

Colonial racialism is the cause of the conflict in eastern DRC, not minerals

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An article in *The New York Times* of 28 January 2025 on the capture of Goma by the M23 spoke of 'rebels backed by Rwanda' who 'marched on a key Congolese city in a bid to occupy territory and exploit minerals'.¹ The representative of a troop-contributing country to the United Nations (UN) mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), MONUSCO, called for his part 'to address the issue of illegal exploitation of the DRC's natural resources which is the root cause of this conflict',² while a French far-right politician affirmed that 'Rwanda has been plundering raw materials which are often rare and which belong to the Congolese and has been reselling them to the European Union since February 2024 and the European Union turns a blind eye to this looting'.³

We want to show that the root cause of the conflict is rather colonial racialism which reduced African populations into antagonistic tribes even within ancient nations like Rwanda whose limits reduced by colonization previously extended to parts of current neighboring countries including the DRC, whose chaotic governance never succeeded in integrating its Rwandan-speaking populations after colonization unlike Rwanda's other neighbors. The international community plays a particularly worrying role in this conflict. When it is not indifferent, it is complacent towards the Congolese government for the simple reason that it is a UN member state, while displaying virulent hostility towards Rwanda and rebellions involving the Banyarwanda (notably Tutsi) who are nevertheless fighting against an existential security threat.

Yet in conclusion of a 2023 [article](#),⁴ I drew attention to the fact that

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¹ *The New York Times*, 'Rwanda, the West's "Donor Darling," Seizes an Opportunity in Congo', 28 January 2025, <<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/28/world/africa/rwanda-congo-goma-conflict.html>> (29 January 2025).

² See the statement by the Pakistani Ambassador to the UN during the UN Security Council meeting of 28 January 2025 on the crisis in the DRC, *UN Web TV*, 28 January 2025, <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/01/1159511>> (29 January 2025). He had expressed himself in the same way during the previous meeting of the UN Security Council on the same subject on 26 January 2025, and certain other participants, including the DRC, had of course mentioned the illegal exploitation of natural resources as the cause of the conflict.

³ *LCI*, '« Je n'arrêterai pas Poutine ou Netanyahu ». Interview exclusive - Marine Le Pen invitée de Darius Rochebin', 29 January 2025, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q1Hgs_I3JU> (29 January 2025).

⁴ 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>>.

The international community does not have the will to bring peace to Congo, and its role in sustaining the conflict is at two levels. The first is to ignore that the ideology of hatred against the Tutsi is the main cause of the problem, which means that this ideology is not sufficiently condemned and combated. ... The second aspect of the role of the international community in sustaining the conflict is to treat the Congolese state as a normal state that must be supported, rather than seeing it as the real problem. It appears that when the UN and the international community in general talk about security in Congo, they are talking about the protection of the territory of the state as the word has often been understood for a long time. However, in 1994, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) began to use the term “human security”, which includes the security of individuals and groups.

The different actors in the conflict align their positions in relation to the same colonial racialism

The Congolese government contests the legitimacy or even the existence of the M23 on the basis of this colonial racialism. It does not refute the grievances of this movement which defends, among other things, the rights of the Congolese Batutsi⁵ persecuted in this country since 1962 and of which more than 400,000 members have lived in exile in neighboring countries and elsewhere for 31 years now for some, since the violence against them intensified with the arrival in the DRC of the army and militias who had just committed the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. It prefers to say that the M23 simply does not exist and that it is rather Rwanda which uses it as a screen to plunder its resources and annex part of its territory. Such a message finds a particular echo in a certain already radicalized Congolese public opinion, which considers the Congolese Batutsi as foreigners belonging to Rwanda and not to Congo, and this since the 1960s, well before the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) stop the genocide against the Tutsi by winning the civil war in 1994 and began ruling the new Rwanda, currently accused of attacking the DRC.⁶

Rwanda has sometimes been involved in the conflict in the DRC since 1996 to counter the threats of the same colonial racialism which had motivated the previous regime to commit

⁵ We use the noun form ‘Batutsi’ (plural) / ‘Mututsi’ (singular) in general and keep ‘Tutsi’ for adjective forms, in quotations and in the established noun form ‘The genocide against the Tutsi’ only.

⁶ For a detailed presentation of the preponderant role of this racism in the conflict in eastern DRC, see Rutazibwa, ‘Discussing the causes’.

genocide against the Tutsi, a regime whose army and militias exiled in the Congo have always attempted to return to complete the genocide against the Tutsi and overthrow power in Rwanda. This involvement was sometimes done in support of rebellions such as AFDL (Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaïre / Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaïre/) in 1996-1997, or RCD (Rassemblement Congolais pour la démocratie / Congolese Rally for Democracy) in 1998-2002. It could sometimes also be done in agreement and at the invitation of the Kinshasa government as in 2009 when the armies of the two countries fought together those who had committed the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda already grouped within the FDLR (Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda / Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda), in an operation that the two armies had named 'Umoja Wetu' in Kiswahili, meaning 'Our unity'.

