DISCUSSING THE CAUSES AND CONTEXT OF WARS AND CONFLICT INVOLVING THE BANYARWANDA FROM EASTERN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

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Summary

This article gives historical perspective and decolonial analysis to the conflict in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). It reviews a number of scholars - including United Nations (UN) lead experts on the DRC - who refuse to acknowledge the role of anti-Tutsi racism in sparking the intermittent violence that has plagued eastern DRC for sixty years now. They offer instead far-fetched explanations that are scholarly and moral vindication to the racist instigators of violence and their bigoted rhetoric in Congo. 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. There seems to be a deliberate desire, on the part of the Congolese authorities and above all of the decision-makers within the international community, to uproot the Congolese Tutsi populations from eastern Congo. No measure has been taken to date to repatriate Congolese refugees settled in Rwanda who exceed 80,000 in 2023, and others in different countries. This desire to eradicate the Tutsi from Congo is also manifested by the relentlessness against the only politico-military organizations which carry the demands of the Congolese Tutsi, namely the CNDP and the M23. Rather than encouraging the Congolese government to listen to their demands, even the UN has fought these rebellions militarily in support of the government troops, killing around 400 CNDP combatants in 2006 with MONUC helicopters and combat tanks, and establishing the Intervention Brigade within the MONUSCO in 2013 with an offensive mandate to neutralize M23; two unprecedented facts in the history of UN peacekeeping operations.

There has always been a constant, deliberate and relentless desire to make Rwanda and its real or supposed allies hold the responsibility for serious crimes and even genocide in Congo. Continuing to portray post-genocide Rwanda as the source of all Congolese woes has become an easy refrain where successive Congolese leaders and their foreign allies seem to benefit from a kind of ‘unlimited irresponsibility insurance’. Influential decision-makers in the West, with a colonial mindset, oppose that the Tutsi can have any political role in the region, whatever the level. The M23 rebellion, whose paternity is attributed to Rwanda in the usual pattern, was in fact created by the clumsiness of Kabila’s Western advisers who wanted to destroy what they perceived as ‘the growing and disproportionate power’ of ex-CNDP Tutsi officers and men within the Congolese army.

The international community does not have the will to bring peace to Congo. A collective of lawyers published a press release in March 2023 describing ‘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.’ The UN treats the Congolese state as a normal state, rather than seeing it as the real problem. When it talks of security in Congo, it means the protection of the territory of the state, rather than human security, which includes the security of individuals and groups. It is time for the UN to find a political solution to the problems of DRC, instead of using its planes to fire on the M23.

Key words

In his 2013 reflections on the historiography of eastern Congo, René Lemarchand described the borderland separating eastern Congo from neighbouring countries including Rwanda as a place ‘where history is a violently contested terrain’. Yet in an article on the same region in 2017, Gillian Mathys pleaded for ‘bringing history back in’. This article precisely offers a historical perspective on the context and cause of the wars and conflict involving the Congolese Banyarwanda in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), while discussing and showing the limits of dominant analyses in existing scholarship. By opening the subject with quotes borrowed from social media on violence against the Tutsi in DRC, in the context of the second war between this country and the M23 (Mouvement du 23 mars / March 23 Movement) rebellion, the intention here is not to choose and side with a discourse of ‘victimization’ and to ‘whitewash’ the violence that may come from the other party to the conflict, as Mathys might fear. The point is rather to draw attention to what could be considered the major cause of the conflict in eastern DRC as in the whole region, since a good diagnosis of the root cause could greatly contribute looking for good solutions. As observed quite early in a book published in Rwanda in 1999 compiling analyses of the internal political evolution of post-genocide Rwanda as well as the ‘first two Congo wars’, ‘the root cause of the instability in the Great Lakes region is none other than the ethnic anti-Tutsi ideology developed and then tested in Rwanda in 1959 before being spread throughout the region’.4

Affirming this thesis from the outset does not mean ignoring or neglecting the other explanations generally put forward to account for the recurrent conflict in eastern Congo. A United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) report established in 2015 that ‘the wars in the DRC have multiple causes revolving around four clusters of factors: economic factors, institutional factors, regional factors and global geopolitical factors’.5 Prepared by Léonce Ndikumana, Professor of Economics at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst with contributions from two other scholars, Emizet François Kisangani and Isaac Kalonda-Kanyama, the report notes that ‘while the wars in the DRC have been portrayed as “resource wars”,

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natural resources are not a direct cause of the conflicts.\textsuperscript{16} The authors, on the other hand, pointed out that 'ethnicity politics was a key factor in both the anti-Mobutu rebellion and the anti-Kabila war.'\textsuperscript{17}

Other scholars, however, explain the conflict in eastern DRC with pernicious theories based on erroneous or simply far-fetched information as will be demonstrated in detail later. Lemarchand considers, for example, that the Tutsi refugees of 1959 whom he describes as 'fifty-niners' would have caused a destabilizing and 'lasting impact on neighbouring states' including Congo, where 'they were able to bring about a radical shift in Mobutu’s policies on land and nationality', sowing ‘seeds of ethnic hatred’ and provoking ‘violent outburst of anti-Rwandan feelings’.\textsuperscript{8} Similar theory on the destabilizing role of 1959 Tutsi refugees in Congo is developed by Stanislas Bucyalimwe Mararo who states that ‘the influx of Tutsi refugees [from 1959] who joined in the ensuing political fights raised anti-Rwandan resentment among the Hunde.’\textsuperscript{9}

Accusing Rwanda of irredentism on the basis of very thin arguments, David Newbury could allege in 1997 in the midst of the AFDL (Alliance des forces démocratiques pour la libération du Congo-Zaïre / Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaïre) war, that this could 'intensify fears among Zairians that the Rwandan government seeks to seize large areas of Kivu' and 'exacerbate regional tensions, placing in greater danger the Rwanda-speaking populations in Kivu'.\textsuperscript{10} The scholar had surprisingly chosen to divert attention to Rwanda rather than to those responsible for the persecution of Rwandophones, a persecution which had already lasted a long time and which was at the origin of the war. Mathys recycled Newbury's theory under the new name of 'greater Rwanda' implying 'expansionist tendencies of Rwandans in general and Tutsi in particular' and legitimizing, according to her interpretation of narratives she gathered in eastern Congo, 'violence [of other Congolese] against Rwandophones or Congolese Tutsi'.\textsuperscript{11} The famous Congolese historian, Professor Isidore Ndaywel È Nziem has also repeated this theory by asserting that 'there is a myth of a greater Rwanda ... likely to perpetuate the existing climate of violence' and that 'to put an end to the prevailing rwandophobia ..., it is essential that the masters of Rwanda and Uganda recognize their wrongdoings.'\textsuperscript{12} The 'greater Rwanda' theory is definitely on the rise with an article and an analysis document produced respectively at the beginning and at the end of last May.\textsuperscript{13}

All of these theories have three important features in common. They evoke without really treating in substance what they call 'rwandophobia', 'violence against Rwandophones or Congolese Tutsi', 'placing in greater danger the Rwanda-speaking populations in Kivu', 'anti-Rwandan resentment' or 'violent outburst of anti-Rwandan feelings'. They are quick to blame this anti-Rwandan sentiment and this hatred against the Tutsi on the post-genocide Rwandan government -its 'irredentism' could 'intensify fears among Zairians that the Rwandan government seeks to seize large areas of Kivu-', or on the Tutsi refugees of 1959 - 'they were able to bring about a radical shift in Mobutu’s policies on land and nationality'-. An American researcher goes so far as to assert that 'hatred among other communities [against the Tutsi] ... stemmed from abuses perpetrated by Tutsi-led soldiers' in recent conflicts.\textsuperscript{14} Finally, these theories seek to reduce the causes of the conflict in eastern DRC to a simple dispute over land and political influence between 'natives' and 'immigrants'.

If it turns out that mistrust and hatred of the Tutsi inspired by racist propaganda constitute the major ingredient of the recurring conflict in eastern DRC as we will endeavour to demonstrate in the following pages, it is to be feared that academics advocating the above theories attempt to offer scholarly and moral vindication

\textsuperscript{6} UNECA, \textit{Conflicts}, Vii. For monographs devoted exclusively to the tragedy and the exclusion of the Congolese populations speaking Kinyarwanda, respectively in North and South Kivu, see A. B. Tegera, \textit{Les Banyarwandas}; and M. M. Ruhimbika, \textit{Les Banyamulenge (Congo-Zaïre) entre deux guerres} (Paris, 2001).
\textsuperscript{7} UNECA, \textit{Conflicts}, Viii.
\textsuperscript{8} Lemarchand, ‘Reflections’, 424-5.
to the racist instigators of violence and their bigoted rhetoric. I enter the discussion with great modesty as an aspiring scholar in front of celebrated academics and researchers, and it is not out of a taste for controversy or being provocative. It is rather the conviction that sincere and respectful discussion can bring us closer to the truth, and that the latter has a liberating power for all, including the peoples of the African Great Lakes region long subjected to violence, and who aspire only to peace and well-being.

This article is based on documentary sources and oral accounts collected and studied for many years to understand the conflicts of the Great Lakes region of Africa and more recently, within the framework of a doctoral thesis on colonial racism and its consequences in the region. Our research builds mainly on a decolonial and interpretivist approach. It seeks to show and deconstruct what could be seen as ‘myths, amnesia and myopia’ in Western knowledge production on the Great Lakes region. It also considers the notion of ‘epistemic location’, in the sense that ‘colonial’ or ‘decolonial’ mindsets do not depend on geography: Westerners can defend decolonial points of view while Africans (and people from the Global South in general) advocate colonial views. The approach finally allows the involvement of the researcher and his human interest to interpret elements of the study. The first part of the article demonstrates the invalidity of the argument that anti-Tutsi racism in Congo began or intensified with the two Congo wars. The second part reviews various arguments put forward to date by influential scholars to explain anti-Tutsi racism in Congo, and demonstrates their lack of a solid basis. The last part questions the cynicism of those who trivialize Rwanda’s security concerns with regard to the threat coming from Congo or play down the pernicious nature and impact of anti-Tutsi racism.

