait la même ... compréhension sur l'agression du Rwanda au Congo.

Journaliste : Toloba yango na Lingala. « Toloba yango na Lingala ? » interroge Bitakwira. Namoni ba Congolais ebele bazo lenda, ... ebele bazo réagir na Facebook, on me fait voir là-bas ; il faut tokende na yango malembe malembe mpo tolongola poti na miso. Je voudrais qu'après cette émission, « mais, buku ya Charles Onana ... », intervient Bitakwira. ...Tokoloba, tokoloba. Nalingi après émission Congolais nyonso avanda aloba effectivement nazui vérité, oyo nayebaki te yango.

Monsieur Bitakwira, batu mosusu bamoni que tokende elections te, na mois ya décembre. Soki to résoudre problème ya Minembwe, ya nani yaa Bunagana te, problème ya ba villages oyo nyonso oyo M23 aza ko déranger lelo ; ba zones oyo tobengi ba zones tampons l'Etat perd, armée na biso ezo nyata te ; l'insécurité esali que batu bazua carte d'électeur te. Soki to résoudre yango te, ça ne sert à rien d'aller aux élections. Bato bamoni lelo, tobanda nano ko résoudre problème ya occupation. To bengana munguna, Leta azua contrôle total ya territoire congolais, et après to organiser ba élections. L'opposition alingi élections, mais à poser ba préalables. Le pouvoir en place bazo tenir à ce qu'il y ait seulement élections en 2023. Sage de la République : il faut tobanda na nini ? Tosala kala élections ndenge olobi ? Tshisekedi tout en étant légitime, pour résoudre le problème ya guerre ya est ? Ou il faut to régler, pour mettre fin na hémorragie et sauver l'avenir de tout un peuple ?

Bitakwira : d'abord, nakoloba na Mokonzi ya mboka, Président de la Republr. Félix Tshisekedi Tshilombo. Que je rencontre régulièrement. Président il faut osala manso bitumba oyo, ou bien guerre oyo esila kozala guerre amicale, il faut ezala bitumba ya solo solo. Parce que quand vous êtes en guerre avec un pays, mais vous êtes toujours ami, c'est une guerre amicale. Comment on peut transformer cette guerre en une vraie guerre ? Rompre les relations diplomatiques avec le Rwanda, et fermer les frontières.

Journaliste : Donc pour le moment guerre toza na yango eza guerre amicale ?

Bitakwira : Eza amicale. Parce que nous sommes en relations diplomatiques avec le Rwanda. Omoni ndenge ba Somaliens, comment, les terroristes Somaliens là. Ils ont commencé à venir tuer au Kenya. Le Kenya a fermé ses frontières. Mais nous comme c'est une guerre amicale, on n'a pas fermé nos frontières, et nous n'avons pas coupé les relations diplomatiques. Malgré le nombre de morts, et malgré le nombre de rebellions et d'agressions que ce pays s'est déjà autorisé. Je vous informe aussi, que pendant que, après Kabila, et cette guerre encore que le Rwanda a occasionné chez nous. C'est pas le Rwanda en fait qui nous agresse.

Journaliste : Nani azo agresser biso ?

Bitakwira : Le Rwanda c'est commeee, comment dire, c'est comme un chien. Qu'on fait monter sur un arbre. Et commence à aboyer très haut, en haut sur l'arbre. Il faut vous poser la question : nani amatisi mbwa oyo likolo na nzete, alors que mbwa amataka likolo na nzete te ? C'est depuis Bill Clinton. Bill Clinton nde azua mbwa yango, amatisi yango likolo ya nzete, nde ezo beta muke muke, biso mpe kaka tozo tala na miso. Nalandi Top Congo lelo na tongo. Que ba résistants, ils ont occupé cinq villages. Ba résistants. Balobi armée na biso te ; balobi ba résistants. Wazalendo. Ils ont récupéré cinq villages. J'ai suivi avec mon amii Thierry « Kambudi » ? demande le journaliste. Non non ; Eric Ambago. « Eric Ambago », répète le journaliste. A interviewer mpe na chef de groupement moko ya kuna na Nord-Kivu. A citer ba villages yango, oyo Bazalendo ba récupérer. Alobi FARDC te, alobi Bazalendo. Pourquoi ne pas intégrer ces Bazalendo dans notre armée ? Pourquoi ne pas les intégrer ? Qu'ils deviennent automatiquement FARDC. Qui nous a interdit de les intégrer ? On en a fait des réservistes, oui. Réservistes, au cas où l'armée est forte sur terrain pour chasser l'ennemi. C'est là où on garde les réservistes. Mais si ceux qui peuvent récupérer cinq villages, on continue à les appeler des résistants, des Wazalendo, au lieu d'être FARDC automatiquement ? Si on allait, parce que de ces histoires de Mai Mai aussi il y avait déjà des histoires, il y avait des voleurs dedans, il y avait des kidnappeurs dedans, je connais. Mais il y a une race pure de ces gens, que le Rwanda craint. Le Rwanda ne craint que ces jeunes gens-là.

Journaliste : Ba mouvement ya auto-défense ?

Bitakwira : Apanakb... Pourquoi il n'a jamais occupé l'est ? C'est à cause de ça. Ce qui se passe à Minembwe là-bas, à Minembwe, chez les Ruberwa-là. Avec les Makanika et les autres. C'est pas les FARDC qui se défendent. C'est les résistants qui se défendent. Sinon les Tutsis de là-bas auraient déjà exterminé tout le monde. J'ai vu un jour un général, qu'on a envoyé à Minembwe. Il devient pasteur. Il commence à aller passer toutes ses journées à l'Eglise avec les nyimbo za uokovu. Oh ! Là où on tue les gens un général commandant il commence à passer ses journées et ses nuits dans l'Eglise ? J'avais posé une question à un responsable militaire : type wana, botiki ye kuna na Minembwe ... maintenant on m'a appris qu'il n'est plus là, on l'a enlevé. Alors, pour sauver ce pays, il y a des actes à poser. Sans regarder ni à gauche ni à droite. Je te dis, le jour où nous rompons les relations diplomatiques avec le Rwanda, nous fermons nos frontières, - sais-tu que, depuis qu'il a enclenché la guerre, les enseignants rwandais ne sont plus payés ; ... l'armée a six mois d'arrière ; eeh, maintenant ... dans les universités rwandaises, on commence à vendre aussi les syllabus. On commence à vendre le syllabus comme on le faisait ici. Il n'a plus l'argent qu'il puisait dans ... nos minerais. Il n'a plus d'argent. Mais il est asphyxié sans qu'on ferme les frontières.

Journaliste : Alors, quel est l'impact ya ba décisions, par exemple ba mesures ya kokanga frontière, toutes ces mesures que vous avez évoquées ...

Bitakwira : Ekotalisa que tosiliki. Moto azo kende bitumba asekaka?

Journaliste : Eko changer forme ya guerre ?

Bitakwira : Je te dis, impact moko ya kosakana te.

Journaliste : Et c'est Kagame qui va souffrir ...?

Bitakwira : Kagame lui-même sait que si on ferme les frontières, on rompt les relations diplomatiques avec la RDC, ... la RDC c'est son souffle, de vie. Et d'ailleurs, avec ce qu'il est en train de vivre maintenant, parce qu'ils ne puisent plus comme avant. Ils vivaient dans l'opulence. Maintenant ils ne gagnent plus comme ils gagnaient avant. Parce qu'il avait beaucoup de complices dans le régime passé. Beaucoup, beaucoup. Même s'il y en a encore aujourd'hui. Même au gouvernement. Il y a des complices, du Rwanda. Mais avant, c'était pire. C'était pire. Je l'ai encore dit ici plusieurs fois.

Journaliste : Donc vous croyez que ça c'est parmi des solutions urgentes ?

Bitakwira : Et nettoyer notre armée. Moi j'ai déjà dit s'il m'était permis que je propose tout celui qui a déjà pris l'arme contre la République Démocratique du Congo je tolère un peu, qu'il ne fasse plus de notre armée, mais qu'il ne mette pas ses pieds à l'est. Qu'il ne soit pas un des militaires à l'est, un des commandants à l'est, tout celui qui a déjà fait la rébellion.

Journaliste : Bitakwira, « ouais », répond-il. Est-ce qu'il faut tokenda en élections na décembre, partie ya est occupée, ou il faudra d'abord to se concentrer pour résoudre le problème de l'occupation, et que les élections interviennent après ?