The usual accusations against Rwanda of wanting to plunder natural resources and annex parts of the DRC's territory have no solid basis. They rely more on the same racist colonial ideology that sows distrust and suspicion between human groups and states. In a [petition](#)⁷ I sent to world leaders in October 2024, I showed that

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 Désiré Kabila himself who nevertheless begged Rwanda at the time to allow him to keep General James Kabarebe as his army general chief of staff with a reduced strength of 199 Rwandan soldiers. The Lusaka Agreement of 10 July 1999 provided for the disengagement and withdrawal of belligerent forces by 15 kilometers; Rwanda unilaterally offered to withdraw 200 kilometers. 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. After the joint military operation Umoja wetu against the FDLR from 20 January to 25 February 2009, Rwandan troops immediately withdrew from Congolese territory.

⁷ Privat Rutazibwa, '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', 21 October 2024, *AfricArxiv*, <<https://doi.org/10.60763/africarxiv/1583>>.

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. 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.

The other accusation which claims that Rwanda is engaging militarily in Congo to defend the Batutsi is equally fallacious.⁸ Rwanda prioritizes its own security, and it has proven in the past that it can sacrifice rebel groups that defend the interests of the Congolese Batutsi in favor of arrangements with the government in Kinshasa. It is in this context that in 2009, Rwanda proceeded with the arrest of General Laurent Nkunda, then head of the CNDP (Congrès national pour la défense du peuple / National Congress for the Defense of the People), for the benefit of collaboration with the government of Congolese President Joseph Kabila in the joint military operation Umoja Wetu against the FDLR. Rwanda also cooperated with the international community to drop the M23 in 2013 when the UN Intervention Brigade began attacking the rebel group.

The international community for the most part also seems to position itself in favor of this colonial racialism. It condemns little or nothing the policies of the Congolese government to persecute its Tutsi population and to ally itself with genocidal forces including the FDLR which threaten the security of Rwanda. On the contrary, it constantly calls for respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the DRC and the protection of its minerals and other natural resources.⁹ The disastrous role of the international community goes even further as we will see in detail, with, among other things, the prompting of Tshisekedi to resume hostilities with M23 in 2021; the silence of the mainstream Western media on the plight of the Congolese

⁸ See statement of the DRC Minister of Foreign Affairs Thérèse Kayikwamba Wagner during the UN Security Council meeting of 28 January 2025 on the crisis in the DRC, UN Web TV, 28 January 2025, <<https://news.un.org/en/story/2025/01/1159511>> (29 January 2025).

⁹ See the majority of interventions during the UN Security Council sessions of 26 and 28 January 2025.

Batutsi; the creation by an American NGO and UN experts of a negationist narrative on the exploitation of Congo's natural resources which has succeeded in replacing the indignation aroused by the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and its persistent threats; as well as the joining of the UN forces, the Burundian defense forces and those of SADC to a coalition with a government and genocidal militias who kill the Batutsi, cut off their heads, burn them and eat their flesh in front of the cameras.

“Dark interests” within the international community serve an anti-Tutsi and anti-Rwanda agenda in the region and perpetuate the conflict in eastern DRC

The expression comes from Fortunat Biselele, former private adviser to President Tshisekedi. Speaking in January 2023 about the rapprochement between the latter and his Rwandan counterpart Paul Kagame, a rapprochement in which he had played a crucial role as Tshisekedi's special envoy, Biselele revealed that 'President Kagame was completely up for it' and that 'we have made a lot of progress until, at a certain moment, there were dark interests which meant that the situation is as it is today'.¹⁰ Some were quick, as usual, to attribute the resurgence of the M23 in November 2021 to Rwanda, using the specious argument that 'the M23 emerged primarily as a means for Rwanda to project its influence against its northern neighbor, Uganda'.¹¹ Others still claim, in February 2025, that 'the starting point of this conflict remains mysterious'.¹² However, in an interview broadcast in Kinyarwanda on 24 May 2024, the military leader of the M23, Major General Sultani Makenga revealed the precise circumstances of the resurgence of the conflict. His group had returned to North Kivu on 14 January 2017 from Uganda where they had withdrawn in 2013, and their delegation had stayed 14 months in Kinshasa after Tshisekedi took power in order to finalize an agreement between his regime and the M23.¹³ It is important to note that during the interview, the rebel leader stated that

¹⁰ *Alain Foka Officiel*, 'La chronique : Qui pour sauver la RDC ?', 6 January 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2K7mFD_1LHY> (5 February 2024).