I. WAR AND VIOLENCE AGAINST THE BANYARWANDA AS WELL AS ANTI-TUTSI RACISM LONG PREDATES THE TWO CONGO WARS

I.1. Attributing the cause of instability in eastern DRC to RPF-led Rwanda is an anachronism

The wars and conflicts targeting or fought by the speakers of the Kinyarwanda language (or Banyarwanda, or rwandophones) in eastern Congo since its independence in 1960, started in 1963 with what was called Intambara ya Kanyarwanda (the Kanyarwanda war). Most of the analysts tend to focus on what happened since October 1996 when the AFDL war began in South-Kivu and ended with the removal of Marshal Mobutu's regime, until now. Not knowing or ignoring other conflicts that happened before, makes those who analyse them look for their origin or root cause in what they call Rwanda's will, since it was led by the RPF-Inkotanyi (Rwanda Patriotic Front/Inkotanyi) in 1994, to loot minerals and other wealth from the Congo. Congolese President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi continually repeats this accusation, as during the visit to Kinshasa by French President Emmanuel Macron in March 2023. UN reports also echo this accusation from time to time, with evidence of business links between Rwanda and eastern Congo, but without being able to establish that this is really the cause of wars and conflict. Rwanda under the leadership of the RPF is even accused by some Western scholars of invading the Congo to find a place to settle its large population, especially Tutsi herders.

Others give Rwanda annexationist aims. United Nations’ (UN) experts have accused Rwanda in 2012 of ‘wanting to annex North Kivu and South Kivu’, based on information provided by Congolese intelligence agencies. Rwanda is still accused of wanting to create what high Congolese authorities, a Prime minister and

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17 On the interpretivist approach, see M. Bevir & J. Blakely, Interpretive Social Science: An Anti-Naturalist Approach, (New York, 2018); J. Dudovskiy, Writing a Dissertation, (https://research-methodology.net/about-us/ebook/).

18 ‘DR Congo leader urges Macron to back sanctions against Rwanda’, Aljazeera (4 March 2023).


a minister of Foreign Affairs, have called ‘states with a mono-ethnic component’ or the ‘Hima empire’ in 1996 and 1997 respectively. It should be noted that the infamous ‘Vangu Mambweni report’, named after the person who headed the ‘Zairean’ parliamentary committee that established it, already in 1995 accused the Tutsi of the region (and RPF-led Rwanda) of wanting create ‘a Hamite empire’, long before Rwanda intervened militarily in the Congo.

There is of course another cause invoked very abundantly today called ‘balkanization’, which is a slight variation of the previous accusation. This is an allegation above all of the high hierarchy of the Catholic Church, the media, civil society and certain opposition parties, and of course, the government in Congo. Returning from a pastoral visit to the diocese of Butembo-Beni in North Kivu in December 2019, Cardinal Fridolin Ambongo insinuated that it is Rwanda which was organizing the massacres in this region (more than 400 km driving distance), to ‘sow terror, in order to force the populations to clear out, thereby leaving free rein to other occupants to come and settle’. In another conflict thousands of kilometres from Rwanda between Teke and Yaka in Bandundu near Kinshasa, President Tshisekedi does not hesitate to once again accuse Rwanda, which he describes as ‘the horrible neighbour’, of being involved. And speaking of his counterpart Paul Kagame, he adds: ‘He wants to take territories in our country, because these territories have wealth which has made his country happy so far.’

The Congolese accuse Rwanda today of trying to ‘balkanize’ the Congo with such intensity that some people are fooled to believe that it is a new and worrying phenomenon. However, it is not the first time that the Congolese have used this word, because it started to be heard in the 1980s. They could not blame Rwanda under the leadership of the RPF (from 1994 to date) for such ‘balkanisation’ because it did not exist yet. They could neither blame that ‘balkanization’ on Rwanda that was ruled by President Habyarimana Juvenal at that time (1973-1994), because it is his government that had invented that claim through MAGRIVI (Mutuelle des Agriculteurs des Virunga / Virunga Farmers’ Mutual), an organization of Congolese Hutu extremists designed to destabilize the Tutsi in Congo. An unsigned document circulated in 1981 at the University of Kinshasa called for the killing of students and Tutsi families living nearby, and accused them of ‘demanding independence for some parts of the Congo, namely the Masisi, Rutshuru, Idjwi, Kalehe’, and ‘one part of the zones of Uvira, Fizi and Mwenga’.

These fabrications, which bring terrible accusations to Congolese Tutsi and RPF-led Rwanda – also identified with the Tutsi – stem from a much older ideology of hatred.

I.2. ‘Kanyarwanda war’: violence against the Banyarwanda and first manifestations of anti-Tutsi racism in Congo

The Kanyarwanda conflict was caused by politicians from the so-called indigenous tribes (Nande, Hunde, Nyanga) who wanted to disrupt security and marginalize the Kinyarwanda speakers for fear of being outvoted in the elections due to the large number of Banyarwanda voters. During the first local elections held in Congo

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after independence in 1960, the Kinyarwanda speakers were elected at 80% in local elections. The conflict was preceded in 1962 by tensions based on making North Kivu an independent province as requested by the representatives of so-called native tribes who had succeeded in allying with the Mwami Hutu of Rutshuru Ndeze Daniel, while the other representatives of the Kinyarwanda speakers such as the Tutsi Cyprien Rwakabuba and Jean Népomuscène Rwiyereka who were ministers in the government of the Kivu province, and the commissioner of the city of Goma Herman Habarugira continued to maintain that the province of Kivu, which included North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema, remains undivided. It was the period of the 'provincettes' well known in the political history of Congo where the ideological opposition between unitarists and federalists was very strong. The proponents of autonomy in North Kivu ended up having the upper hand.

At the end of 1962, there were attacks by some Hutu against the Hunde customary authorities of Masisi who were oppressing them, killing a policeman and his deputy. This led the authorities in North Kivu, which had already become an autonomous province, and those in the Territory of Masisi, to send troops to restore security, but when they arrived, they killed and looted the population. The actual conflict began in July 1963 and ended immediately after Joseph Désiré Mobutu took power on 24 November 1965. It opposed the Kinyarwanda-speaking populations of Masisi, Goma and Bwito on the one hand, and the Nande, Hunde and Nyanga populations of these regions on the other. During this conflict, majority of administrative positions at the provincial and intermediate levels were in the hands of so-called natives who took advantage of this to carry out criminal activities against Hutu and Tutsi, with particular emphasis on the persecution and murder of the latter.

In the North-Kivu parliamentary meeting held on 15 October 1963, some of its members requested that 'all the Rwandans...be expelled from Northern Kivu Province'; others said that 'only the Tutsi are against us', that 'a Tutsi has to be expelled without any condition, because he constitutes a public danger', which ended with the establishment of a special committee to study the 'Rwandan problem'. This committee submitted to the General Assembly resolutions that include 'pure and simple expulsion of Tutsi, refugees and immigrants alike, towards their native country', and 'modification of the electoral decree of March 23, 1960, granting the vote to the Rwandan immigrants'. It also requested the 'establishment of special identity cards for Rwandan immigrants; and evacuation of the Tutsi of Northern Kivu [autochthonous Tutsi of Rutshuru also called Abanyejomba] and their transfer to regions remote from Rwanda'. The General Assembly approved the resolutions except the last one to move away from Rwandan border the native Tutsi Abanyejomba. Its president Raphael Buunda (a Hunde) immediately signed the decree (Edit no. 11/63 of 15 October 1963) ordering that all Tutsi refugees and immigrants on the territory of North-Kivu be expelled and returned to their country of origin, and requesting the provincial government to immediately implement the order.

The Tutsi of Goma and Masisi in particular were severely persecuted and killed at this particular time; those who were already living there as natives or immigrants were also treated as refugees, their identity documents systematically seized by the administration, those acquired during colonization set on fire or made to disappear from civil status offices. Violence and persecution against Banyarwanda and Tutsi in particular went on. On 19 August 1964, the Congolese government issued an order signed by President Joseph Kasa-Vubu, Prime Minister Moïse Tshombe and Minister for Home Affairs Godefroid Munongo expelling Rwandan refugees from the country, and citizens of Burundi, Mali and Congo Brazzaville. It was in this period that the UNHCR...

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31 Bucyalimwe, ‘Land’.
32 Rusamira, ‘La dynamique’, 149.
33 Assemblée provinciale, compte-rendu, as quoted in Bucyalime, ‘Land’, 522-23.
34 Ibid.
airlifted Rwandan Tutsi refugees from North Kivu to Tanzania where they settled in the new refugee camp expressly opened for them at Mwesi in the Mpanga district.37

Harassment and oppression of Kinyarwanda speakers including their murder continued, and towards the 1965 elections they again rebelled against local authorities. The leaders of North Kivu at the time, Denis Paluku (a Nande) and Muleyi Benezet (a Hunde) lied to the central government in Léopoldville (Kinshasa) that the Rwandan riots supported the Mulele rebels, and yet the latter were not present in North Kivu. The government of Léopoldville immediately sent the army and the police to quell those who were presented as a threat to power. In Masisi and Goma, these forces came to systematically hunt down the Tutsi, killing many of them in Kirotshi and other rural areas like the Tutsi refugee camp of Bibwe, and throwing many bodies of Tutsi into Lac Vert near Sake.38

The ideology of hatred that had been sown in Rwanda by the Belgian colonial administration and influential White Fathers missionaries, causing the massacre and the flight of the Tutsi, had already spread to the Congo.39 François Preziosi, a UNHCR official in Congo at the time, explains:

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 Léopoldville in which all disorders and atrocities in North Kivu were ascribed to the Tutsis.40

Preziosi, one of the few to have compassion for Rwandan Tutsi refugees, was killed near the Kalonge camp in South Kivu in 1964, in an attempt to protect them.41 In fact, there was also insecurity in South Kivu at this time, due to the war of the Mulele rebels who fought against the Congolese state between 1963 and 1965.