Bitakwira : Est-ce que tu sais que même si nous nous concentrons, tovandi lukula mibali, comme les animaux malades de la peste, de Lafontaine, dans deux mois on peut libérer tout le pays ? Tout le pays, dans deux mois. Dans deux mois. ... J'ai une grande autorité militaire, qui m'a écrit que « vous serez invité à l'état-major général, pour contribuer ». J'attends l'invitation. Je peux vomir des choses là-bas. Je peux vomir des choses. Parce qu'à un certain niveau c'est nous qui avons entretenu cette guerre.

Journaliste : Alors, vous avez fait une déclaration récemment je pense que j'avais relayé ça na tweet ; vous avez dit : « malgré la bonne foi, de la République Démocratique du Congo, ya ko participer na Nairobi, mpo na ba résolutions oyo ekosala que est ya Rep Dem Du Con ezua la paix, tant qu'il y aura certains pays, oyo bazo participer, notamment Rwanda, olobeli Uganda, olobeli Kenya. Soki bazali partie prenante na kati ya ba negotiations wana ; malgré la bonne foi ya rep dem du congo, le problème ne sera pas résolu ». « Il ne sera pas résolu », intervient Bitakwira. Qu'est-ce que vous reprochez ?

Bitakwira : Nous y perdons et l'argent, et le temps, et l'énergie. « Comment » ? interroge le journaliste. Cette guerre ; cette guerre ; de l'agression de la République Démocratique du Congo, c'est une guerre entre les nilotiques et les bantous. Entre les nilotiques et les bantous. Je vais te donner un exemple. « Allez-y », lui dit le journaliste. Je suis un citoyen de la sous-région des Grands Lacs. Je suis un citoyen de la sous-région des Grands Lacs. Je l'ai dit dernièrement dans une conférence sur le livre de Charles Onana. J'entends et j'écoute presque tous les dialectes du Kivu. J'entends et j'écoute presque tous les dialectes du Kivu. Je parle Kirundi, moi ; je parle Kinyarwanda, moi ; je parle un peu de Kiganda, mais j'écoute tout le Kiganda. Je parle le Swahili du Kenya. Je parle le Swahili de la Tanzanie. Quand un Kenyan parle, je sais que ... c'est un Kenyan. Quand celui-ci parle, je sais ... c'est un Tanzanien. Tout comme le Swahili du Kivu, et même celui du Katanga. *[J'observe depuis un temps que Bitakwira lit de temps à autre un texte préparé à l'avance lorsqu'il répond à certaines questions]*

Le Burundi en 1972, sous le Président Micombero, sous le Président Micombero. Il a exterminé plus de 200.000 Hutus. Et on allait prendre, on allait prendre chacun chez lui à la maison. Tu montes dans leee, ce à quoi on jette les caillasses, c'est quoi là. Comment on appelle ça. Quand on met les caillasses puis on va verser au chantier. B, Benne. On allait prendre les Hutu, en 1972 au Burundi, on vous prend chez vous devant votre femme, devant vos enfants, vous montez dans la benne, on vous rassemble à 80, 120, on va creuser vous êtes en train de voir comment on creuse. Et puis babaluli benne, bino nyonso na se. Allez, on met leee, on met le sable au-dessus. Vous êtes parti. A ce moment-là les Tutsis du Rwa Burundi pensaient qu'ils peuvent exterminer tous les Hutus du Burundi, alors que ils n'étaient que à 11-12 % de la population. Les autres sont à peu près à 89-90%. C'est avec Nkurunziza, hier, que les Burundi se sont libérés, contre ces nilotiques. Mais l'intention c'était de les equ.... Tu connais dans quelles conditions, Melchior Ndayaye est mort ? Elu. ...mais dans quelles conditions il est mort ? Donc, ça à nos frères Tutsis, la cruauté vient du diable. Vous ne pouvez pas aller vous abriter chez eux. Que si nous n'avons que quatre pays minimum, ou maximum, ou même trois : l'Angola, le Burundi maintenant, comme il y a un Hutu à la tête ; et la Tanzanie. Et la Zambie, la Zambie aussi, est bantoue. Le reste, Rwanda : allez ; Uganda : tika ; Kenya : yaan ! Vous ne regardez même pas le visage de Ruto Vous regardez le visage ? Vous connaissons toutes les tribus du Kenya : les Kalanjini, les... ils sont nombreux. Et on connaît ceux qui sont nilotiques et ceux qui sont bantous. C'est un empire qu'on est qu'on a créé. Empire Hima, power, Tutsi-power. Et vous allez vous jeter dans leurs bras. Okimeli mbula na océan. Okimeli mbula na océan.

Journaliste : Donc ça ne sert à rien que RDC se mette autour d'une table ... « mais, mais mais l'armée qu'on a déployée, chez nous EAC, eye kosalisa biso ? Eye komela bino ? Ça fait combien Mais si c'était le Zimbabwe, l'Afrique du Sud, la Zambie, c'est pas le Botswana, si c'était même « Tchad », intervient le journaliste. Tchad non. C'est un peu. C'est un peu. Parce que l'Afrique de l'ouest aussi a ses nilotiques. Macky Sall, c'est un nilotique. Sankara était nilotique. Blaise Compaoré est nilotique, Idriss Debi est nilotique ; ils ont aussi leurs manières, de vivre là-bas.

Alors, maintenant, nous ne sommes pas conscients, qu'avec Bill Clinton, Bill Clinton voulait transformer la sous-région des Grands Lacs comme au Moyen-Orient. La même manière que l'Israélien traite les Palestiniens, c'est ce qu'ils sont en train de faire ici au Congo. Entreprenez nous aussi nous recourons encore, aux mêmes, pour venir à notre secours. Je je vous ai donné les reproches, '...', [intervention inaudible du journaliste] je vous ai ... donné un exemple la fois passée, sur les fautes du Président Kabila. Je vous en avais parlé. C'était une tactique. De promouvoir l'ennemi. Et lui confier toute l'armée. Quand dans ta maison, tu sais chez nous les Bantous - ceux qui ont vécu en ville ne le savent pas -, chez nous les Bantous, chaque homme, dans sa case, il a une lance. Tu peux pas dormir sans lance. Quand un animal vient vous agresser, pa pa ! Maintenant : un ennemi l'arrache l'armée d'un pays. C'est lui qui devient le vrai commandant. Tous les postes stratégiques, c'est lui. Vous avez donné à l'ennemi, pendant la journée, pas pendant la nuit. Etes-vous Congolais ?

Journaliste : Vous voulez dire que Kabila avait livré l'armée congolaise ?

Bitakwira : Je te dis que, tous les généraux Mai Mai, qui font face au Rwanda, hein ? Il les a emmenés tous ici en exil. Et ils sont toujours ici. Les ... Padiri, les Nakabaka, les Safari. Ils sont nombreux.

Journaliste : Kabila pouvait le faire pour quel intérêt ?

Bitakwira : Il a envoyé les Nilotiques là-bas, les Tutsis là-bas. « ...il a pris les Tutsi... », intervient le journaliste. Vingt-quatre généraux, si je ne me trompe pas de chiffre. « Il les a remplacé ? » demande le journaliste. Non, il les a nommés ; il ne ... les plaçait qu'aux fonctions, à l'est du pays. « Et les Mai Mai ont été envoyés en exil », demande le journaliste. J'ai l'impression, ils ont été rappelés ici. Sans fonctions. Et ils sont toujours là, sans fonctions. Toi tu vas te battre contre les Rwandais sans l'armée des Mai Mai ? Tu vas plutôt t'occuper de ceux de Shege ? C'est que Rwanda ekokota même dans deux heures.

Journaliste : Vous voulez dire que Kabila a rendu, a favorisé l'infiltration, Kabila a rendu l'armée faible, Kabila a donné plus de la force aux Rwandais d'avoir suffisamment des postes dans notre armée ?

Bitakwira : Ou bien à leurs complices. Ou bien à leurs complices. Moi je te ... La fois passée je l'ai dit dans l'émission. Pourquoi toi aussi tu oublies si vite ? « Si, je n'oublie pas, mais je pose ... », rétorque le journaliste. Tu as une mémoire eee, comment on Tu as une mémoire rebelle ?

Journaliste : [en riant] Ce n'est pas le cas, je vous pose des questions, c'est tout.

Bitakwira : Je t'avais dit la fois passée que, en Israël il y a aussi des Arabes. Ok ? Ils sont au parlement, en Israël. Le Knusset [sic]. Mais l'Israël ne peut pas prendre ses officiers arabes, les nommer à la frontière avec la Palestine. Impossible ! Impossible. Oh, région militaire ; oh, zone de défense ; oh, nini nini. Ba Arabes, oyo banti na Israel. Lokuta na yo. Ba Arabes wana, ba oficiers wana bakobaluka yo.