¹¹ 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. 6.

¹² Christophe Rigaud, 'RDC:« Paul Kagame semble dans un moment poutinien ». Interview avec Thierry Vircoulon, chercheur à l'Institut français des relations internationales (Ifri), Afrikarabia, 02 février 2025, <<https://afrikarabia.com/wordpress/rdc-paul-kagame-semble-dans-un-moment-poutinien/>> (4 February 2025).

¹³ *MAMA URWAGASABO TV*, 'Maj. Gen Sultani Makenga atuganirije byinshi bituma M23 ikomeza kurwana ndetse na tumwe muduce bafite', 24 May 2024, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=run-WSp6ldg>> (21 July 2024).

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.¹⁴

The agreement between M23 and President Tshisekedi's regime stipulated 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.¹⁵

The details of the agreement as well as the budget were already agreed and the documents signed by the minister in charge, and the M23 delegation waited a very long time for the budget to be allocated to it. All of a sudden, the M23 delegation was told: 'go back, we will call you back'. The delegation actually returned to their maquis in North Kivu and according to Major General Makenga, 'After a week they attacked us. This is how the war began; this is how we are at war to this day.'¹⁶ President Tshisekedi himself had recognized the prolonged presence of this M23 delegation in Kinshasa,¹⁷ and some sources even indicate the agreed budget.¹⁸

In the same interview, Major General Makenga reveals other troubling information on the duplicity of President Tshisekedi as well as his responsibility in triggering the new M23 rebellion.

The transcript of the interview translated in English can be found in Rutazibwa, 'Petition for the dissolution', pp. 53-56. For the original transcript in Kinyarwanda, see *ibid.*, pp. 120-123.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* For the transcript in English, see Rutazibwa, 'Petition for the dissolution', p. 55.

¹⁵ *Ibid.* For the transcript in English, see Rutazibwa, 'Petition for the dissolution', p. 53.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* For the transcript in English, see Rutazibwa, 'Petition for the dissolution', p. 56.

¹⁷ *GSR CONGO TV*, 'Félix Tshisekedi affirme qu'il n'avait jamais invité le M23 à Kinshasa', 22 February 2024, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPCzmd4LSNc>> (14 February 2025).

¹⁸ *Africa Intelligence*, 'RDC : Quand la présidence Tshisekedi négociait la reddition du M23 avec un million de dollars', 17 November 2022, <<https://www.africaintelligence.fr/afrique-centrale/2022/11/17/quand-la-presidence-tshisekedi-negociait-la-reddition-du-m23-avec-un-million-de-dollars,109865216-gra>> (07 February 2025).

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.... 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".¹⁹

When the M23 delegation returned and they began to be attacked by government forces, the M23 fighters defended themselves and repelled the attacks twice. And each time, the M23 leadership asked President Tshisekedi why they were being attacked. The latter replied that 'they were people who didn't seek peace' in his entourage. And since then, attacks and counterattacks have continued unabated, most often allowing the M23 to dislodge government forces and their allies and occupy new territories. The journalist was very curious and asked the following question to Major General Makenga:

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?²⁰

To which Major General Makenga replied:

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

¹⁹ *MAMA URWAGASABO TV*, 'Maj. Gen Sultan Makenga atuganirije'. For the transcript in English, see Rutazibwa, 'Petition for the dissolution', pp. 55-56.

²⁰ *Ibid.* For the transcript in English, see Rutazibwa, 'Petition for the dissolution', p. 56.

follow-up, he discovered that we were Rwandans. This therefore means that it was he who was doing it, and not those around him.²¹

It should also be remembered that the creation of the M23 in 2012 was provoked by members of the UN Group of Experts (GoE) on the Congo led by the American Steve Hege at the time; Western diplomats in Kinshasa; Keneth Roth of Human Rights Watch among others, who wanted to destroy the influence of Rwandophones (Tutsi in particular) within the army and other institutions of the DRC. I have shown this in my previous publications, citing the writings of those concerned and those of a certain Jason Stearns also associated with this group.²²

The silence of the mainstream Western media on the plight of the Congolese Batutsi

The imbalance of information in the major Western media on the conflict in eastern DRC manifests itself in a very complacent narrative with regard to the power in Kinshasa; a shocking silence on the atrocities committed against the Congolese Batutsi and assimilated populations; as well as a virulent and blind hostility against the M23 and Rwanda. This brilliant discussion between a journalist from AFP (Agence France Presse) and President Paul Kagame during a press conference in Kigali in April 2024 is revealing of this state of affairs. President Kagame went so far as to declare this: 'even those who accuse us, actually I should accuse them of not supporting M23, because it is as if they agree with the injustice that is being done to this community'.²³

AFP journalist: 'My question is about the March 23 movement in DRC. Your government previously denied backing the movement. Does that denial still stand a year and a half later? And what is the current relationship between Rwanda's government and M23? Thank you.'