I.3. From ‘Kanyarwanda war’ to low intensity violence and discrimination against Banyarwanda, and virulent racism fuelled by pre-1994 genocide Rwandan regimes against the Tutsi in Congo

After the period of major violence that plagued Banyarwanda in Congo during Kanyarwanda conflict, there have been riots, harassment and insecurity for Banyarwanda in general and Tutsi in particular at different times, both in their communities and in schools where their children were studying. This was often based on disputes over citizenship laws that changed over time due to the so-called ‘natives’ who feared the Banyarwanda could gain greater political influence because of their large numbers.42 The Banyarwanda were prohibited from being enumerated during the general population census of 1984; they were deprived of the right to vote in the 1987 parliamentary elections; and the Tutsi of North Kivu and South Kivu were prevented from sitting in the National Sovereign Conference (Conférence Nationale Souveraine - CNS) convened in 1991.43 The main reason, however, was the mobilization of hatred and ethnic division that originated in Rwanda.44

The deeply racist and anti-Tutsi regimes which succeeded one another in Rwanda from the end of colonization until 1994 and installed with the support of the colonizers and influential White Fathers missionaries continued to interfere in Congo against the Tutsi. That of Kayibanda (1962-1973) influenced Congolese authorities at central and provincial level (especially in North and South Kivu), to take hostile stands

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38 Nzitatira & Gachaha, ‘Memo’; Mugesera, Imibereho.
39 For an overview of the first anti-Tutsi genocidal policies implemented by the Belgian colonial administration in Rwanda from 1959, see P. Rutazibwa, ‘The genocide against the Tutsi: the establishment of the genocidal policies since 1959’, AfricArXiv (2023), (https://doi.org/10.21428/3b2160cd.f58c1e1a).
41 Ibid. 51.
against the Tutsi, including denying citizenship to refugees as requested by UNHCR.\textsuperscript{45} It also successfully attempted to extradite and kidnap Tutsi refugees - including those imprisoned at the central police station in Goma during the ‘Kanyarwanda war’ - to then execute them.\textsuperscript{46} Now an 88 years old peasant, Prosper Kanyehara escaped one of these kidnappings at the central police station in Goma in 1963. With about fifty of his fellow Tutsi prisoners selected to be transferred, they resented with sticks and stones against soldiers who wanted to force them into a vehicle which was to take them to Rwanda. A Congolese soldier had warned a Tutsi refugee family he was connected to in the town of Goma to ask the Tutsi prisoners to refuse to get into the vehicle because he knew the plan. Seven of the refugees succumbed to the bullets of the soldiers, but 49 others, including Kanyehara, were transferred to Kinshasa to be judged, then to Congo-Brazzaville where they remained for 6 months in an abandoned school. He would then return to Goma in 1964 and leave to join his family which had already preceded him in the new Mwesi refugee camp in Tanzania.\textsuperscript{47}

The Habyarimana regime (1973-1994) proceeded in the same way, the most famous case being that of Ngurumbe Aloys kidnapped in North Kivu and imprisoned for more than 11 years in Rwanda and whose life was only saved thanks to the intervention of influential personalities who had known him personally before, including the Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano and the Ugandan President Yoweri K. Museveni.\textsuperscript{48} Habyarimana’s regime also created or supported racist organizations in neighbouring countries such as Abanyarwanda-Abahutu Association in Uganda and MAGRIVI in Congo, with the intention of controlling and destabilizing the Tutsi.\textsuperscript{49} MAGRIVI’s manifesto called ‘Quelques éléments pour la promotion du peuple Hutu du Zaïre’ (Some elements for the promotion of the Hutu people of Zaire) expresses many goals including: ‘seeking the unification of the Bantous ethnic groups’, and ‘damaging the image of the Tutsi among friends of other ethnic groups.’ Here are some excerpts:

The Hutu should remind their Nande and Hunde neighbours of the division that the Tutsi have created between the different ethnic groups of North Kivu in order to be able to explain their policy of hegemony. ... compatriots previously informed of the whole situation (history of the Hutu ethnic group, Tutsi politics) will thus allow influential politicians to differentiate a Hutu from a Tutsi and will also be useful in stealing information from the Tutsi relating to their policy towards ethnic groups of North Kivu and the Hutu in particular. ... Hutu students will participate in one way or another in the destabilization of Tutsi politics (eg. sabotage, smearing of Tutsis with friends of other ethnic groups, etc...).\textsuperscript{50}

The official creation of MAGRIVI in Kinshasa in 1980 coincided with a new rise in anti-Tutsi extremism with the contestation of their nationality from 1981 and acts of violence targeting Tutsi in secondary schools and institutions of higher learning, same as in rural areas against Tutsi peasants. The leaflet mentioned above launched as part of the operation to hunt Tutsi students at the University of Kinshasa in 1981 illustrates the effectiveness and virulence of this new rise in anti-Tutsi propaganda.

It has been almost 22 years (1962, the year from which the internal regulations of the Tutsi people who immigrated to Zaire began to circulate) that a group of refugees undertook fallacious and shameful manoeuvres, initially seeking to seize Zaïrean nationality by force or by trickery and therefore benefit from any advantage enjoyed by a real, authentic Zaïrian, son of this country; and secondly, what is very serious and could give rise to consequences that could not be more unfortunate, is that this group of impostors and usurpers of nationality is even demanding autonomy on the national territory, of certain entities on Zaïrian 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

\textsuperscript{45} Mugesera, \textit{Imibereho}, 109-12.
\textsuperscript{46} Mugesera, \textit{Imibereho}; Rwasamanzi, ‘RDC : la citoyenneté’.
\textsuperscript{47} Interview with Prosper Kanyehara, Kigali, 14 November 2022.
\textsuperscript{49} Mugesera, \textit{Imibereho}, 104.
\textsuperscript{50} ‘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, analyzing 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, \textit{Les crises}, 151-2.
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.51

The 'internal regulations of the Tutsi people' mentioned by this tract, also called 'Plan de colonisation Tutsi au Kivu et région centrale de l' Afrique' (Tutsi colonization plan in Kivu and central region of Africa), is another important document in extremist anti-Tutsi literature.52 Presented and distributed as a secret Tutsi document, this forgery is actually a fabrication of extremist Hutu circles in North Kivu (Masisi and Rutshuru) piloted by the Rwandan secret services of the time. French historian and Africanist Jean-Pierre Chrétien compares it to the 'Protocole des Sages de Sion' (Protocol of the Elders of Zion), a fake produced in France around 1900 by anti-Semitic services of the Russian secret police.53 Wrongly attributed to the Jews as their plan for world domination, the 'Protocol of the Elders of Zion' served as the pretext for many pogroms and other persecutions against this people. According to the authors and propagators of the 'Plan de colonisation Tutsi au Kivu et région centrale de l' Afrique', the document was discovered in 1962 in Nyamitabo (Masisi) in North Kivu. But it is more likely that they also invented it in the 1980s in the wake of MAGRIVI, because it was then that it began to be used against the Tutsi in Congo, and later in the 1990s by hate media in Rwanda.

### 1.4. Violence against Banyarwanda in 1993 in North Kivu

In 1993, conflict broke out again in North Kivu, opposing the Nande, Hunde, Nyanga and Tembo tribes to the Banyarwanda, both Congolese and Rwandan refugees of 1959.54 These ethnic groups had previously joined forces with the Hutu against the Tutsi, claiming that the latter were foreigners who should not be represented in the National Sovereign Conference (CNS). Indeed, the Tutsi were not represented at that conference, a national gathering tasked to prepare the post-Mobutu political transition. Even the Tutsi Banyejomba who were initially members of the CNS such as Cyprien Rwakabuba Shinga who started politics in 1959 with the first municipal elections under Belgian colonial rule and continued uninterrupted when Congo gained independence, and Monsignor Patient Kanyamacumbi who was the Secretary General of the Council of Catholic Bishops of Congo (then Zaïre) were expelled from it. The four other ethnic groups, however, later turned against the Hutu, claiming they were also Banyarwanda foreigners like the Tutsi. The Hutu had been able to have representatives in the CNS, and four of them were even included in the transitional parliament (Haut Conseil de la République-Parlement de Transition / HCR-PT) set up by the CNS.

On behalf of the four ethnic groups, a certain Kaseso wrote to the CNS accusing three of the four Hutu of not being Congolese citizens. Sued for slandering them, Kaseso lost the case before the court, and was sentenced to one month in prison and a fine of several billion Zaïres, the local currency at the time. CNS also dismissed Kaseso's claim. This angered the representatives of the four tribes, prompting them to plan a riot and massacre of the Banyarwanda in the Masisi and Walikale zones. In 1992, changes were made in the civil and military administration of North Kivu in order to prepare for the uprising. Gendarmes from other provinces were replaced by those of the four tribes, and the number of gendarmerie stations was increased. Provincial Governor Jean-Pierre Kalumo Mbogho and Vice Governor Junior Bamwishes also hailed from these ethnic groups, Nande and Nyanga respectively.