Journaliste : Comment résoudre les erreurs de Kabila aujourd'hui.

Bitakwira : Eeeh, je crois qu'il faut les états généraux de l'armée. Il faut les états généraux de ee l'armée.

Journaliste : Qui va consister en quoi ?

Bitakwira : Nous devons faire l'autopsie. Tout celui qui aurait pris l'arme contre la République, contre le pays, non seulement il ne doit plus être à l'est du pays, mais il faut lui donner le délai pour qu'il quitte notre armée. Et il faut une fiche civique pour chaque militaire. Comment vous allez avoir des officiers anti-patrie ? Ils ont déjà tué, ils se sont enrichis dans la rébellion, et vous les prenez comme des héros. Ils commencent à se ... promener dans les meilleures jeeps ... dans la capitale. Ka ka ka ka ka ka, hah ! Si ... ma grand-mère apprend ça

Journaliste : Vous ... étiez entrain d'expliquer quelque chose de très très capital, je pense qu'il faudra ... «sur la sous-région des Grands Lacs », complète Bitakwira. Oui oui. « C'est pourquoi je te cite », poursuit Bitakwira. Allez-y.

Bitakwira : Je te cite quelques, quelques présidents peuls à l'ouest du pays [sic]. Donc, je te dis que, « Bill Clinton a fait... », intervient le journaliste. ... il a monté un chien sur un arbre. Et, quand tu lis le livre de Charles Onana mon frère, sur, le le le démantèlement de la République Démocratique du Congo à partir de 1994, à partir de 1994. « Onana je le cherche, je ne sais pas où le voir », intervient le journaliste. Et voir le déploiement de de l'armée et des officiers militaires et des renseignements américains qu'on a déployé à Entebbe qui venaient maintenant renforcer l'armée de Kagame. Et les millions et les millions qu'on lui a donnés. C'est comme ça que, Bill Clinton a grondé Jacques Chirac, sur son opération turquoise ? On a étouffé cette opération turquoise pour favoriser à Kagame de démanteler la République Démocratique du Congo, et s'occuper de toutes ses richesses. Je dis bien ... « Et d'organiser le pillage » ? intervient le journaliste. Démanteler. Donc pour Clinton, la mission de Kagame est que ce pays devienne un non-état ; un non-état. Et ils ont utilisé des complices. Vous allez lire dans le même livre, -parce que les gens me disent, l'Union Européenne me dit : « Oh, moi ; c'est toi qui ...qui sème la haine ». Non non non. Ce n'est pas la haine. Je détiens la vérité tu sais que ça passe chez moi. Il écrit encore : « Banyamulenge : eh, comment di ... destruction préméditée de la République Démocratique du Congo ».

Tu sais ce que ces gens ont fait dans ce pays ? Quand la guerre de Fred Rwigema, qui était le patron du Front, du Front Populaire Rwa..., du Front Patriotique Rwandais, le 1^{er} octobre, le 1^{er} octobre mil neuf cent quatre-vingt-dix, mil-neuf cent-nonante. C'est là où la guerre des Tutsi s'est enclenché de l'Uganda pour le Rwanda. Ceux qui se disent Banyamulenge chez moi, tous les jeunes, Tutsi de chez moi, venant de Minembwe, Bijombo, c'est pas Rurambo, c'est pas Kitembe, ... je connais tous les villages de chez moi. Tous, ont été recrutés, pour aller en Uganda. Charles Onana décrit. Et moi ... nous les avons vu partir. Et ils jetaient tous les cartes pour citoyens, déchirées, cartes pour citoyen, 'Tozongi epai na biso'. Et ils sont partis en Uganda, voler au secours de leurs frères, les Kagame. Ils sont partis en Uganda. Alors, on a gelé la guerre, jusqu'à ce que ils aillent aux négociations avec le gouvernement Habyarimana, et ils ont abattu son avion. Ils ont abattu son avion.

Maintenant, les Tutsis venus ... du Congo, ces Banyamulenge ici, que je connais très bien. J'ai des amis dedans, certains ont étudié dans nos familles. Ceux qui ont déchiré les cartes pour citoyen du Zaïre, ils atterrisse à Kigali. Ils font la demande : « bon mais nous sommes venus vous aider à partir de l'Uganda, oui, mais, notre demande c'est de nous aider à diriger la RDC. C'est nous qui devons diriger la RDC. C'est la demande que nous formulons. Parce que kuna bamoneli biso mingi. C'est nous qui devons diriger maintenant le Zaïre ».

C'est comme ça qu'en octobre, -toujours octobre-, en octobre 1996, enclenche la guerre de, révolte des Banyamulenge. La révolte des Banyamulenge. Qui a ... pour opération, quoi ? Parce que c'est parti de chez moi à Lemera. On a tué des pasteurs et on les a enterrés vivants. On a tué les malades dans les hôpitaux ; Mukwege était médecin directeur là-bas ; il a échappé belle. C'était pour exterminer, comme le Burundi opérant, du temps de Micombero. Pour eux, ils devaient exterminer tout le monde : les Bafuliru, les Babembe, les Banyindu, peut-être ils allaient tolérer un peu les Bashii. Il faut exterminer, la terre doit nous revenir. Et nous irons à Kinshasa.

Quand ils ont compris qu'il y avait une certaine résistance, c'est comme ça qu'ils sont allés recourir à Mzee Kabila. Mais je l'ai dit encore la fois passée. Mzee Laurent Désiré Kabila, on lui a remis un colis dont il ignorait le contenu. Il ignorait le contenu. Il ne savait pas de quoi il s'agissait. C'est comme ça qu'il est venu jusqu'ici, bon, il a joué un peu le malin, parce que normalement c'est leee, c'est ... si c'est ... qui était Secrétaire Général de l'AFDL là. Bugera, Bugerwa. C'est Bugerwa ou Bugera ? Quelque chose de pareil. C'est eux qui étaient préparés pour être président de la république. Ici. Ici.

Comment un peuple peut faire la guerre quatre fois ? Dans un pays qui l'a accueilli ? Il n'est pas originaire de ce pays, mais on l'a accueilli, on l'a accepté. Et on a commencé à accepter que non, il est aussi Congolais. Mais c'est eux qui font toujours la guerre : AFDL, c'est eux ; RCD, c'est eux ; CNDD, c'est eux ; M23, c'est eux. Eux toujours. Mais je l'ai dit la fois passée qu'il y a une tribu qui les soutiennent [sic]. Dans leurs opérations.

Journaliste : Quelle tribu ?

Bitakwira : Mes frères pour la plupart quand vous entendez parler de eeh, Runiga, Bertrand Bisimwa, Mwendanga, Katintima, tous, ... des gouverneurs qui se sont succédé sous le RCD là. On ne peut puiser que là-bas. Parce que c'est la souris ; c'est la souris domestique, qui invite toujours la souris sauvage. Et elle dit que : « ne passe pas par la porte, on va t'écraser. Il y a un petit trou où nous passons toujours. Tu montres le trou ».

Journaliste : Il y a une sorte de complicité ?

Bitakwira : Visible. Mais l'Etat n'en fait pas ... cas. C'est ça le problème. L'Etat n'en fait pas cas. Nous sommes, nous sommes inattentifs, si pas naïfs.

Journaliste : Est-ce qu'on peut dire que le mal est profond ?

Bitakwira : Très profond.

Journaliste : Est-ce qu'il y a lieu de (sic) résoudre ?

Bitakwira : Si on nous écoute avec les deux oreilles ; pas avec une oreille.

Journaliste : Très bien ! Allez ! Nous sommes en direct. Messieurs et dames, oh là là ! oh là là ! oh là là ! Notre cher beau pays ! ... « Il faut que le créateur intervienne », commente Bitakwira. Il faut que le créateur intervienne. Sinon eh, c'est très difficile. Lorsque j'entends ça, boyoki place towuti, place tokomi lelo. Non, le mal est profond. Le mal est profond. Il faut une bonne dose de diagnostic approprié, « Autopsie de la nation en danger », intervient Bitakwira. Pour un traitement approprié. « Autopsie de la nation en danger », répète Bitakwira.

... [pause en danger sur le procès des kidnappeurs]

Journaliste : Monsieur Bitakwira, kaka na makambo ya infiltration oyo. Mwangachuchu a été arrêté. Un honorable député. « Président d'un groupe parlementaire », ajoute Bitakwira. D'un groupe parlementaire. « Oui », approuve Bitakwira. Oyoki procès ndenge ebandiki no lelo oyo. Oyebacki déjà, -oyo oza sage, oza mieux informé, ozo maîtriser situation, oyebacki déjà que Mwangachuchu azalaki na makambo oyo bien avant ? Oboyaka koloba to olobaka baboyaka koyoka ? Comment vous analysez kosamba ya Mwangachuchu tii lelo place tozali. Et le mobile de son arrestation.