President Paul Kagame:

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Rutazibwa, 'Petition for the dissolution', pp. 112-113.

²³ *Rwanda TV*, 'LIVE: Press Conference with President Paul Kagame', 8 April 2024, <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkkVD-MNGq8>> (20 June 2024).

Well, those who accuse us, I would ask them, why they actually don't support M23 themselves. Including AFP, and you as a journalist. Why don't you support M23? Or, why is the question: "you support M23? Or you don't support M23?" First of all, what is M23? M23 is an organization born in and out of Congo. That is number one. Number two: these are Congolese. And you will hear even Congo admit it. Now, why do they exist? Why are they fighting? Why do they have arms? It is another question. It is also a simple question. They exist because they have been denied their rights as citizens of that country. They are called Tutsis of Rwanda. Fine. Then you need to be educated also a little bit about history. We have Rwandan communities in Congo who are Congolese, and by the way these are not just the Tutsis. It is the same social structure of our country that is also there in Congo. Like, in fact we have other neighboring countries where they are, but they are citizens of those countries. We have a hundred thousand people originating from this community; a hundred thousand who have been living here in Rwanda in refugee camps for the last two decades. Why? Because they are being uprooted from their ancestral homes, persecuted, and sent across In fact, there are more in Uganda. There is a hundred thousand here, there are hundreds of thousands there in Uganda; more numbers.

So, M23 is born out of that situation. That is why I asked the question, I said: "Well, why wouldn't anybody else? Why are we being accused as Rwanda, of supporting M23?" And I am saying, even those who accuse us, actually I should accuse them of not supporting M23, because it is as if they agree with the injustice that is being done to this community. Otherwise, if you didn't agree with that injustice, you would be actually raising questions? Why are these people of M23 being treated like this? Why are we having a hundred thousand refugees here in Rwanda? That is where you would start from. Not start from asking Rwanda: "Are you supporting M23 or not? Are you still denying?" Because, you are asking the wrong questions. The issue is not whether anybody supports M23 or not. The issue is: what is actually the problem of M23? That is the question you should have asked in fact. What is the problem? What is this thing called M23? Are they human beings? Are they this? Are they Rwandans? Are they Congolese? Are they that? Why do they exist? Why do they even have arms and are fighting in their own country? This is the right question I should be asked. So, whether Rwanda supports or is associated in any way is actually immaterial; it is irrelevant to the question. Or even you, if you want to educate yourself or educate the public, the question should have been simple. Ask me: "By the way, what do you understand the M23 to be? What is it?" That is a

fair question. That is the one I would wish to be associated with, rather than whether I support or not support.²⁴

It is obvious that the AFP journalist, like her colleagues from other major media outlets around the world, are not ignorant of the basics of professional reporting to the point of being pedagogically and patiently educated by President Kagame. Their silence and the imbalance in their information on the conflict in the DRC are deliberate.

The creation by an American NGO and UN experts of the negationist narrative of the exploitation of Congolese minerals

The American NGO IRC (International Rescue Committee) and the UN Group of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and other Forms of Wealth in the Democratic Republic of Congo created by the UN in 2000 'under pressure from French diplomacy' contributed immensely in imposing the narrative of the exploitation of Congolese minerals as the cause of the conflict and extreme violence, and this narrative succeeded in replacing the indignation aroused until then by the genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi in 1994 in Rwanda as explained in a doctoral thesis defended by a Congolese from North Kivu at the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne in 2009.²⁵ The first and 5th surveys of IRC affirmed in 2001 and 2008 respectively that there had been 2.5 million and 5.4 million excess deaths compared to 'normal baseline mortality rates' because of the RCD war, between August 1998 and March 2001 for the first report, and August 1998 and April 2007 for the second.²⁶ 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 started from the IRC figure of 2.5 million excess deaths and extrapolated it to 3.5 excess deaths between August 1998 and September 2002 with the following interpretation: 'These deaths are a direct result of the occupation by Rwanda and Uganda.'²⁷ For Rwanda especially, the report definitively

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ Aloys Tegera, *Les Banyarwanda du Nord-Kivu (RDC) au XXème 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.

²⁶ International Rescue Committee, 'Mortality in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Results from Eleven Mortality Surveys' (Final draft, 2001).