53 Chrétien & Kabanda, Rwanda, 272.
54 F. Ngabu (Mgr, Evêque de Goma), Situation qui prévaut dans le Diocèse autour des massacres dans les zones de Walikale et de Masisi, (Goma, 11 mai 1993). This report provides in-depth analysis and relatively complete data, as it has benefited from the extensive network of Catholic parishes in the areas affected by the violence, as well as from the author’s good knowledge of political actors.
The massacres started in Walikale zone on 20 March 1993 in the market of Ntoto where many Banyarwanda were killed. They continued the next day in Boyi, killing Banyarwanda who were leaving churches after Sunday religious service. Many other Banyarwanda also fell into the Luindi River trying to escape.\textsuperscript{55} The killers explained that the root cause of the violence was a Rwandan flag that had been hung on Congolese soil. In the area of Walikale, there were indeed many Rwandans Hutu brought by President Habyarimana on the land allotted to him by his Zaïrean counterpart President Mobutu. These Rwandans were said to behave as if they were still in Rwanda! However, the issue of a Rwandan flag hanging on the Congolese soil was a lie. Instead, the flag belonged to the political party DSN (Démocratie pour le Salut National / Democracy for National Salvation) of a certain Sekimonyo wa Magango, a Congolese Hutu Munyarwanda originating from Rutshuru zone.

The massacre of Banyarwanda also took place in the Masisi zone in early April 1993, and even in the Rutshuru zone in Bwito. When Bishop Faustin Ngabu of the Catholic Diocese of Goma released his report on the massacre on 11 May 1993, over 3,000 people had been killed, around 50,000 displaced, many properties destroyed, houses burned down and livestock looted. Rusamira estimates at 14,000 the number of Banyarwanda killed at the only Ntoto market.\textsuperscript{56} Quoting the charity MSF (Médecins sans Frontières), Stearns informs that ‘within three months, between 6,000 and 15,000 people had been killed and 250,000 displaced in the province’.\textsuperscript{57}

\textbf{I.5. 1994-1996: violence from Rwanda genocidal forces in exile in Congo and deprivation of citizenship and expulsion of the Tutsi following Vangu Mambweni report}

After many Rwandans fled to Congo following the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, insecurity continued to prevail in eastern Congo, forcing Tutsi (and some Hunde and Nyanga) from Masisi to flee to Rwanda, as they were all attacked by Congolese Hutu fighters supported by the Interahamwe militia and the former Rwandan Armed Forces (ex-Forces armées rwandaises - ex-FAR).\textsuperscript{58} Congolese state laws and policies have also continued to target and exclude Banyarwanda and Tutsi in particular, with regard to citizenship and land rights. These policies started with the 1980s and became more serious when Célestin Anzuluni Bembe (from the Bembe tribe neighbouring the Tutsi Banyamulenge in South Kivu) headed the Congolese parliament from 1989 to 1993.\textsuperscript{59} The situation worsened further when the transitional parliament (HCR-PT) appointed a parliamentary information committee on 18 August 1994 headed by Vangu Mambweni ma Busana to ‘inquire about the situation prevailing in the regions of North and South Kivu following the massive entry of Rwandan refugees’. The committee was also to examine ‘the displacement of our populations in the face of armed conflicts related to the problem of Zaïrean nationality in the Great Lakes region’.\textsuperscript{60}

Endorsing with complacency and lightness the assertions of certain representatives of the so-called 'indigenous' ethnic groups, the report of the Vangu committee alleges that all the 'Banyarwanda are foreigners in Zaire'; that 'when the borders of Zaïre were drawn, there were no Banyarwanda (Hutu, let alone Tutsi) in Bwisha (Rutshuru)'; that the Banyamulenge call themselves Zaïrians 'by cheating' whereas they are 'Banyarwanda immigrants from 1950'. After conclusions of unprecedented violence, particularly against the Tutsi, the Vangu report makes recommendations, the first of which is 'the unconditional repatriation of all Rwandan refugees and immigrants'.\textsuperscript{61} On 28 April 1995, the transitional parliament (HCR-TP) voted resolutions stemming from the recommendations of the Vangu report, including that of expelling all Congolese Banyarwanda without conditions and without delay and confiscating their property.\textsuperscript{62}

In order to implement these decisions, the zone commissioner of the city of Uvira in South Kivu, Shweka Mutabazi wrote a letter expelling the Banyamulenge from Congo on 26 October 1995.\textsuperscript{63} In July 1996, this

\textsuperscript{55} Ngabu, \textit{Situation}\; ; Nzitatira & Gachaha, ‘Memo’.
\textsuperscript{56} Rusamira, ‘La dynamique’.
\textsuperscript{57} Stearns, \textit{North Kivu}, 28.
\textsuperscript{58} Rusamira, ‘La dynamique’, 153.
\textsuperscript{59} Ndahinda & Mugabe, ‘Streaming hate’.
\textsuperscript{60} Rapport Vangu.
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Ibid}. 13, 78, 106, 172.
\textsuperscript{62} Ndahinda & Mugabe, ‘Streaming hate’ ; Rwasamanzi, ‘RDC : la citoyenneté’.
\textsuperscript{63} Ruhimbika, \textit{Les Banyamulenge}.
commissioner stated the following in a protestant church in Uvira: 'When you meet a snake on the road, what do you do? Don't you kill it? So, what are you waiting for? Don't you see snakes among us?'64 In late August 1996, the Governor of South Kivu, Pastor Kyembo wa Lumona travelled to the Minembwe area heavily populated of Tutsi Banyamulenge, leading a group of 25 people including soldiers of high rank. They decided where the new military camps should be located. The governor told the population gathering on 23 August 1996 that he 'came to tell the Banyamulenge people to lay down their weapons and give up the idea of fighting the State of Zaire'. He said, 'Even if there are those who don't believe you are citizens, that's not a good enough reason to take up arms and fight for those rights'. Before returning home, he and the group he led held a secret meeting with representatives of other tribes in the area, with the exception of the Banyamulenge.65 At the end of November 1996, the deputy governor of South Kivu, Lwabanji Lwaboshi Ngabo, who acted as governor in the absence of the latter called to Kinshasa, gave one week until 8 October 1996, so that 'all the Banyamulenge come down from the mountains, hand themselves over to the government which would provide them with an escort to accompany them to their homeland, Rwanda. If they didn't, the Zairian army (FAZ) would fire bombs on them'.66

The AFDL war began on 18 October 1996 in South Kivu as the resistance of the Tutsi Banyamulenge, only ten days after the deadline set by the vice-governor for their expulsion. However, the abuses and killings of Banyamulenge in South Kivu and other Tutsi in North Kivu had been going on for months. The actual number of victims of those massacres against the Tutsi was not known. As for those who survived, more than 12,000 Tutsi refugees from North Kivu were counted in temporary camps at Gisenyi in Rwanda in May 1996; and a larger number in Kisoro in Uganda. On 15 September 1996, more than 600 Banyamulenge were chased from their homes in South-Kivu and were taking refuge in three different places: in UNHCR premises in Uvira, a refugee camp in Cyangugu in Rwanda, and in Burundi.67 The number of Congolese Tutsi refugees fleeing North- Kivu in particular has continued to increase over the successive wars and conflicts in this part of the DRC to the point of constituting almost all of the more than 80,000 Congolese refugees identified by the UNHCR in Rwanda in 2023, as well as a non-negligible part of the more than 422,000 Congolese refugees registered in Uganda, and some in other parts of the world.68

The repatriation and resettlement of these Tutsi refugees, some of whom have been expelled from the DRC for 29 years now, and their security with all the population in the area is the main demand of the M23 rebellion and of the CNDP (Congrès national pour la défense du peuple / National Congress for the Defence of the People) before it.69

II. RENOUNCE FALSE ANALYSES: ANTI-TUTSI RACISM IN CONGO IS NOT THE RESULT OF 'LAND DISPUTES' OR 'POLITICAL ACTIVISM BY RWANDAN TUTSI REFUGEES', LET ALONE 'RWANDAN IRREDENTISM', 'PLUNDERING' OR 'VIOLENCE BY TUTSI REBEL LEADERS'

There is a wilful myopia on the part of some researchers who refuse to recognize the role of anti-Tutsi racism in triggering intermittent violence and conflicts that have been tearing eastern DRC apart for sixty years now. When they deign to evoke this racism, it is to quickly impute the guilt to the victims, or to find vague explanations, without ever denouncing the serious responsibility of the apostles of this anti-Tutsi hatred yet clearly identifiable within the Congolese political class, administration and civil society. Lemarchand offers an example of such myopia when he argues that violence against the Banyarwanda in North Kivu in 1993 and anti-Rwandan sentiments resulted from the alienation of land from indigenous communities by Rwandan Tutsi refugees of 1959.70 This conclusion appears as an excuse and an apology for the violence of these so-called

64 Rutazibwa, Les crises, 21.
65 Ibid.
68 UNHCR, Global focus. UNHCR operations worldwide, 2023.
69 République Démocratique du Congo, Accord de paix entre le Gouvernement et le Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP), Goma, le 23 Mars 2009.
natives against the Banyarwanda, when we know the causes and the circumstances of this violent episode of 1993 against the Banyarwanda as we have described them above.

But the most disturbing thing is that Lemarchand draws such a terrible conclusion from a false premise. He first makes a tendentious description stigmatizing the Rwandan Tutsi refugees of 1959 as ‘the so-called “fifty-nine”,’ ‘overwhelmingly Tutsi’, ‘drawn for the most part from the upper stratum of the Tutsi community’, ‘relatively well-educated’, claiming ‘administrative skills and resources unmatched by their predecessors’. He thinks that ‘what had not been anticipated was the lasting impact’ of their ‘exodus’ on ‘neighboring states’, namely Burundi, Uganda and Congo. He goes on to say that in the latter country, these Tutsi refugees ‘were able to bring about a radical shift in Mobutu’s policies on land and nationality’ and that ‘some of the newcomers were able to accumulate considerable wealth through land deals and agro-business enterprises’. Then quoting the French africanist Gérard Prunier to better illustrate his point, Lemarchand makes a serious mistake by presenting Cyprien Rwakabuba, a Congolese Tutsi from Jomba in Rutshuru, as a Rwandan Tutsi refugee from 1959.