Bitakwira : Oyebe, ce que, ce que, moi, et mon peuple, ont subi, des Tutsis. Je dis bien des Tutsis. ... Comme réfugiés, le HCR les a déversés chez nous, chez nous. Il y avait trois sites, pour ces réfugiés-là. Les documents existent, et Charles Onana en parle. Il cite même le nombre des réfugiés là. Il cite même mon chef coutumier qui les a reçus, dans son livre. Ils ont, quand ils sont venus entre 1959 jusqu'en 1953 [sic], on les a placés dans trois sites chez moi à Uvira dans la collectivité-chefferie des Bafuliru qui est la mienne. On les a placés à Lemera, il y avait un site. On les a mis à Mulenge, il y avait un site ; et on les a mis à Katobo. Il y avait un site. Tous ces villages existent aujourd'hui. Non seulement ces gens sont allés prendre tout ce dont ils avaient besoin chez Kagame ou chez leurs frères venus de l'Uganda, ils ont tué ceux qu'ils ont tués, ils ont tué les gens qu'ils connaissaient, mais ils ont commencé à changer même les noms de nos villages, de nos montagnes, et de nos rivières. Si votre village s'appelle Kitoga, ça n'est plus Kitoga, ça devient Gitoga. Si votre rivière ou votre montagne s'appelle Katobo, ce n'est plus Katobo, ça devient Gatobo. Vous voyez jusqu'à quel niveau ces gens sont cyniques ? Alors, maintenant comme Kinshasa est loin des réalités de l'agression, c'est notre malheur. ... des fois les gens de l'est se sentent comme le, non-assistance à personne en danger. Parce que le reste des Congolais ne s'intéresse pas : qui tue à l'est ? Il est venu d'où ? Il s'appelle qui ?

Quand j'étais ministre, au conseil des ministres j'ai levé le doigt. Et j'ai parlé devant le Président de la République Kabila. « Excellence, Monsieur le Président de la République. Nous voyons des criminels qu'on a attrapés à l'est en train de tuer, en train de voler, on les emmène à Kinshasa, -souvent des rebelles-, on les emmène à Kinshasa, Kinshasa les envoie à Kitona, -eux n'appellent plus Kitona, c'est Gitona. Ils envoient à Kitona, celui qui était major à Kitona, il devient colonel, celui qui était colonel, il devient général, on le déploie au même endroit où on l'avait arrêté.

Dernièrement chez moi, il y a un général, qui est rappelé ici. Un certain Ramazani, je le cite. Un grand, un grand officier du RCD. Du RCD. Il vient de passer quatre ans à Uvira. Complice avec les Makanika. Qui tuent les gens dans les hauts plateaux vers Minembwe là-bas. Il a même fait tuer certains officiers. Parce que quand quelqu'un a été RCD, CNPD, M23, il a un virus de Kagame dans son sang.

Journaliste : Et l'AFDL ?

Bitakwira : L'AFDL on tolère un peu parce qu'ils ont fait partir Mobutu, et Mzee s'était réfracté, c'est comme ça qu'on tolère un peu. Mais, à la révolte des Banyamulenge ces gens ont, ils ces gens ont ext. « RCD, AFDL, M23 », intervient le journaliste. Ces gens ont ext, les Tutsis ont exterminé des gens à Uvira, Fizi, comme on n'a jamais entendu dans l'histoire. Ça je vous le dis. Et ils le savent. Et chaque fois qu'on nous invite dans les rencontres, ils veulent qu'on, nous effacer la mémoire, que nous ne nous appellions plus de rien, mais moi je leur dis toujours : tant que vous n'avez pas demandé pardon, tant que vous n'avez pas demandé pardon, pour les femmes enterrées vivantes à Kasika, Mwenga, Katogota, à Makobola. Vous voulez nous faire oublier, que vous n'avez rien fait ? Ces gens prenaient les clés de tout l'hôtel, les clés de ton hôtel. Ils emmènent à Kigali. Ils vont rester là-bas pendant un mois. Ils ont écrit sur ton hôtel : irafashwe en Kinyarwanda c'est-à-dire c'est saisi. Et maintenant tu vas me parler de Mwangachuchu. ... est-ce que je peux faire confiance à un d'eux ? Je peux faire confiance à un d'eux ? Personne ...

Journaliste : Mwangachuchu est des leurs ? Un des leurs ?

Bitakwira : Oui, c'est un Tutsi du Nord-Kivu. Il a été mon collègue à l'assemblée nationale. Et je ne peux même pas douter de ce qu'on lui colle à la peau.

Journaliste : Ah, vous ne doutez pas.

Bitakwira : Non, je ne doute pas ; ils sont tous pareils. Chez moi on dit que quand un pygmée a chié dans l'eau, on dit tous les pygmées chient dans l'eau. Tous les pygmées. Quand un pygmée passe : ah, c'est eux qui chient dans l'eau. Quand tu vois un Tutsi ... ; un Tutsi ... : un criminel.

Journaliste : Il ne faut pas généraliser parce qu'il y a toujours des cas exceptionnels, ça arrive.

Bitakwira : Un criminel.

Journaliste : Il faut se méfier des Tutsis ?

Bitakwira : Eeh ! Un criminel-né.

Journaliste : Il faut se méfier.

Bitakwira : Eeh, quand il est en position de faiblesse il peut dormir pendant six mois sous ton lit. Quand il prend la position de force, il va dire qu'il ne t'a jamais vu. Pourtant il a dormi pendant six mois sous ton lit.

Journaliste : Ah bon ?

Bitakwira : He ! Je me pose toujours la question : est-ce que leur créateur ce n'est pas celui qui a créé le diable ?

Journaliste : Il ne faut pas généraliser parce qu'il y a toujours des cas exceptionnels, ça arrive.

Bitakwira : Je n'ai jamais vu une race aussi méchante que celle-.... Regarde ce que fait Kagame chez nous.

Journaliste : Est-ce que vous avez des preuves.

Bitakwira : Même si tu es cynique. J'ai vu une image où on est en train d'égorger (sic) la peau de quelqu'un. J'ai pas pu regarder, j'ai crié

Journaliste : Les propos tenus n'engagent que son auteur !

Bitakwira : Donc, on t'égorge la peau comme on égorge la vache, on t'enlève la peau. « Est-ce que vous avez des preuves », demande encore le journaliste. Avec des couteaux bien tranchants. Un être humain.

Journaliste : Mwangachuchu est un danger pour la République ?

Bitakwira : Bon. Ceux qui l'ont entre leurs mains, ils le savent. Moi j'ai des, j'ai ses voisins, j'ai des gens qui vivent avec lui, c'était, après Dieu, là-bas c'était lui.

Journaliste : Mwangachuchu.

Bitakwira : Unh ! Et il sait bien que ce n'est pas sa terre. Sa terre c'est le Rwanda.

Journaliste : Aah ! C'est un sujet Rwandais.

Bitakwira : Mais comment. Quand on commence à te dire que : non, moi je parle Kinyamulenge. Oh ! Est-ce que le Kinyamulenge existe ? Il n'y a que Dieu qui donne la langue. C'est Dieu qui donne la langue. Ruberwa parle la même langue que Kagame, Nyarugabo parle la même langue que Kagame, tous parlent la même langue que Kagame. C'est comme si tu viens de Londres. Tu viens de Londres. Tu arrives à ... au Kenya, à Nairobi. Tu parles Anglais. Tu commences à dire aux autres : ... ça c'est pas l'Anglais. C'est le KinyaNairobi. Regarde-moi : Je crois qu'aucun d'eux n'ira au ciel. Parce que même les pasteurs ... ont déjà tué. Eeh ! Parlez, et tout le monde les suit eh ! Pasteur eeh, pasteur. [Le journaliste rit]. Quelqu'un qui a fait la rébellion contre ton pays, il devient pasteur comment, automatique. Et vous ne comptez pas le nombre de morts. Entre ses mains, vous ne comptez pas. Naive, ... la naïveté bantoue. C'est comme ça que j'ai parlé de Mao Tsé-Toung la fois passée, dans une conférence. Les Japonais aussi ont colonisé, je l'ai dit c'était, c'était par ordi. Les Japonais ont colonisé les Chinois pendant 109 ans. Mais ils ont eu la chance de voir Ma, Mao Tsé-Toung naître. Mao Tsé-Toung naître. C'est lui qui est venu changer, et si on parle de la Chine aujourd'hui, le père fondateur de la Chine c'est Mao Tsé-Toung. Parce que sous la colonisation japonaise, on trouvait sur 6 kilomètres-carrés plus de 200 églises. J'ai même donné l'exemple de chez moi. J'ai six églises qui entourent ma résidence. Et chacun monte la musique comme il l'entend. Mais entre-temps ils ont ... des murs mitoyens. ... Celui-ci joue Laure Mbongo, l'autre joue -la fille qui est décédée c'est qui- « Marie Misamo », dit le journaliste. Marie Misamo. Au même moment. Maintenant vous ne savez pas : est-ce que c'est Marie Misamo qui chante ? Ou c'est Laure Mbongo.