²⁷ 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.

and peremptorily declared its security concerns unreal while accusing it of plundering: '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".'²⁸

However, it happens that two of the three demographers who had been hired by the European Union to verify the registration of the population of Congolese nationality between 2005 and 2006 with a view to the constitution of an electoral list refuted in 2008, the IRC estimates of mortality in the DRC. Based on the operations that they had carried out as experts of the European Union, operations that 'proved to be extremely reliable from a statistical point of view', they established that 'the number of deaths due to the unrest is approximately TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DEATHS'. And the demographers' estimate covered the period from 1992 to 2005, and not from 1998 to 2004 as had done an interim IRC report which put forward the figure of 4 million deaths.²⁹ The demographers further explained that in revisiting IRC figures, they want 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)'.³⁰ Nevertheless, the remarkable work of these demographers does not seem to have prevented the denialist approach from triumphing. Since then, successive UN experts' reports 'have clearly embraced and promoted the conspiracy theories of racist anti-Tutsi ideology'³¹ and are marred by enormous methodological flaws.³² The security concerns of Rwanda and the Congolese Batutsi against the threats of genocidal forces are trivialized and denigrated, in favor of the negationist narrative of mineral exploitation and other accusations.

Even more serious, the construction of this new narrative went hand in hand with the change in the initial mission of the UN forces in the DRC which was to fight the Rwandan genocidal forces and other 'negative forces' to ally with them and the Congolese government against the Congolese Batutsi who are fighting for their survival as well as against Rwanda. Already in 2006, MONUC (predecessor of MONUSCO) had killed 400 CNDP (predecessor of

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁹ 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>. The capital letters of the quote come from the authors.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Rutazibwa, 'Petition for the dissolution', abstract.

³² Bojana Coulibaly, 'Can the Group of Experts midterm report be a reliable source of information on the DRC crisis?', 12 January 2025, *Conspiracy Tracker Great Lakes*, <<https://conspiracytrackergl.com/can-the-un-group-of-experts-2024-midterm-report-be-a-reliable-source-of-information-on-the-drc-conflict/>> (21 January 2025).

M23) fighters using its helicopters and tanks to prevent this movement from taking the city of Goma.³³In March 2013, the UN Security Council established by Resolution 2098 the Intervention Brigade within MONUSCO ‘with an unprecedented UN peacekeeping mandate for offensive operations to neutralize armed groups’.³⁴ It turned out very quickly that the only target of the UN Intervention Brigade was M23 because after the withdrawal of the latter from Goma and other areas the same year 2013, the UN force did not attack the armed groups roaming the east of the DRC. Since the resumption of hostilities against the M23 by the Tshisekedi regime in November 2021, MONUSCO has marked a new turning point by collaborating very closely with the FARDC, nevertheless allied with genocidal forces including the FDLR, other militias, the armies of Burundi and some SADC countries in atrocious acts of ethnic cleansing against the Congolese Batutsi and in rocket firing and other provocations against Rwanda.

The UN, the Burundian defense forces and those of SADC in a coalition with a DRC government and genocidal militias who kill Batutsi, cut off their heads and eat their flesh in front of the cameras

It's horrifying to see how the international community is concerned about protecting and defending the minerals of the DRC, while displaying a monstrous insensitivity in the face of people who are systematically persecuted, who are tortured, who are killed and whose flesh is eaten in broad daylight and in front of the cameras, simply because they are of Tutsi origin or suspected of being such. In the petition sent to world leaders in October 2024 requesting the [dissolution of the UN](#), I showed images of some of these atrocities, explaining that they 'are not clashes between rival African tribes as presented by Western media', but the consequence of a 'racist and genocidal ideology' created by colonization but most especially, 'implemented in a radical way in Rwanda - before spreading to the entire region - by the Belgian colonial administration and the Missionaries of Africa (aka White Fathers), during the first genocide against the Tutsi from 1959’.³⁵

And the petition continued by noting that

³³ Rutazibwa, ‘Discussing the causes’, p. 22.

³⁴ S. Sheeran and S. Case, ‘The Intervention Brigade: Legal Issues for the UN in the Democratic Republic of the Congo,’ *International Peace Institute*, (New York), November 2014.

³⁵ Rutazibwa, ‘Petition for the dissolution’, abstract.