The figure cited by Prunier gives us a sense of the enormity of the land grabbing that went on at the time: it reached ‘such incredible proportions’, he writes, ‘that in 1980 the Land Ministry in Kinshasa had to cancel the attribution of 230,000 hectares (575,000 acres) to the notorious Rwandan businessman Cyprien Rwakabuka’. Although in a footnote Lemarchand explains that the author (Prunier), ‘offers no evidence in support of this astronomical figure’, this does not curiously prevent him from making it a sufficient basis to draw the following conclusion:

The result has been to squeeze a large number of Congolese peasants out of their traditional holdings and sow the seeds of ethnic hatred. The violent outburst of anti-Rwandan feelings in 1993 demonstrated the full measure of the impact of land alienation on indigenous communities, mainly Hunde, Nyanga, and Tembo.

Like many other Western analysts, Lemarchand gives this false justification and excuse for violence against the Banyarwanda and hatred against the Tutsi by claiming to rely on monographs on the land problem in the conflict in eastern Congo. However, none of these monographs gives the beginning of proof that the Tutsi are the only ones involved in the problems of land alienation, and that this is indeed the real cause of the anti-Tutsi hatred and the recurrent persecutions of the Banyarwanda.

Some other analysts even come up with fanciful figures which are not based on any credible statistical research and which only have the effect of reproducing and amplifying the racist propaganda of extremist anti-Tutsi circles in the Congo. Jason K. Stearns is certainly a case study in this genre.

However, soon after independence, the state began commercializing land, a process formalized by a land law in 1973 that in theory stripped traditional chiefs of their control over land. Affluent businessmen, in North Kivu often Tutsi, were able to buy concessions and register it with the state. In the same year, Mobutu also expropriated most foreign owned companies and gave them to Congolese to run. This had an enormous impact on Masisi territory, where foreign-owned plantations constituted over half of the land. Tutsi immigrants, then close allies of Mobutu, obtained 90 per cent of this land. In many cases, these businessmen annexed neighboring land to the detriment of peasant farmers.

Bucyalimwe is presented as one of the pioneers to study land issues and conflict in North Kivu. Despite his own anti-Tutsi prejudices to which we will return later, his case study of the administrative entity of Muvunyi-Kibabi in Masisi in North Kivu paints a totally different picture from what Stearns describes. We see

71 Ibid.
72 Ibid. 425.
73 Ibid.
76 Lemarchand, ‘Reflections’, 432.
actors of various ethnic origins involved in land acquisition and alienation operations, in total contrast to the narrative stigmatizing the only Tutsi. And the most astonishing thing is that the so-called natives, -the Hunde in this case-, are far from being the victims of this land alienation as our respected scholars try to make believe.

A land market flourished as well for three simultaneous and politically based reasons. First, a big project of cattle ranching had been established in Northern Kivu Province between 1973 and 1975. ... The second factor was the enactment of the 1973 measures of Zairianization. In response to these measures, the minister of agriculture allocated former white concessions in Masisi to individuals on the basis of their political ties. ... The beneficiary of the Osso concession (...) was Bisengimana Rwema, who was, at that time, Mobutu's chief of staff. The Murambi concession was given to Minister Kabwita from Lower Zaire in 1975. He was evicted later by a Hunde, Eugene Muhima. Some Hunde, Hutu, and Tutsi cattle keepers took over the Bumba concession after having paid off the debt that the former white settlers still owed the state at independence. The third factor was the 1973 Land Law, which rejected customary law in land transactions and imposed written law as the only source of land rights, ... Facing the growing needs for pasture land in the 1970s and the 1980s and challenging the 1973 Land Law that deprived them of power in land matters, Hunde authorities engaged in land sales. With the complicity of the Provincial Land Services in Bukavu (...), they sold the two forest reserves of Rwamikeri and Nyarunaba to individuals who converted them into vast ranches. For example, the greater part of Rwamikeri passed to one incoming Tutsi family (Gashatis), and that of Nyarunaba to Nkuriyingoma, Munyenshoza, Benedicto, Ruterahagusha (Tutsi), and Mutumayi (Hutu from Munigi-Goma).77

The preceding excerpt shows that the beneficiaries of Zairianization at the national level as well as of the local sale of forest reserves were Tutsi, Kongo (originating from Lower Zaire), Hunde and Hutu; and that the proceeds from the sale went to the customary Hunde authorities. Bucyalimwe even gives cases of abusive land expropriations carried out by customary Hunde chiefs, where the beneficiaries are not Tutsi at all, but indeed Hunde; and where victims are mainly Banyarwanda (Hutu and Twa).

One implication of the Hunde political monopoly was their involvement in a movement of land plunder: to retake lands from Rwandan immigrants for their own profit or to sell them to better-off individuals, mainly insider and outsider cattle keepers. There are four major cases in which entire families were dispossessed from their lands or resisted their land expropriation by the Hunde authorities. With the complicity of Tito Muhabura (once both chief of groupement and of state post of Kibabi), Kalinda Ndandu, chief of the Bahunde chieftaincy, took the lands bordering the Kibabi post from the populations of Rutingita in 1986. The people, who knew he was the chief of the principal tribunal in Bweremana in charge of settling land conflicts, did not resist. The Twa and Hutu of Nyamiyaga, twenty-seven families in total, were forcibly removed from their lands by the census official at the Kibabi post, Bahunga. ... The last case is Mamboleo, a Hunde from Lu[g]unje in Matanda groupement; after replacing Ntakirenze as the notable of Kabara in 1962, Mamboleo settled in his predecessor's concession, kicking out the members of his family.78

In the following last excerpt, Bucyalimwe gives two cases of land expropriation involving the local Hunde authorities and a Hutu and Tutsi cattle herders. The victims are once again Banyarwanda (Hutu), not the so-called natives.

The collaboration between Hunde customary authorities and cattle keepers in land expropriation may be exemplified by two cases. The trader Habumugisha (a Hutu) got a document from Bweremana giving him full rights over the village of Mumba in 1980. In implementing these rights, he attempted without success to expel the Hutu populations from their lands. After two years of fighting and violence, the trader was defeated and forced to leave the countryside for permanent residence in Goma town. The cattle keeper and ACOGENOKI branch president, Rumiya Ntamvutsa (Tutsi), used his relationship with Tito Muhabura to dispossess several Hutu families of their lands at the Mushwa Hill. Taking advantage of his influence and using his money, he succeeded in getting an ownership certificate from the Provincial Land Services in 1977 to the detriment of these families who had lived on these lands since 1955/1956.79

77 Bucyalimwe, 'Land', 527-8.
78 Ibid. 526-7.
79 Ibid. 528-9.
All this seriously calls into question the attitude of researchers like Stearns who single out and stigmatize the Tutsi in the problem of land alienation to justify the hatred of which they are the object. It also completely contradicts the assertions of Lemarchand that ‘land grabbing’ by 'Rwandan' (Tutsi) businessmen had as a result ‘to squeeze a large number of Congolese peasants out of their traditional holdings and sow the seeds of ethnic hatred’, and that ‘the violent outburst of anti-Rwandan feelings in 1993 demonstrated the full measure of the impact of land alienation on indigenous communities, mainly Hunde, Nyanga, and Tembo’.

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. Lemarchand (quoting Prunier) presents Congolese Tutsi Cyprien Rwakabuba Shinga as a ‘notorious Rwandan businessman’ to illustrate the alleged alienation of natives’ land by Rwandan Tutsi refugees of 1959. The same scholar violently denigrates Barthélemy Bisengimana Rwema as a ‘fiendishly astute Tutsi exile’ for having been chief of staff to President Mobutu by 1972, thus illustrating in his eyes how the Rwandan Tutsi refugees of 1959 ‘were able to bring about a radical shift in Mobutu's policies on land and nationality’. This alleged role of Bisengimana had also been previously mentioned by a Belgian and American researchers.

Building on Newbury’s theory of ‘irredentist Rwanda’, Mathys renames it mythico-history of a ‘greater Rwanda’, a formula taken up by the Congolese historian Ndaywel. All three scholars evoke a speech by the former Rwandan President Pasteur Bizimungu interpreted in a very biased way, without ever demonstrating that there really are territorial claims with regard to the Congo, either in the public opinion, or on the part of the Rwandan authorities. Speaking of the first Congo war, Bucyalimwe evoked in 2002 ‘the military and political project of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) government in Kivu in 1996’ which, according to him, aimed at ‘the expansion of the living space that the Rwandan Tutsis no longer hide today and the control of a vast market zone going from the Red Sea, the Pacific Ocean to Southern Africa via Central Africa’.

The Congolese (Zairian at the time) parliamentary committee called Vangu mentioned above had already made public in 1995, on a fanciful and delirious air, a certain number of these allegations taken up by these scholars. On the alleged role of Barthélemy Bisengimana Rwema in the adoption of the 1972 law on nationality, ‘the commission believes that had it not been for the presence of the late Barthelemy Bisengimana in the high political sphere of Zaire, this law would never have existed.’ Regarding ‘Rwandan irredentism’ or the theory of ‘greater Rwanda’, the Vangu report had already given this history lesson in 1995:

Towards the end of the 19th century, a Rwandan king Rwabugiri tried several times to attack Buhavu, Bushi and Buhunde: his incursions ended in his death on Lake Kivu by a Havu ambush in 1895. This data is very important to understand the nostalgic attitudes of Rwandan Hutu or Tutsi who, believing that an attack mounted and missed, creates a reason for territorial claim, hoping to relaunch military expeditions against the geographical region of Buhavu, Bushi and Buhunde (Walungu, Kabare, Bukavu, Idjwi, Kalehe, Goma, Nyiragongo, Rutshuru, Masisi and Walikale).