Journaliste : Allez, on va terminer, Justin Bitakwira. Organiser les états-majors généraux, « de l'armée pour une autopsie : qui a fait quoi, et que chaque militaire de la RDC ait une fiche civique. Tu n'as pas de fiche civique, -et on ne peut pas donner une fiche civique à quelqu'un qui a été dans une des rebellions. Pour démanteler la RDC », complète Bitakwira. En urgence, fermeture des frontières « avec le Rwanda », complète Bitakwira. Il faut rompre des relations, « rupture des relations avec le Rwanda, ... on va l'asphyxier », précise encore Bitakwira.

Journaliste : Allez, boza ebele bisika bozumi bozo landa biso tozali en direct. Sango mokonzi, chef de poste, officier de permanence. Oyo, il faut koyoka. Soki oyoki makambo oyo ozo funguama. Soki oyoki te, ça c'est un problème.

... [suite annoncée sur l'opposition et le sentiment de Bitakwira d'appartenir à la famille politique présidentielle qui procède à des arrestations arbitraires et autres dérives dictatoriales contre des opposants, et enfin sur le bras de fer entre le pouvoir et certains prélats catholiques, après une pause sur un reportage à Goma].

Annex 2.

Transcript of the original interview in Kinyarwanda of Major General Sultani Makenga on MAMA URWAGASABO TV:

'Maj.Gen Sultan MAKENGA ATUGANIRIJE BYINSHI BITUMA M23 IKOMEZA KURWANA NDETSE NA TUMWE MUDUCE BAFITE' (MAMA URWAGASABO TV, 24 May 2024). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=run-WSp6ldg>.

Journalist Mutesi Scovia (MAMA URWAGASABO TV):

Afande nagira ngo wenda, mbere y'uko tuvuga ku mibereho uyu muni uko imeze, impamvu ikomeye nyuma y'uko 2012 mutsinzwe mugahunga, impamvu ikomeye yatumye mwongera mukagaruka mumaze gutsindwa, aho mwakuye icyizere ko noneho mushobora gushobora ibyari byabananiye mbere ni iki?

Major General Sultani Makenga:

Yeah, murakoze! Aah, 2013 ntawho twatsinzwe urugamba. Uko niko governments zo zivuga; utsinda abantu iyo wabatswe impamvu ituma barwana. So, habaye ibibazo icyo gihe, hazamo Nations Unies- hazamo UN-, hazamo SADC n'abandi bandi, biba ngombwa ko tuva kuri ground. Twisanga turi Uganda, twisanga turi mu Rwanda kuri bamwe, ariko tugira na agreement Nairobi, dusinyana na gouvernement icyo gihe ya Kinshasa, tugira ibyo twumvikana. Ubwo rero hakurikiyeho process yo kureba ko ibyongibyo twumvikanyeye bishyirwa mu bikorwa; ntacyakozwe, kugeza igihe government yariho icyo gihe ituvanira, itwerurira ko ntacyo iteze gukora. Ubwo rero twarebye inzira zose zishoboka zose kugira ngo turebe ko byacyemuka mu mahoro, biranga, niko guhitamo kugaruka iwacu. Tugarutse iwacu rero 2017 mu kwezi kwa mbere, tariki 14; twahisemo kugaruka kuko niyo nzira yonyine yari isigaye yo gucyemura ibibazo byacu. N'uko twajye, tugaruka iwacu, kugeza uyu muni ubu tuvugana ahangaha.

Journalist:

Ahari wenda ndibugaruke kugira ngo uduhe ishusho wenda y'uyu muni uko, urugero aho mugeze, ibyo murimo mukora, eeh, kugira ngo wenda n'impamvu murwanira, ababumva bavuge bati impamvu turwanira ni iyi, kandi turacyayihagazeho nk'uko wabwivuze uti ntawho badutsinze, habaye impamvu zitandukanye, ariko impamvu yo ntiyatsinze. Kugeza ubu impamvu murwanira ifite ishusho isa ite?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Impamvu turwana zirahari ni nyinshi; turwanira uburenganzira bwacu, twabujijwe n'ubuyobozi buriho. ...Intabara turwana uyu muni ntawho ari iy'uyu muni. Ni intabara ifite amateka kuva 1996. Eeh, 1996 habaye revolution, ariyo ya AFDL, ifite objectifs eshatu. Iya mbere kwari ukuvana Interahamwe ku mupaka w'u Rwanda, zari ziyuye mu Rwanda zishe, zikoze jenocide, ziri ku mupaka hano wa Kongo, zitegura tena kujya kwica abasigaye. Iyo yari impamvu ya mbere. Impamvu ya kabiri, kwari ukugarura bene wacu bari birukanywe mu gihugu, babaye impunzi mu Rwanda na Uganda n'ahandi, kugira ngo bagaruke mu byabo. Iya gatatu kwari ukuvana ubutegetsi bwa Mobutu bwari burambiranye, aribwo buri guteza n'ibibazo, haba mu gihugu, haba no muri region. Izo mpamvu zose uko ari eshatu rero, ntizigeze zigira iki, ntizigeze ziyemuka. N'uyu muni! Niyo mpamvu n'uyu muni tukirwana. Bene wacu ntibigeze bataha, Interahamwe tuvugaga, ziracyari ahangaha n'ubundi nizo ziyoboye n'ahangaha; ubutegetsi bubiri, iyo tuvuye Mobutu tuba tuvuye ubutegetsi bubiri, n'ubundi buracyahari. So, eeh, rero, nkuko nkubwiye ngo amateka ya 1996, hagiye haba agreements zitandukanye, zitandukanye zitandukanye, ariko zitigeze zigira iki, zigera ku musozo. Kubera kudashaka kwa gouvènements ziriho, kuko arizo ziteza n'ibibazo, kugeza na n'uyu muni. Ariko sindi bujye kure cyane ndajya hafi cyane; ndashaka gusa nkubwire amateka aho intabara itangiriyey; ndatangirira mu gihe cya CNDP niho dutangirira, aho twagiranye amasezerano na government yari iriho icyo gihe, yari iya Kabila; tujya muri government, turumvikana, dufite ibyo twumvikanye, turasinye, tujya muri gouvernement, tugeze hagati, bo bava muri accord, bava muri agreement twumvikanye. « Muri ya masezerano », asks the journalist. Muri ya masezerano. Twabwira tuyahagararaho tuti dusubire mu masezerano tuyahagararaho, kugeza igihe batangiye gufunga bamwe, kwica abandi, kugira gute, ...

Journalist:

Afande, niba ntaguciyey mw'ijambo amasezerano yavugaga icyari cyatumye mujya mu ngabo za Leta, yasabaga iki cyatumye mwemera?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Ni byinshi. Ni byinshi. Ariko ibyo twari twumvikanye, kwari uko twari twabujijwe n'ubuyobozi buriho, imyaka irenga itanu, kugira ngo tuzane umutekano hano iwacu, bene wacu bataha, batanze batekane, noneho tuzakore evaluation y'imyaka itanu, kugira ngo turebe ni ibiki byagezeho, kugira ngo tujye mu yindi etape. « OK », says the journalist. Ubuho rero icyo myaka itaranagera, nta n'icyari cyanakorwa, bo bashakira kuyavamo. Nicyo cyateye ikibazo, niho havutse M23 rero mwumva. ...So, nibwo nyine twafashe za Gomamwarumvishe, dufate Rutshuru, dufata za Goma, haza pressure, dusubira inyuma, ariko tujya mu mishyikirano, tugira ibyo twumvikanye bitashyizwe mu bikorwa, kugeza igihe nyine byabayeho ko dusubira Uganda. Dusubira Uganda rero twagarutse nk'uko udusanze ahangaha. Twagarutse ahangaha n'ubundi.... Aba bari ku butegetsi uyu muni, twari hamwe nabo kuva cyera. 2012-2013, cadres babo nitwe twaba traininze za Rumangabo. 2016 kugeza 2018, twari kumwe nabo; uyu Tshisekedi twari kumwe nawe muri coalition, hamwe n'abandi banyapolitiki bandi babaga muri opposition y'icyo gihe.