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”.³⁶

President Tshisekedi had in fact revealed his genocidal project against the Congolese Batutsi in a public speech in December 2023, saying:

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'.³⁷

President Tshisekedi's influential ideologue, Justin Bitakwira, currently a national deputy, had earlier declared in July 2023 in a television broadcast that 'this war; of the aggression of the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is a war between the Nilotics and the Bantus'. He thus called for an end to the deployment of East African Community (EAC) forces by accusing them of being Nilotics, even inviting the journalist to ‘look at the face’ of Kenyan President William Ruto to realize that he is Nilotic. For Bitakwira, relying on the help of the EAC forces was like 'fleeing the rain into the ocean'; and this is why he pleaded for the deployment of forces from countries led by Bantu: 'we only have four countries minimum, or maximum, or even three: Angola, Burundi now, as there is a Hutu at the head; and Tanzania'.³⁸

The United Nations themselves, also members of this new genocidal coalition, had previously shown their ideological penchant for anti-Tutsi conspiracy theories in their reports as we saw above, but also their support for the genocidal force FDLR in the positions taken by some of their experts. Steve Hege, the American who served later from 2010 to 2012 as

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

coordinator of the United Nations Group of Experts (GoE) on the DRC, could make this astonishing plea in favor of the FDLR in February 2009, rebelling against the collaboration between the armies of the DRC and Rwanda to hunt down these genocidal forces.

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.³⁹

A little interpretation is necessary to show how this future coordinator of the UN GoE on the Congo is fully immersed in colonial racialism. He associates the FDLR, which is a Rwandan foreign force in DRC made up of genocidal Bahutu, with the Congolese government and Mai-Mai militias on the basis of 'racial' affinity between Bantus; and the CNDP which was a Congolese rebellion - often unduly identified only with the Batutsi - with Rwanda and treats it with contempt as a proxy when it had specific demands relating to the Congolese Batutsi, once again by 'racial' affinity between Batutsi, Hamites or Nilotics according to the lexicon of colonial anthropology. He also mentions the RPF and Rwanda indiscriminately to insinuate that the latter is in the hands of the Batutsi generally associated globally and unduly with the RPF. And in this equation, Hege's choice was made, and this definitively: for him, the FDLR who are foreigners deserved all the rights in the Congo of which they were 'the principal defender' according to him, and the CNDP, although Congolese citizens who fought for their rights, deserved none; he had mentally banished them to Rwanda, and things had to stay that way. Here Hege's reasoning is perfectly in agreement with that of the radicalized extremist circles in Congo who treat the Congolese Batutsi as Rwandans who must return home to Rwanda, and the Bahutu Rwandans of the FDLR as welcome in the Congo where they can install roadblocks, raise taxes, exploit minerals and other resources, kill and rape without it being able to move anyone; not even the government or its Western partners, including mainstream media and human rights activists. This is one of the fundamental reasons why the conflict in the east of the DRC has become intractable.

³⁹ 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).

Understanding this ideological foundation of all these actors in the Tshisekedi regime coalition therefore allows us to see that they all firmly believe in colonial racialism stemming from the anthropology of antagonistic races: Bantu/Nilotic; Tutsi/Hutu; etc. This also explains the cynicism, insensitivity and cruelty of the international community in the face of the tragedy of the Congolese Batutsi, as well as its untimely condemnations of Rwanda which is trying to defend its security against the ever-present genocidal threat. Regarding the cruelty towards the Congolese Batutsi, I made, in my October 2024 petition to world leaders, the following recommendations:

It is imperative that Congolese President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo be apprehended and tried for the crime of genocide, as well as other accomplices within his regime. ... 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.⁴⁰

I continue to hope that among world leaders - with the exception of the aforementioned people and the UN Secretary General to whom I did not send a copy of my petition for ethical reasons - there will be some who will demonstrate courage and responsibility by paying attention to my recommendations.

An anti-Tutsi racism of colonial inspiration and neocolonial instrumentalization to destroy all truly African governance

On 21 March 2023, I gave a talk to an ad hoc committee of Rwandan parliamentarians on Rwanda-DRC relations in the context of the conflict in eastern DRC. I was invited to speak to them about colonial racialism and its consequences in the region, and in particular about the ideology of hatred and discrimination in the DRC against the Banyarwanda and the Batutsi in particular. At a certain point I mentioned the name of Seruteganya, a Muhutu, very influential

⁴⁰ Rutazibwa, 'Petition for the dissolution', pp. 14, 19.

official at the court of the last independent king of Rwanda Kigeli IV Rwabugili (1853-1896). Some of his colleagues, jealous of his growing influence, had plotted an intrigue against Seruteganya, accusing him of boasting of being the lover of the queen mother Murorunkwere and even of having made her pregnant. The scandal of a pregnant Queen Mother in an adulterous relationship caused immense shock, even if it later turned out to be nothing more than a crude set-up. Unfortunately, too late, because the outcome of the intrigue had cost the lives of the queen mother, of Seruteganya and his four sons.⁴¹