It is interesting to note that Newbury takes up exactly in his article cited above this argument of the Vangu report regarding the alleged Rwandan ‘territorial claim’ based on past ‘incursions’ or ‘mounted and missed attack’. The argument has been repeated by other scholars like Mathys who even did field research in the Congo to gather "'collective memories" of pre-colonial "Rwandan" wrongdoings', in particular the 'cruelty' of Rwandan kings including Rwabugiri, thus providing a historical depth to the ‘Congolese victimhood at the hand of Rwanda’. But what Mathys naively calls the 'historical narratives' of the Congolese 'lakeside people'

81 Ibid. 424-5.
82 J.-C. Willame, Banyarwanda et Banyamulenge: violences ethniques et gestion de l’identité au Kivu, (Paris, 1997), 53 ; Stearns, From CNDP to M23, 12.
85 Rapport Vangu, 158.
86 Ibid. 157.
are in reality transpositions of the racist anti-Tutsi propaganda developed in Rwanda after what has been abusively called 'the Hutu revolution'. A striking example is this narration by one of her interlocutors in Bweremana who attributes to King Rwabugiri a scene of imaginary cruelty commonly attributed to the queen-mother Kanjogera and to an unidentified Tutsi chief by propagandists of the Rwandan regime before the 1994 genocide. 'They said he was a colonizer, even while drinking beer, he drank it sitting on the knees of others. He tortured people, instead of putting his staff in the ground, he put it in a foot'. The tale is in fact a modified version of the following published in 1979 by Major Lizinde Théoneste Mugabushaka, one of the great ideologues of the Habyarimana regime.

In the 1950s, a lord from the same region [Byumba] was still giving orders to his clients, the tip of his spear buried in their feet under the weight of his body. ... We could here think of the macabre scene executed by the queen-mother Kanjogera each time before peacefully prolonging [sic] herself in her bed. It is said that she got up leaning heavily on two knives (inkota) plunged at the level of the collarbones in two beautiful babies placed on either side for this cynical immolation.

These allegations had no factual basis. They were invented to fuel hatred against the Tutsi and against the Rwandan monarchy identified with them alone according to a propaganda developed by the Belgian strategy of decolonization.

'The hegemonic, even expansionist project of Rwanda' and 'the expansion of the vital space of the Tutsi' stated by Bucyalimwe in 2002 also echoed the following assertions of the Vangu report:

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. ...

It is understood that in the strategy of Tutsi emigration, it is recommended that Tutsi in the diaspora organize themselves and establish themselves in Canada and in the Republic of South Africa, from where they can continue to finance the rebirth of the new Rwandan state like the Jews for Israel. That the Tutsi who feel threatened in their host country be asked to return to Rwanda. That those who would be safe where they are stay there to control, as far as possible, information and the media so as to bring international opinion to focus on the fate of the Tutsi; ...

Considering that the new power in Kigali encourages the priority return of exiled Tutsis to achieve a new ethnic balance and that then a measured return of Hutu peasants will be authorized while Hutu intellectuals and elements of the former Rwandan army (the FAR) can be considered as the Palestinians of Africa who will never see their "Palestine" again and that all the Tutsis of the international organizations must see to it; ...

Whereas a Bujumbura-Kigali alliance was concluded between Tutsis for the establishment of the Tutsiland entity, a geographical area covering Rwanda, Burundi, part of Uganda, the North Kivu region and the South Kivu characterized by the emergence of Hima hegemony in the Great Lakes region; ...

Given that the Tutsiland will be, according to the current project, led by the Tutsi having under their domination the other peoples occupying the space, namely: the Nande, Hunde, Nyanga, Tembo, Havu, Twa, Shi, Rega, Vira, Fuliru, Bembe and the traditional valets of the Tutsi (the Hutu); ...

Whereas the Tutsiland translates into action the plan of the Volcanoes Republic cited several times by the target groups indicated in this report;

Having regard to all of the above;

Given the urgency and necessity,

A- The Commission requires:

1. The unconditional repatriation of all Rwandan refugees and immigrants; ... 
9. the prosecution of the perpetrators of the destabilization of Masisi, Rutshuru and Walikale.
Forty Congolese Tutsi (from North Kivu and Banyamulenge from South Kivu) residing in Kinshasa reacted to the Vangu report in a letter dated 10 July 1995 to President Mobutu with copy to the Secretary General of the United Nations.93 Speaking ‘both in the name of our brothers in the interior of the country and in our own name’, the signatories urged President Mobutu to ‘consider as contrary to the constitution the conclusions of the VANGU Commission, in this that they advocate the exclusion of national populations’ and to take measures ‘on the legal level and possibly on the judicial level’. They warned their country's parliament for having taken upon itself 'the terrible responsibility of declaring Zairian populations foreigners' and forcing the government to expel them, which for them could not 'remain without serious consequences. Because, it is nothing less than an incitement to violence and civil war'. Addressing the issue of the late Barthélemy Bisengimana cited in the Vangu report for his alleged role in the adoption of the 1972 nationality law, the signatories provided the following clarifications:

Here is a typical example of a peremptory and contemptuous assertion vis-à-vis our own institutions. The guiding principles of this law were identified during a meeting of the Political Bureau of the MPR held on the ITB Moulaert, on July 28, 1970 (see Azap of August 1, 1970), and made public by its political director, Prosper MADRANDELE, the same day. Then a bill was prepared by the government, then submitted to the vote of the National Assembly before being promulgated by the Head of State, as law n ° 72-002 of January 05, 1972. Isn’t it an insult to all these organizers of our institutions of the time, men of great honour and very strong personality, to present them as puppets manipulated by a single man, was he director of the office of the Head of state? It’s too stupid to imagine it for a single moment. In what way is the Parliament of the time, which was entirely made up of deputies elected by direct universal suffrage, less deserving than that of today, made up of deputies appointed by the political class and who, as such, should be more circumspect in their major decisions?94

Before becoming President Mobutu’s chief of staff, Bisengimana had in fact worked in Kinshasa for an Italian consulting company which was in charge of the Inga dam project, initiated since the colonial era. Mobutu had recruited him for his skills, knowing full well that he was Rwandan, and that he had previously completed his studies in the first promotion of the polytechnic faculty of Lovanium University in Kinshasa (Léopoldville), then open to the three Belgian colonies including Rwanda. It was the collaborators of President Mobutu who had known him as a colleague at the university who had recommended him.95 The rise of Bisengimana had therefore nothing ‘astute’ nor ‘fiendish’, contrary to what Professor Lemarchand had asserted.

As for the warning of the forty signatories of the memorandum to President Mobutu against incitement to violence and the risk of civil war, it unfortunately proved to be prescient. Analysts say political figures involved in drafting the Vangu report as well as implementing its conclusions such as Anzuluni Bembe, Lwabanji Ngabo and Vangu Mambweni were responsible for the outbreak of the First Congo War in 1996.96 And there were people sharing these politicians’ ideology of hatred even within the institutions considered otherwise as moral bodies. A periodical whose editor was a Catholic priest from the diocese of Uvira, Father Léonard Kamalebo Bulambo, could publish in September 1995, in the midst of the persecution of the Tutsi Banyamulenge in South Kivu, an editorial with the following title: ‘The Munyamulenge finally regains his fold’. And describing the Munyamulenge, this editorial said that ‘this Zairwa [denigration of the bad pronunciation of ‘zaïrois’ by the Banyarwanda] of yesterday, is only a Rwandan with the morphology and ideology identical to those of Paul Kagame’ and that ‘the Nilotics of North and South Kivu [to speak of the Tutsi] have convinced by their actions that they are in no way from us’.97

93 Mémorandum des quarante Tutsi et Banyamulenge de Kinshasa adressé au Maréchal Mobutu, Président de la République du Zaïre, (Kinshasa, 1995), (http://jkanya.free.fr/banyamurenge0108.html).
94 Ibid.
III. TAKE SERIOUSLY THE SECURITY CONCERNS OF RWANDA AND THE RIGHT TO LIFE OF THE CONGOLESE TUTSI

Supported by certain powers, major international media, activists and even academics, the DRC has succeeded in imposing on the world the narrative that Rwanda's past military interventions in this country aimed at plundering its resources, and that the Congolese rebellions supported or allegedly supported by Rwanda are responsible for serious human rights abuses and grave atrocities.\(^{98}\) Beyond the undeniable reality of the destruction and loss associated with any war, there has always been a constant, deliberate and relentless desire to make Rwanda and its real or supposed allies hold the responsibility for serious crimes and even genocide in Congo.\(^{99}\) These efforts to construct and impose this narrative end up obscuring and even completely veiling the security concerns of Rwanda as well as the claims of the Congolese rebellions, especially with regard to the right to life and nationality of the Congolese Tutsi populations.

There are some of the wars that took place or started in eastern Congo where the Government of Rwanda admits that it was indeed involved, supporting one of the groups that opposed the Government namely AFDL (1996-1997) and RCD (Rassemblement congois pour la démocratie / Congo Rally for Democracy, 1998-2002). There are also situations where Rwanda was invited by the Congolese government itself, as in the operation called 'Umoja Wetu' which started on 20 January and ended on 25 February 2009 in order to fight the FDLR (Forces démocratiques pour la libération du Rwanda / Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda). Rwanda has also recently announced that whenever the FDLR tries to threaten its security from the Congo, it will be a sufficient reason for it to fight in that country.\(^{100}\) There are also recent rebellions CNDP and M23, fighting for better governance that can recognize the rights of the Rwandophone populations, including the Tutsi. None of these scenarios justifies permanent and thoughtless condemnations. Thus, the narrative that disfigures Rwanda and the Congolese rebellions calls for three observations.