Journalist :

Tshisekedi uyu Perezida ? Cyangwa se ?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Uyu uyu, uyungu. "OK", says the journalist. Ise we yari ameze nk'urwaye, ariko n'uyu yakoresheye. N'abandi banyapolitike bandi muri opposition y'icyo gihe, twari kumwe nabo. Ubutegetsi rero, afashe, agiye ku butegetsi, twumvaga ko ibibazo byacu bigize iki, bicyemutse. Twicara turindiriyey ko ibibazo bicyemuka kuko arabizi, twari turi kumwe, ntacyo yigeze akora, kugeza igihe twashyizeho delegation yacu ijya Kinshasa, imarayo amezi 14.

Journalist:

Kuri aya masezerano Patrick Muyaya ndetse na President Tshisekedi -Muyaya ni umuvugizi wa gouvernement ya Congo- we ubwe ahakana ko (h)atigeze kubaho, ngo niba mwaranagiye avugaga ngo ko mushobora kuba mwarumaze amezi atatu ariko ntawamenyey ko mwajye.

Maj Gen Makenga:

Aah, ndakuka niko bateye barabeshya, Tshisekedi arabeshya n'abantu bese barabeshya; n'uko bakeka ko abantu bese ari abajinga ahari, ariko twagiye officially, twavuyeyey officially. Twariyo bizwi, twagize amanama n'amanama menshi; twagenderaga no ku bibali bya Etat-major; eeh, twagiye no kureba ikigo cyitwaga Mbanza-Ngungu, twagiye; twagiye no kureba aho bita ZTM, ni aho bita Mweso, aho Forces zacu zagombaga kujya gukorera re-org; n'ibyo twumvikanye birahari kandi biranditswe. Kuko na document isaba budget yo kugira ngo ibyo twumvikanye bikorwe, irahari yarasiywe, yasinywe na minister wa Interior wariho icyo gihe witwaga Kankonde, irahari. So, sinibaza rero ko hari aho abantu babihakiranye. Eeh, nyuma rero yo kubaho, ibyo byo twumvikanye, twumvikanye ko tugomba kujanga forces zi operatinga Nord-Kivu na Sud-Kivu kugira ngo tuzane umutekano iwacu, bene wacu bataha. Nyuma yaho, ngo tukazamufasha guhangana na Kabila ... igikwazo afite. Tujya kureba ikigo cyitwaga Mbanza-Ngungu kwari ukugira ngo tuzahashyire brigade yacu ivanze n'abe, abo yita abe. Kugira ngo noneho yizere ko afite umutekano, Kabila ntacyo yamutwara. Aho ZTM mbabwiye ZTM, ni aho twagombaga gushyirira forces zacu, ... forces zacu zijye zi operatinga Nord-Kivu na Sud-Kivu, n'ahavamo force ijya Kinshasa nk'uko mbikubwiye. Turangije kumvikana, tugeze kuri budget, byose turabyumvikana, baratubwirira ngo tuzane ama listes yacu barebe ko turi aba Kongomani. Urumva abantu badusaba ama listes ngo turebe ko turi aba Kongomani, twari kumwe nabo kuva 2012, ariko uwo muni bavuze ngo tuzane ama listes barebe ko turi aba Kongomani. Ama listes turayazana. Listes zacu ... turazizana. Basanga bari muri FARDC, 99 % baba muri FARDC, n'amafaranga yabo arasohoka. Na bamwe babaye promoted muri FARDC kandi badahari. Uwo dufite twabwira nk'umusilikare, ni lieutenant, hariya tugasanga ni major.

Journalist:

Mwe kuba mwarasanze umusilikare utakiba muri Leta, ari kumwe namwe, hariya yarazamutse, mwe mwabitekereje mute mukibona ibyo?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Eeh, oya twari dusanzwe tubimenyereye tu, ni bwa bu bandi bw'aba « ah, bashakaga kubona amafaranga ye », says the journalist. Ntibigeze ba declara ko abantu badahari, bavugaga ko bahari, amafaranga akajya asohoka, akarya abongabo nyine ... babishinze. "aah, OK", says the journalist. So, aah, listes turazitanga, ngo bashakaga kureba niba turi aba Kongomani, sinzi niba umu Kongomani umumenyera ku zina; simbizi; nyuma yaho, batangira kuturerega, amafaranga turayarindiriyey, amafaranga turayarindiriyey, ... kugeza igihe batubwiye bati "nimutaha, tuzongeraga tubahamagare". Delegation yacu irataha, nyuma y'icyumweru kimwe, baradutera. N'uko intabara yatangiye, n'ukungu kuri mu ntabara kugeza uyu muni.

Journalist:

Ngira ngo ni amateka, nkuko watangiye ubivugaga kugira ngo abantu bumwe inkomoko y'intabara yaturutse, eeh, ndagira ngo noneho Tshisekedi navugaga ngo wari umwe muri mwe wari muri opposition ya Leta yari iriho asimbura, yari asimbuye, mukaba mwari mugiyey no kumufasha uyu vitaga ikibazo agiye ku butegetsi wabuvuyeyeho ariwe Kabila ngo mumufashe ibintu bisubire mu buryo namwe mubashe gucyura bene wanyu. Aha rero nyuma y'uko babateye, akavugaga ati ni abadashaka amahoro, nyuma y'izo nshuro ebyiri mutangiye kwirwanaho, haba hari uburyo bundi mwongeye kumwoherereza ubutumwa ngo mumubaze muti ko watubwiraga ko ari abadashaka amahoro, koko baba bakiri bo? Cyangwa mwararekeye mubona ko ababeshya?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Oya, n'iyi abantu banarwana, buriya haba hari inzira n'ubundi bana communica. Twakomeje kubikora. Ariko tuza gusanga ariwe uri kubikora. Kuko, wenyine yatubwiye ko, ngo nyuma yo gukurikiranana, ngo ari gusanga ngo turi Abanyarwanda. So, bisobanuye ko, ari we wabikoraga, atari abantu be.

Journalist:

Nimvugaga kuri iki cy'uko basanze muri Abanyarwanda, sindibujye kure y'ibiyaba(zwa?) y'ibivugaga buri muni n'ubutegetsi murwana nabwo aribwo bwa Tshisekedi, avugaga ko n'ubundi arwana n'u Rwanda; rimwe na rimwe bakavugaga bati ni itsinda ririmo Abakongomani n'Abanyarwanda rifashwa n'u Rwanda ndetse na Uganda. Iki, mwe icyo bakivuze mubumva mute, kuba uyu muni bavugaga ko mufashwa n'u Rwanda na Uganda.

Maj Gen Makenga:

Ibyongiyey bahora babivugaga, n'ubutegetsi bwavuyeyeyo bwababwiraga, eeh, n'abangaba niko bavugaga, ariko bazi ko atari byo. Abanyarwanda, ni abavandimwe bacu. Ntabwibanaho. Ariko hari u Rwanda, hari na Kongo. Igihe cyose rero icyo Kongo inaniwe gucyemura ibibazo yakabaye icyemura, ibyitirira abandi. Ibyitirira u Rwanda, ibyitirira Uganda; cyane cyane u Rwanda; ejo izabiyitirira n'abandi n'abandi n'abandi. Uyu muni iravugaga u Rwanda, igahigima gato ikavugaga Uganda, ariko nkeka ko n'ejo izavugaga n'abandi n'abandi kuko niko bateye. Ariko bazi ko, bazi ko atari byo. Babivugaga bazi impamvu babivugaga. Impamvu babivugaga ni uko badashakaga kubona umuntu uvugaga ururimi rw'u Rwanda muri Kongo, cyane cyane Abatutsi. So, kandi, ntacyo wabihinduraho, nawe ntiyabihinduraho. Abo udashakaga, ni Abakongomani. Bazakomeza kuba muri Kongo, ntaho bazajya. Kutwitirira u Rwanda, kutwitirira Uganda, n'abandi azatwitirira n'ejo ejo bundi, azakomeza kubivugaga, ariko sinkeka ko azabivugaga igihe kirekire, kuko ni ikinyoma, ikinyoma kigira igihe cyacyo, ariko n'ukuri kukagira igihe iki, kukagaragara.