I brought up this story to show that before colonization, there was a strong social and political integration of Rwandan society where members of different groups could find themselves at the highest levels of governance in the country. And the deputies who learned this story for the first time agreed with me that it was unimaginable to speak of a notable Hutu, who had become above all a lover of the queen mother, in the pattern of thought inherited from colonization which had too exalted the image of the Mututsi and despised that of the Muhutu and the Mutwa within the framework of a Hamitic ideology which considered that the power and any other manifestation of 'civilization' that the Westerners had found in Rwanda was the work of the only Batutsi, considered Hamites and of Caucasian origin, who would have established themselves in Rwanda through conquest and by reducing the Bahutu into slavery. However, the Polish anthropologist Jan Czekanowski had established, after a study carried out in 1907, that 'the institution of slavery does not play a role' in Rwanda.⁴²

Colonial literature ended up establishing an equivalence between the customary political elite and the Batutsi in general. But whether it was the German (1897-1916), Belgian (1916-1962) colonizers or the missionaries of Africa (aka White Fathers) established in Rwanda since 1900, this traditional power identified with the Batutsi had to be destroyed. If they kept it for a certain time - and even ethnicized it in favor of a few Batutsi auxiliary to colonization to the detriment of the Bahutu and Batwa - it was out of pure opportunism. The first major synthesis of colonial knowledge on the history of Rwanda therefore established that 'it was in Urundi and mainly in Ruanda' that the Hamites corresponding to the Batutsi 'gave their full measure and founded empires bearing a particular mark'.⁴³

⁴¹ Alexis Kagame, *Un abrégé de l'histoire du Rwanda de 1853 à 1972*. (Tome II) (Editions universitaires, Butare, 1975), pp. 23,29-33.

⁴² Jan Czekanowski, *Forschungen im Nil-Kongo-Zwischengebiet, vol. 1, Ethnographie, Zwischenseengebiet Mpororo, Ruanda* (Klinkhardt & Biermann, Leipzig, 1917), 262ff. As translated in English by Klaus Bachmann, *Everyday life in early colonial Rwanda. Insights from German and Polish sources* (Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2020), p. 64.

⁴³ Louis de Lacger (du clergé d'Albi), *Ruanda. Première partie. Le Ruanda ancien* (Kabgayi, 1959), p. 58.

So, Richard Kandt, who later became the first German civilian Resident in Rwanda, wrote in 1999: 'Rouanda is a country full of hopes when we could destroy the power of the Watusi'.⁴⁴ In 1902, the French missionary Alphonse Brard wrote: 'today, the Batusi no longer have a future, the appearance of Europeans will ruin their power everywhere...'.⁴⁵ Another German colonial official, Lieutenant Von Parish wrote in 1903: 'We should first remove the Batutsi or at least remove their influence. ... To achieve this one would enjoy the warm support of the Bahutu while the Batutsi could only count on the support of the Batwa'.⁴⁶ Von Parish was proposing the creation of a settlement colony for Europeans in southern Rwanda because of a good climate, fertile land and cheap labor. But for him, it was necessary to get rid of the Batutsi first. Belgian officer Josué Henry, 'Commissioner general and senior commander of the Kivu troops' tasked to defend the eastern border of Belgian Congo against the Germans who were colonial masters of Rwanda during First World War wrote in December 2014:

The Watuzi form a very powerful tribe which according to the lowest estimates can mobilize 10,000 to 20,000 warriors. Can we, under the conditions that I have just expressed by invading its territory, put the Germans in the situation of exploiting the feeling of national defence vis-à-vis it to our detriment. ... Also, if I take the bias. Rwanda does not only have Watuzi. It has numerous and strong Bahutu populations who are subject to them and who, I am convinced, would not ask better to shake off the yoke....⁴⁷

This permanent threat from Westerners to destroy traditional Rwandan power which they nevertheless considered efficient and effective was put into action at the end of colonization by the Belgian administration and the White Father missionaries. As they had unduly conflated this power to the Batutsi in general, its destruction implied that of the Batutsi as a group too, in a genocidal enterprise, by sensitizing Bahutu to ethnic hatred according to the strategy that they had already announced in their declarations, a sample of which we have reproduced above. In another [article](#) published in 2023, I show that Belgium committed the

⁴⁴ 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.

⁴⁵ 'La lettre du Père Brard du 8 février 1902 à Monseigneur Livinhac' [A.G.M.Afr., 02/1 et N° 098523,48], 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. 99.

⁴⁶ 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. 189.