First, continuing to portray post-genocide Rwanda as the source of all Congolese woes has become an easy refrain where successive Congolese leaders and their foreign allies seem to benefit from a kind of 'unlimited irresponsibility insurance'.\(^{101}\) The French operation 'Turquoise' approved by the UN had succeeded in protecting and settling in Congo, just on the border with Rwanda, ex-FAR and Interahamwe genocidaires mixed with the civilian population with the obvious intention of bringing them back in power as soon as possible in Kigali. Rwanda had no choice but to pursue these genocidaires in the Congo and forcibly repatriate the civilian exiles they had taken hostage, failing which it risked the total annihilation it had come close to as a nation with the genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. The Mobutu regime, on the other hand, had the choice of welcoming these genocidaires by disarming them and settling them far from the Rwandan border at a distance that respected international conventions, as the Tanzanian authorities had done during the same period. But Mobutu chose instead to give in to pressure from France, which promised to bring him out of the international isolation into which he had been plunged by the massacre of students at the University of Lubumbashi in 1990 as well as the ethnic cleansing of the Baluba from Kasaï in Shaba (Katanga) in 1992-1993. Rwanda's military intervention during the first Congo war eventually enabled the overthrow of the Mobutu regime, which had definitively imposed itself on its people as an irremovable fatality.

The Cameroonian Axelle Kabou published in 1991 a book with the provocative title: 'And if Africa refused development?'\(^{102}\) One would be tempted to paraphrase it by saying: 'And if Congo refused liberation?' Although mainly motivated by its security concerns, Rwanda's support for the overthrow of Mobutu should have been used by Congolese partners for a real liberation of this country, but this was not the case. Yet, it is through

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100 P. Kagame (Perezida), *Jiambo mu muhango wo kwakira indahiro z’abyabozzi bashya muri Guverinoma* (Kigali, 30 Ugushyingo 2022). [President Paul Kagame's speech at the swearing in ceremony of new leaders in the Government (Kigali, 30 November 2022)].
101 The expression is borrowed from an article published in 2012 which presented a debate between a Congolese and a Rwandan on the M23 rebellion. 'M-23 : débat citoyen entre un Congolais et un Rwandais sur le conflit en RDC', (Présentation de P. Rutazibwa), *ARI-RNA*, 01 août 2012.
support of this kind that other countries in the region were liberated. Rwanda had benefited from minimal but
nevertheless useful support from Uganda, and the latter had itself benefited from that of Tanzania, whose
capital city Dar-es-Salam remained for a long time the hub of the leaders of the liberation movements in
Southern (ANC – African National Congress, FLS - Front Line States) and Eastern Africa.103 Young people from
different countries met there and were deeply influenced by the progressive Marxist, pan-Africanist or
nationalist movement.104 Fred Rwigema, the first leader of the RPF/RPA (Rwanda Patriotic Front / Rwanda
Patriotic Army), had stayed there in the 1970s after being recruited by the FRONASA (Front for National
Salvation) of Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, and it was from Dar-es-salaam that he had joined Mozambique for his
first military training in Montepuez.105

The Congolese not only missed the opportunity to use Rwanda's support for their real liberation; they
also devalued it, before their successive rulers returned the ingratitude to it. Rwanda's role was central in
freeing the Congolese (Zairians at the time) from Mobutu's regime.106 As historians from the University of
Rwanda pointed out in a reference book published in 2016, Rwanda's role in this process has never been fully
appreciated, for the following reasons: 'France's hostility; the rampant ethnic anti-Tutsi ideology in the region
and increasingly around the world; and above all the pride of the Congolese (Zairians) who feel humiliated to
have been liberated by a small country like Rwanda'.107

Shortly after Laurent Désiré Kabila came to power with the fall of Mobutu, Rwanda became aware of
great hostility against it and decided to withdraw its troops after having informed the countries of the regional
coalition so that they provide military support teams to replace the Rwandans.108 Kabila had to beg Rwanda to
lend him James Kabarebe as chief of staff, and the latter remained in Congo with a reduced team of 199 soldiers
until his dismissal in July 1998. Tanzania had sent instructors who distinguished themselves by a sensitization
campaign against the Tutsi and against Rwanda. Officially, they were supposed to train Kabila's presidential
guard at Camp Kitona, but they were simultaneously training ex-FAR and Rwandan Interahamwe militia.109
Rwanda had to protest officially to Tanzania and Kabila, and promises were given to stop this bad campaign.
The Tanzanian instructors were changed twice, but the anti-Rwandan campaign did not stop, despite
declarations of innocence by the Tanzanian authorities who swore they had never given such instructions.
Finally, a joint commission of inquiry of Rwandans and Tanzanians revealed that the anti-Rwandan and anti-
Tutsi campaign carried out by the Tanzanian instructors was conceived and orchestrated directly by Kabila
himself. Very confused, he of course apologized to the Rwandans, without really convincing.110 Having been
supported by Rwanda to seize power was seen by Kabila as a major political handicap from the viewpoint of his
public opinion, the political opposition and the civil society. Thus, he sought to get rid of this cumbersome
alliance as quickly as possible. His alliance with the ex-FAR and Interahamwe against the backdrop of this anti-
Tutsi and anti-Rwanda hostility that he had just revealed motivated Rwanda's second intervention in the Congo
in support of the new RCD rebellion.

The Lusaka agreement on the DRC signed on 10 July 1999 clearly identified the ex-FAR and Interahamwe
as 'negative forces'. In addition to the ceasefire, the agreement provided for the disengagement of the
belligerent forces and their retreat of 15 km; Rwanda unilaterally offered to withdraw 200 km. The ceasefire
came as the Rwandan-backed RCD-Goma controlled more than half of the DRC's territory. Their forces were

103 Normally, armed groups fighting colonial or alien domination and racist regimes are the ones that have been dubbed 'liberation movements' in
international law (UN General Assembly Resolution 3103 (XXVIII) of 1973). However, common sense makes it possible to extend the designation to
all movements that fought against neo-colonial regimes in Africa. In Rwanda, the regimes in charge from independence to the 1994 genocide were
not only neo-colonial, but also racist.

104 Interview with Mike Rugema, Kigali, 21 September 2000; and Tito Rutaremara, Kigali, 04 October 2000. The two interviewees are among the
founders of RANU (Rwandese Alliance for National Unity) created in Nairobi in 1979 and precursor of the RPF.

105 Interview with Colonel Charles Musitu, Kigali, 13 October 2000. Musitu, whose real name was Mugume before adopting the code name which
definitively replaced it, was with Rwigema the only Rwandans among the 67 commanders and combatants of the FRONASA trained in Montepuez
between 1976-1978.


107 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).

108 Ibid. 627.


110 Interview with Charles Muligande, Secretary General of the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), 20 December 2002. This information is also reported
about to march on Kinshasa, but 'friendly powers' advised Rwanda 'not to humiliate the region'; Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe were fighting on the side of the Congolese government.\textsuperscript{111} The signing of the Pretoria Agreement on 30 July 2002 between Presidents Joseph Kabila of DRC and Paul Kagame of Rwanda aimed at the withdrawal of Rwandan troops from Congo as well as the neutralization and return to Rwanda of Rwandan negative forces operating in the DRC.\textsuperscript{112} Rwanda began to withdraw its troops on 17 September 2002 and on 5 October 2002, the last Rwandan soldier left Congolese territory, long before the three-month deadline stipulated in the agreement.\textsuperscript{113}

Congo did not honour its part of the contract, as did the representatives of the international community. The regime of Joseph Kabila continued to collaborate with the Rwandan negative forces regrouped under the FDLR. MONUC (Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en république démocratique du Congo / United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo), which the Pretoria agreement between Rwanda and DRC asked to collaborate with the latter to 'track', 'regroup', 'disarm' and then 'immediately initiate the process of repatriation to Rwanda of all ex-FAR and Interahamwe including those based in Kamina' following the cantonment ordered by Joseph Kabila from April 2002 under the pressure of the Sun City talks, has achieved little. These negative forces quartered in Kamina left their camp in October 2002, to sink into the forests of Kivu.\textsuperscript{114}

Authorities in Kinshasa (as well as some actors in the international community) had previously relied on the FDLR to coerce Rwandan authorities into negotiating power-sharing.\textsuperscript{115} Compared to the organizations which preceded it, in particular the RDR (Rassemblement démocratique pour le retour / Democratic rally for the return) as well as the PALIR (Peuple en armes pour la libération du Rwanda / People in arms for the liberation of Rwanda) with its two armed branches: ALIR I (Armée pour la libération du Rwanda I / Army for the Liberation of Rwanda I) operating in Kivu and ALIR II (Armée pour la libération du Rwanda II / Army for the Liberation of Rwanda II) integrated and operating within the official structures of the Congolese army, the FDLR were presented by their defenders as an organization of young combatants who did not take part in the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda in 1994.\textsuperscript{116} However, these young people continued to be recruited and supervised by genocidal elders, and above all to be formatted in the ideology of the genocide which has never changed within these organizations. Chris McGreal, a journalist of \textit{The Guardian} reported in 2008 how ‘the fugitive killers’ were training their children to carry on the ‘mission of extermination’. A 13-year-old child in the FDLR army told the journalist the following:

The Tutsis stole our country and they are killing the Hutus or making them slaves. We have to kill them wherever they are. It is the only way to get our country back. When they are defeated I can go home.\textsuperscript{117}

Rwanda’s military intervention during the two Congo wars had very positive repercussions in terms of its security. Rwandan exiles estimated at 1,500,000 were repatriated from Congo (Zaire at the time) to Rwanda during the first war of 1996-1997.\textsuperscript{118} In addition to its social dimension, which was the responsibility of the Rwandan government in relation to its citizens, the forced repatriation of exiles made it possible, if not to remove, in any case to significantly reduce the pool of recruitment and subversion of the genocidal forces. Imitating this movement, about 300,000 other exiles were repatriated from Tanzania during the same period. Unlike the Congo, Tanzania had shown responsibility in preventing Rwandan exiles from posing a security threat to their country of origin: 7,000 rifles and 50,000 machetes were taken from them before crossing the border in 1994, and no military activity has ever been registered in their camps.\textsuperscript{119} The Rwandan army chief of staff

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.; Statement by Charles Muligande, Secretary General of the RPF, in an official meeting (Kigali, 23 March 2002).