Journalist:

Muravugaga rero ko abiyitirira u Rwanda, ariko ndagaruka nibaze: mwebwe muby'ukuri ukurikije uko mumeze, ibikorwa mukora, nacye ahantu hari urugomeroye rwubakwa, umuntu yakwibaza ngo amafaranga angana kuriya ashobora gukora ibikorwa remezo bingana kuriya bihenze, mwe muyakura he niba muvugaga ko mudafashwa n'u Rwanda na Uganda?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Icyo mbere, urugomeroye wacyiye n'urwa, ni project ya Union Europeenne iri gukorera hano. Hari ibyo dukora bikeya, bitoya biyanye n'ubushobozi dufite; ariko support yacu, icya mbere dufite impamvu. Iyo ni support yacu ya mbere. Icyo kabiri, ni abatwaga. Abaturage, basupportinze urugamba turimo. Kuko turwanira ukuri, nabo bazi ko ari ukuri. Kandi abatwaga barambwiye ubutegetsi bwa Kinshasa. Baraburambiwe, baraburambiwe. Ni ukuvugaga support dufite rero, ni twabwira ku giti cyacu ba nyiribabazo, ni Abakongomani ni general badusupportinze kuko barushyey ubutegetsi bwa Tshisekedi, no kuba dufite impamvu.

Journalist:

Abarimo gutera inkunga uyu mushinga ni abanyamahanga ?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Ni abanyamahanga, ni Union Europeenne. « Ikorana ite namwe se kandi mutitwa ubutegetsi? » asks the journalist. ...Twasanze iyo projet ihari, aribwo ikinatangira, ariko twashyizeho environnement ituma ikomeza. Tubemerera ko bakomeza, nabo kuba barakomeje n'uko bazi ko bafite garantie y'umutekano. Kandi koko turawubaha, nkuko tuwaha n'abandi bose bari mu karere du controllinga.

Journalist:

...Uyu muni abatwaga batuye muri aka karere murimo, bafite umutekano ku ruhe rwego? Harimo abari mu kaga, hari abo mwashyize mu nkambi? Cyangwa bari mu ngo zabo niho mucungira umutekano wabo?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Abaturage bari mu karere du controllinga baratekanye cyane, cyane. Ku buryo n'abari mu turere tuyobowe na Leta, bavayeho bagahungira aho turi. Yego hari uturere tukiri mu bibazo, twegereye frontline, aho Tshisekedi a creating a terror kugira ngo ahamurire abaturage, yice abaturage, asenye ibintu byabo, kugira ngo wenda nabo bahungira bajye mu nkambi kimwe n'abandi kuko hari abo yafashe en otag abashyira hano za Kibati ahitwa Kanyaruchinya, abandi abashyira za Sake. Aba yifuza ko n'abandi bose bajya muri iyo situation. Cyangwa bagahungira igihugu. Kuko nta mbabazi, nta rukundo afitaye abaturage.

Journalist:

Aha umuntu yakwibaza Perezida ushaka ko abaturage bahungira se, guhungira kw'abaturage abona byabagira ingaruka? [kuri M23], cyangwa ni uko adakunze abaturage.

Maj Gen Makenga:

Afite impamvu ze ndakeka ariwe wazisubiza, ariko icyo tumuziho, nta baturage akunda, nta gihugu akunda, ari aho, ameze nka mercenaire.

Journalist:

Yego, ukiri kuri icyo cyo kudakunda igihugu n'ukuntu abikora, ... ubona iyi ntamba / mwafashe icyemezo musubira inyuma nkuko wabimbwiye muri 2012. Ubona iyi ntamba mu by'ukuri iyo urebye ishusho ifite muzayirwana kugeza, cyangwa izi mbaraga zabashubije inyuma muri 2012, n'ubundi uhora utegereje ko isaha iyo ariyo yose zaza, cyangwa hari ingamba zo guhangana nazo?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Eeh, icyo gihe hari muri 2013. Ubungubu turi muri 2024. Ni ukuvuga ngo ibintu byarahindutse. Eeh, sinizera ko bazongera kubibona. Twebwe ntidutera uwo ariwe wese, ntidushaka gutera uwo ariwe wese; icyo dukora ni ukwirwanaho, no kurwana ku baturage bacu. Kandi tukaba tuzi ko, turabizi 100% ko gouvernement ya Kinshasa, nta na rimwe izashaka ko ibibazo bikemuka mu mahoro. Rero natwe, tuzakomeza kwirwanaho, mu bushobozi dufite kandi tunarinde abo turi kumwe nabo.

Journalist:

Hano nituvugaga intamba ntabwo ndibwibagiriye kubaza niba muri iyi ntamba mwaba mufite zimwe mu mfungwa mfungwa z'abanyamahanga bashobora kuba bari hano mu gihugu, baje muri iyi mirwano.

Maj Gen Makenga :

Abanyamahanga turabafite, dufite Abarundi, dufite na FDLR ubwo ni abanyamahanga, « ni benewacu », intervient la journaliste [les FDLR sont Rwandais comme la journaliste]. Ubwo nabo turabafite ; dufite na FARDC, dufite na babandi biyita ngo Wazalendo. Ngira ngo nta nubwo bazi icyo bisobanuye Wazalendo ; ariko abanyamahanga ni abo, ni Abarundi n'Interahamwe dufite. Nunakenera kuzibona, urazibona zirahari.

Journalist :

Wenda duhe ishusho y'umukongomani wavuye muri ibi bice birimo imirwano, akumva mwaragarutse, muhe ishusho kugira ngo ufite uburyo bwo gusura ibice wenda ashobora kuba yazamo kureba, yavuye ishusho muby'ukuri iri muri iki gice mufite no kwizera uko ashobora kuhagera, uwaba hari ibice ashobora kuganamo.

Maj Gen Makenga :

Ibice du controllinga ni Rutshuru, ni Masisi, ni Nyiragongo, aah, ibyo bice biratekanye. Biratekanye, uwo ariwe wese yabisura, abaturage baratekanye, uraza no kubona ... uze kubareba, baratekanye. Nakubwiye ko hari abava mu bice biri mu maboko ya government bagahungira ino iwacu, batuye, batekanye. Nakubwiye ko hari ama projets ya Union Europeenne ari gukorera hano, hari ama ONG menshi menshi, NGOs nyinshi ziri aha, n'uko hatekanye, n'uko hari umutekano.

Journalist:

Afande, reka tugushimire, kandi dushime umwana muduhaye, no kuba hari uburyo muhaye ishusho abakurikira uru rugamba umuni ku muni, ariko nsoze mbaza ikibazo kivugaga kiti: 'ejo bundi umuvugizi wa guverinema ya Kongo akaba na minisitiri w'itumanaho, ari i Goma aje gushyigira abaguye mu nkambi ya Mugunga, atanahwema kuvuga ko arimwe mwayirashe mufatanije na RDF nkuko babyandika: M23/RDF, yavuze ko noneho ibijanyanye n'amahoro bidahari ahubwo hariyeho kwubura intamba. Mwaba mwarabonye ibindi bitero byihariye bitandukanye n'uko bisanzwe muri iyi minsi? Nyuma y'uko abivuze?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Ibyo bavugaga c'est la raison zo kurasa impunzi hariya, ni ibintu basanzwe bakora, bakunda gukora, na 2012 - barabikoze. 2013 barabikoze, bikozwe na ka gabo kamwe bitaga Kahongya, kabaga i Goma, kari gakuriye Interahamwe, eeh, icyo gihe babikoze kuko MONUSCO yari yanze kubafasha mu rugamba, babona bari gutsindwa, bajya kureba MONUSCO ngo ko itari kubafasha, MONUSCO ikababwira iti nimwe mwatangije intamba, kandi mwari mu mishyikirano, ntabwo dushobora kubafasha; ba intimida MONUSCO bayibwira ko baza kuyitera amabuye n'iki, MONUSCO barababwira bati "ariko nihagira ikomporo rimwe rigwa muri Goma, turabafasha. icyo bakoze, Kahongya n'uwooo, na Regional commander wari uriho icyo gihe witwa Bauma berekeza imbunda muri Goma batera muri Goma kugira ngo noneho Monusco ize kubafasha. Ni nibyongibyo nubundi bakoze ejo bundi hariya. Buri muni baradutera kuko nakubwiye ko tudatara twebwe, twebwe twirwanaho; baraduteye, ahantu hatandukanye henshi. Ariko hose, bahura n'ibibazo; ngira [ngo] kubera umujinya, ahari bashaka ko SADC n'abandi bandi babo wenda binjira mu rugamba, barasaa, cyangwa wenda kugira ngo communaute internationale ibone ko, ina confirminge bya bindi batwita ngo turi aba terroristes kandi tutaribo, eeh, barasa mu baturage, ariko isi yose irabizi ko ari bo babikoze.