⁴⁷ Musée royal de l'Afrique centrale (MRAC), Tervuren, Archives Josué Henry de la Lindi, HA.01.117, 402.

first genocide against the Tutsi from 1 November 1959.⁴⁸ The role of the White Father missionaries in this first genocide against the Tutsi is better illustrated in my petition to the world leaders where I used previously unpublished archives of these same missionaries.⁴⁹ In another [article](#) of 2024, I show how Belgium disguised this first genocide against the Tutsi as a 'social revolution' or 'Hutu revolt', leaving post-independence power in the hands of a neo-colonial, racist and genocidal regime which continued cyclical anti-Tutsi pogroms and whose ideological and political heirs implemented the last genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in 1994.⁵⁰

Today we are witnessing the same strategy aimed at destroying all effective and genuine African governance on the continent. If at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s, Belgium destroyed the Rwandan monarchy and the nationalist party UNAR (Union Nationale Rwandaise / Rwandan National Union) which demanded independence and brought together the majority of all Rwandans using parties like PARMEHUTU (Parti de l'émancipation du peuple hutu / Party for the Emancipation of the Hutu People) built on an ethnic, racist and genocidal ideology, today the neo-colonial forces are attacking the leadership in Rwanda under the RPF (Rwanda Patriotic Front) led by President Paul Kagame using Africans who chose to adhere to the colonial ideology of antagonistic African 'races'.

The first genocide against the Tutsi committed by Belgium from 1959 was whitewashed into 'social revolution' and many Western knowledge producers in the media and even in the research community have normalized it to this day. I have referred to this latter category in my previous articles as 'criminal scholars'. The persistent genocidal attacks and threats against Rwanda and the Congolese Batutsi since 1994 to date are equally whitewashed as false pretexts to conceal the expansionist and predatory ambitions of a phantasmagoric Hima-Tutsi empire allegedly 'in the pay of Western imperialists', and the same Western knowledge producers validate the narrative; whether mainstream media, UN experts or so-called researchers. I saw an American in this last category who boasts in his CV of having succeeded, after the publication of the UN GoE report on the Congo of which he was coordinator in 2008, that two European countries 'temporarily suspended aid to the Rwandan government'.⁵¹

⁴⁸ 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>>.

⁴⁹ Rutazibwa, 'Petition for the dissolution', pp. 90-98.

⁵⁰ Privat Rutazibwa, 'Rwanda: how the post-independence regimes from 1962 to 1994 were neo-colonial, racist and genocidal', 05 February 2024, *AfricArxiv*, <<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10628654>>.

⁵¹ 'Jason Stearns', *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jason_Stearns> (08 February 2025).

Regarding the suspension of aid to Rwanda, Germany⁵² and Great Britain⁵³ announced threats in this direction after the capture of Goma by the M23 rebels. Belgium also urged the entire European Union to do the same and suspend existing agreements.⁵⁴ Calling Rwanda, a ‘donor darling’ is a bit like winking at the proponents of ‘primitive politics’ in our region and on the continent, who make a kind of mirror accusation of Rwanda as being ‘in the pay of Western imperialists’. No, Rwanda is not among the main beneficiaries of Western aid. But what it receives, it is known to use effectively. If they were reasonable, Westerners should stop blackmailing Rwanda with aid and instead think about reparations. In my October 2024 petition to world leaders, I wrote that

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 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.⁵⁵

I reiterated this in a letter dated 16 November 2024 to the German Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office, Katja Keul.⁵⁶ An official in the ministry informed me a month later

⁵² RFI, ‘RDC: tirs à Goma, des ambassades attaquées par des manifestants à Kinshasa’, Live du mardi 28 janvier 2025, <<https://www.rfi.fr/fr/afrique/20250128-rdc-echanges-tirs-goma-m23-rwanda-deplaces-humanitaire>> (14 February 2025).

⁵³ Patrick Wintour, ‘Lammy tells Rwanda it is putting \$1bn in aid ‘under threat’ in DRC invasion’, *The Guardian*, 29 January 2025, <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jan/29/rwanda-global-aid-under-threat-drc-invasion-david-lammy>> (14 February 2025).

⁵⁴ Mared Gwyn Jones, ‘DR Congo conflict: Why is the EU under pressure to reconsider its minerals partnership with Rwanda?’, *Euronews*, 30 January 2025, <<https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2025/01/30/dr-congo-conflict-why-is-the-eu-under-pressure-to-reconsider-its-minerals-partnership-with>> (14 February 2025).

⁵⁵ Rutazibwa, ‘Petition for the dissolution’, pp. 14-15.

⁵⁶ Privat Rutazibwa, ‘Letter to supervisor’, 7 December 2024, *AfricArxiv*, <<https://doi.org/10.60763/africarxiv/1670>>. The letter to the Minister of State appears as appendix 2 of the document.

that 'You will receive a full answer to your letter. Your letter has not been forgotten'. I'm still waiting!⁵⁷

⁵⁷ The message came from a person whose good faith and good will I have no reason to doubt, until now.