So, ibyo kuvugaga rero ngo bavuze ko ngo noneho ngo inzira y'amahoro "ntayo bagiyeye kujiya mu ntamba", complete la journaliste. Nta n'iyigeze ibaho kuko ntibigeze banayishaka, kuva 2022, hariyeho habaho ibintu bya process by'amahoro, byo kureba ko ibibazo byacyemuka ku mahoro; twagiye duhagarara, tugasubira inyuma, byose ibyo badutegetse tukabyemera, ariko government ntiyigeze ishaka.

So, ubwo rero nta gishya yavuze rero, nta gishya yavuze rero, n'ubundi yavuze ibyo basanzwe bakora, ubwo kandi natwe, tuzakorana ibyo dusanzwe dukora natwe byo kwirwanaho no kurwana ku baturage dufite.

Journalist:

Afande, ijamba kwirwanaho, nitorisobanura mu Kinyarwanda cyacu, birasa nk'aho ari igihe hari umuntu ushaka kuko atakwaga, ukamubizayo. Aramutse atakwatse waguma aho uri. Niba uko ari ko mbyumvise, cyangwa niba wamfasha kubyumva.

Maj Gen Makenga:

Twebwe, dukomeza kubwira amahanga n'abandi bandi, region, amahanga ya kure, kubabwira ko dukeneye amahoro. Na Kinshasa tuyibwira ko dukeneye amahoro. Niyo mpamvu twe natwe dutera. Twebwe turirinda gusa. Ariko iyo baduteye, nibwo twirwanaho. Ni ukuvuga ngo, bataduteye twebwe ntabwo twarwana.

Journalist:

Iyo mwirwanyeho muguma aho muri? Cyangwa mubigizayo? Kubera ko, kuko iki kintu cyo kwirwanaho abantu benshi bagikozeho comments mu bihe bitandukanye, abavugizi baba aba gisilikare n'igi sivili cyanyu babivuze, wabonaga ko bibaza bati aba bantu birwanaho ntabwo barimo kurwana. Ariko noneho mufite n'ihuriro ry'uwaje abayoboye, akavugaga ati twe tuzajya no gukuraho ubutegetsi. None wowe murirwanaho!

Maj Gen Makenga:

Twebwe turirwanaho. Ariko mu kwirwanaho, ubwo ni ukuvuga ngo, uvanaho cya kindi gituma ukomeza kwirwanaho. Ni ukuvuga ngo niba baduteye, twirwanaho. Ubwo iyo twirwanyeho, tuvanaho ya menace. Ni ukuvuga ngo iyo menace ituma duhora twirwanaho, iyo menace ituma duhora duhagaze dushaka kurwana ku baturage ngo batabamara, iyo menace ituma bene wacu bamaze imyaka n'imyaka mu buhunzi, iyo menace ituma bene wacu bahora bikoreye imisambi ku mutwe, batazi aho bari burare; iyo menace ikomeza gusenya iby'abaturage, kwica abaturage, tugomba kuyivanaho, muri cadre yo kwirwanaho.

Journalist:

Afande, ubuzima abana bariga ino aha, amavuriro yasubiye mu buryo bwo gukora, nibura ah'ibanze aho muri?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Amavuriro arakora, amashuri arakora, ejo bundi bakoze ikizami cya Leta; ndumva hashize icyumweru bagikoze. Bariga, bariga. Cyeretse utwo turere nkubwiye twegereye frontline. Natwo ni ducyeya. Ariko ahandi bariga kabisa ntaaa. No mu kanya urabona ama bus acyuye abanyeshuri; ndumva amasaha ageze, urahura nabo bavuye ku mashuri.

Journalist:

Bakora ikizami cyoherezwa gukosorwa na Leta? Cyangwa hari uburyo ...?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Oya, kijya Kinshasa n'ubundi. "Aah, Ok", says the journalist. Kinshasa icyo yakozwe, abarimu bari mu turere turimo, bakase amafaranga yabo, ariko amashuri yo yarakomeje kuko abaturage barahagaze, abana barahagarara, n'abo barimu bari muri utwo turere baritanga, bakomeza kwigisha. Leta ibonye ko byanze guhagarara, nubwo yashakaga ko bihagarara, nta kundi ubwo, iraza ikoresha ikizame, yohereza abantu bazanyeye nyine za examens, zirakorwa, n'ubundi ziragenda.

Journalist:

Ndasozza ku kibazo gito, unshyamba wenda utagihaye ntuza nyinshi bitewe wenda n'umwana nkumaranye. Muteganya ko mushobora guhirika ubutegetsi mukoresheje igisirikare? Nibaramuka batemeye ibijanyanye n'amahoro, cyangwa ubwumvikane bwo kugarura amahoro muri aka gace?

Maj Gen Makenga:

Twebwe tuzakomeza gutakamba, dushaka amahoro, dushaka ko ibintu byacyemuka mu nzira y'amahoro, kugeza igihe wenda bizacyemuka.

Annex 3.

Transcript of an extract of President Paul Kagame's inaugural speech on *RwandaTV*:

'Umuhango w'Irahira rya Perezida Kagame Paul' (Tariki 11 Kanama 2024).

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yi1_xmD2OuU&t=11s.

In this year 2024, the intersecting crises that define our region and our world continue to create uncertainty, and distrust. As a result of unaddressed inequalities and double standards. Peace in our region, is a priority, for Rwanda. Yet, it has been lacking, particularly, in eastern DRC. But peace cannot be delivered by anyone, from anywhere, no matter how powerful, if the party, most directly concerned, does not do what is needed. Without that, the sincere mediation efforts by the mandated regional leaders can not work as intended. And here, I would like to pause, to thank the President of Angola, President Lourenço who is here with us, and the President of Kenya, President William Ruto among others, for everything they have done and continue to do.

Peace cannot happen all on its own. We all have to do our part, and the right things in order to achieve and sustain peace. This should not be seen as a favour to anyone. For anyone to do what is needed for everybody to have peace and have their rights can't be a matter of favours being dished out to people. It's an obligation. In the end when it doesn't happen, that's why people stand up and fight for it. It should be understood as a necessity, because it is a question of people's rights. And there cannot be real peace, if those rights are not respected. You can't wake up one day, and decide to deny whoever you want their citizenship right, and expect to get away with it. There has to be a meeting in the middle. There has to be a compromise.

This is a time to reflect, on the kind of world we want our children to live in. As a global community, we have more in common than we think. And within us, we always have the tools to repair, to renew and to reset. It does not mean that we have to agree on everything. But we must respect each other's choices. All of us. Doing the best we can, in our unique contexts. There is no longer room for the powerful to impose their vision, about how others ought to live. Or to create narratives that falsify the truth. This must always be resisted. Even when under pressure. But there is also no possible excuse for injustice wherever it occurs, whether committed against us as Africans, or inflicted by ourselves. Indeed, we Africans are people who have consistently fought injustice. We don't need any lesson about how best to do so. And we must all humbly acknowledge the necessity to adapt our political and governance systems to our specific conditions and expectations of our citizens. Like everyone else, what matters most to us, is to see our people living safe, healthy and dignified lives. This is imperative. And it is a responsibility you cannot evade or outsource.

Table of Contents

I. There was genocide in the DRC, and the conflict in the east of the country is fueled by racist ideology.....	2
1. A genocide of incredible cruelty	3
2. A little background	7
3. A genocide planned at the highest level of the state	13
4. The UN and certain African countries have chosen to side militarily with the genocidal regime of President Tshisekedi	17
5. Power in Kinshasa is under the influence of a racist and genocidal ideology	19
6. Anti-Tutsi racism in DRC: the fantasy of the Hima-Tutsi empire and the call for Bantu solidarity draw heavily on genocidal propaganda of the Habyarimana regime in Rwanda and threaten all of Africa	27
7. An anti-Tutsi racism that makes the conflict with Rwanda intractable, denies the existence of Congolese Batutsi, and vows to their extermination	38
8. An anti-Tutsi racism which rejects the legitimacy of the politico-military organizations that carry the demands of the Congolese Batutsi	47
9. Anti-Tutsi racism: when UN experts and Western researchers become its propagandists more zealous than the ideologues of Kinshasa	62
10. Anti-Tutsi racism: an ideology of colonial inspiration and neo-colonial instrumentalization	75
II. Recommended actions to world leaders	115
Annex 1.	117
Transcript of large extracts from Bitakwira's interview on <i>Bosolo Television</i> :	117
Annex 2.	120
Transcript of the original interview in Kinyarwanda of Major General Sultani Makenga on <i>MAMA URWAGASABO TV</i> :	120
Annex 3.	123
Transcript of an extract of President Paul Kagame's inaugural speech on <i>RwandaTV</i> :	123