\textsuperscript{112} Accord de paix entre les Gouvernements de la République Démocratique du Congo et de la République du Rwanda sur le retrait des troupes rwandaises du territoire de la République démocratique du Congo et le démantèlement des forces des ex-FAR et des Interahamwe en République Démocratique du Congo, signé le 30 juillet 2002 à Pretoria.

\textsuperscript{113} CNUR, Histoire du Rwanda, 629.

\textsuperscript{114} A. Tegera, « Abazungu » : une nouvelle coalition dans le Masisi, (Pole Institute, mai 2023), 12.

\textsuperscript{115} CNUR, Histoire du Rwanda, 631.

\textsuperscript{116} \textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{117} \textit{Ibid}.

\textsuperscript{118} \textit{C. McGreal, ‘We have to kill Tutsis wherever they are’. The Guardian, (London), 16 May 2008.}

\textsuperscript{119} CNUR, Histoire du Rwanda, 630.
declared in 2002 that 'if we did not have attacked Zaire, the refugee question would have remained forever insoluble'. And speaking of the 1996 war against the genocidal forces allied to the Mobutu regime, he added: 'we could not have defeated them if the war had taken place inside the country'.120 The capacity for nuisance of the Rwandan genocidal forces was not completely destroyed, however. At the end of 2002, the United Nations estimated the number of ex-FAR and Interahamwe militiamen still present in the DRC at 10,000, while Rwanda put the figure at 50,000.121

Despite signs of a thaw and numerous initiatives intended to show that he had a will to normalize relations with Rwanda, President Tshisekedi also ended up revealing a face of betrayal and bad faith. While it was Rwanda which had proposed, at the end of 2019-beginning of 2000, that the neighbouring countries of the DRC be associated with the search for a solution to the problems of foreign armed groups operating from this country, President Tshisekedi invited, at the end of 2021, Uganda and Burundi to carry out joint military operations with the DRC without involving or informing Rwanda.122

Tshisekedi clearly joined the other two countries in a strategy of encirclement of Rwanda since the latter was already in an extremely tense situation with its two neighbours to the north and south, in particular with Uganda, from which many feared an armed confrontation.123 In 2018 and 2019, armed groups backed by Uganda and Burundi had already launched deadly attacks in southern and northern Rwanda.124 Fearing the effects of the cessation clause for the status of Rwandan refugees announced for 01 January 2018 by UNHCR, the FDLR had joined forces with other opposition groups to attempt a return in force to Rwanda through these attacks.125 By April 2021, the FDLR had succeeded in allying with Congolese armed groups to form the 'Abazungu' coalition, and they already controlled a large part of Masisi territory.126 They continued to enjoy the support of Uganda according to various sources, and their objective was to get as close as possible to the border with Rwanda.

General Muhoozi Kainerugaba's intervention to normalize relations between Uganda and Rwanda in February 2022 came as a huge surprise and relief to those who feared an increasingly imminent war between the two countries. On the other hand, it was a blow for the tactic of encirclement of President Tshisekedi who had certainly promised himself to steal the show from the other tenors of the Congolese political class in view of the elections, by ‘carrying the war from whence it came’, that is to say in Rwanda, as they keep swearing since Laurent Désiré Kabila. Tshisekedi generally displays a virtuous but hypocritical discourse: he claims to condemn hate speech but surrounds himself with notorious anti-Tutsi extremists; moreover, he is accustomed to spectacular alliance ruptures and political betrayals.

The second observation is that there seems to be a deliberate desire, on the part of the Congolese authorities and above all of the decision-makers within the international community, to uproot the Congolese Tutsi populations from eastern Congo. Since the adoption by the Congolese parliament in 1995 of the resolution for the expulsion of the Tutsi for ‘doubtful nationality’ following the Vangu Mambweni report, no measure has been taken to date by the successive Congolese authorities to remedy this inequity, and repatriate Congolese refugees settled in Rwanda who exceed 80,000 in 2023, and others in different countries.127 The United Nations and Western powers have never exerted pressure on the Congolese authorities to solve this problem. On the contrary, some countries like the United States facilitated the resettlement of Congolese Tutsi refugees in this country in 1999 following the genocidal massacres and persecutions of which they were victims throughout the DRC after the outbreak of the RCD rebellion, or in 2007 for the survivors of the Gatumba massacre of 13 August 2004 in Burundi, which killed more than 150 Tutsi Banyamulenge refugees in this camp.128 While welcoming

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120 General James Kabarebe, presentation in a seminar of Rwandan officials, 23 March 2002; CNUR, Histoire du Rwanda, 630.
121 Ibid.
124 Ibid.
125 Tegera, “Abazungu”, 4-14.
126 Ibid. 2.
127 UNHCR, Global focus (https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/operations/rwanda#toc-populations).
the generosity of this humanitarian gesture, we can be concerned about its perversity insofar as it would be considered as an alternative to the search for a lasting political solution with regard to the recognition by the Congolese authorities of the right to life and nationality of the Congolese Tutsi populations on the soil of their ancestors.

Another source of concern which betrays this desire to eradicate the Tutsi from the Congo is the relentlessness against the only politico-military organizations which carry the demands of the Congolese Tutsi, namely the CNDP and the M23. Rather than encouraging the Congolese government to listen to their demands, even the United Nations has fought these rebellions militarily in support of the government troops FARDC (Forces armées de la république démocratique du Congo / Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo), an unprecedented fact in the history of peacekeeping operations. UN experts have also openly expressed their hostility towards these Congolese rebel movements at the same time as their sympathy towards the Rwandan genocidaires. In 2008, Jason Stearns, coordinator of the UN Group of Experts on the DR Congo wrote: ‘In response to the cumulative deaths of fewer than twenty Tutsi over the past two years, Nkunda [leader of CNDP] has launched offensives hat [sic] have displaced hundreds of thousands and killed over a hundred’. 129

The expert is careful not to explain here that these murders of the Tutsi are of a genocidal nature (they are killed for what they are because of an ideology of hatred which specifically targets them) and part of a set of problems that justified the creation of the CNDP. He also maintains a deliberate confusion about the offensives which result in population displacements: they are generally initiated by the government forces rather than by the CNDP.

Steve Hege, who also led the UN Group of Experts on DRC could state the following in 2012 while testifying before a subcommittee of the US House of Representatives: ‘M23 also claims they are fighting for the 50,000 Tutsi refugees who remain in Rwanda. A rebellion which displaces over 500,000 can hardly defend the rights of 50,000 refugees.’130 The UN experts definitely suffer from the same wilful myopia. They do not want to see that the initiative for offensives almost always comes from the government. In fact, they fundamentally deny the raison d’etre and the legitimacy of these rebellions, and advocate for the status quo: the Congolese Tutsi can remain in exile, and above all, we must not disturb the Rwandan genocidaires established in the Congo. In 2009, Hege was violently opposed to the joint military operations ‘Umoja wetu’ (our unity) of the Rwandan and Congolese armies against the FDLR in a passionate and threatening plea in favour of the Rwandan genocidaires.

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.131

This stupefying position taken by a UN lead expert has never received, to our knowledge, either the disavowal of the UN, or the condemnation of well-meaning souls among the other major decision-makers and analysts on Congo.

If security concerns with regard to the genocidal forces were the first motivation of Rwanda for its armed interventions, they were even more so for the Congolese Tutsi who had engaged militarily and politically during the two Congo wars. But unfortunately for them, the benefits were rather disappointing. The families of many of them who had fled the massacres by the genocidaires or who had been expelled by the Congolese authorities for racist motives continued to vegetate in refugee camps in Rwanda and other neighbouring countries. Their contribution and their sacrifice, however essential during these rebellions, had only served to establish in power an increasingly irresponsible political class which quickly allied itself with the Rwandan genocidaires and even sometimes created new Congolese tribal militias against a backdrop of anti-Tutsi genocide ideology. It was this 129 Stearns, ‘Laurent Nkunda’, 264.
observation that prompted Laurent Nkunda to refuse his appointment to the national army, which was to integrate combatants from the former belligerent Congolese factions under the Sun City Accord of December 2002. For him, the integration of the army had to be preceded by guarantees of security: eradicating the FDLR and other genocidal forces, and repatriating and resettling refugees.\textsuperscript{132}

Nkunda succeeded in mobilizing other officers and politicians from different tribes in Congo around the imperatives of living together for their communities as well as better governance, and his initiatives led to the creation of the CNDP which quickly became an important politico-military force in the Congolese political landscape. He managed to resist and defeat the government forces in all their confrontations between 2004 and 2008, and his forces even came close to taking the city of Goma in 2006 before MONUC intervened with its helicopters and combat tanks, killing around 400 combatants of the CNDP.\textsuperscript{133} The decision to commit such a massacre did not come under the official mandate of MONUC, but rather a bias that has characterized many actors in the international community who have always remained indifferent if not hostile to the claims of the Congolese Tutsi, choosing to side with the Congolese government. It is this hostility that justifies the complacency with which some relay the clichés that have always demonized Laurent Nkunda without taking the trouble to explain to the public that it is generally propaganda from the government and certain militants - Congolese and foreigners -, driven by racist anti-Tutsi ideology or other interests.

One example is this statement by Stearns, the former UN expert and now head of a research institute on eastern Congo: ‘Nkunda has become the most infamous of Congo’s warlords, inspiring venom and critique in Kinshasa’s dailies and on the burgeoning Congolese blogosphere’.\textsuperscript{134} The truth is that with the CNDP, Nkunda had succeeded in creating ‘the only places in the Congo where there is complete safety for the local population' as was recognized by this same researcher who then had hastened to demean this merit for the same reasons.\textsuperscript{135} Nkunda had managed to surround himself with personalities from various ethnic groups in Congo as mentioned above, and it was even a commander of Tembo origin from South Kivu who had proposed during a meeting, the armed intervention that Nkunda should carry out on Bukavu in 2004, saying it was unacceptable for them to remain indifferent as the government army surrounded and killed civilians, including women and children, in this capital city of South Kivu, simply because they were Tutsi.\textsuperscript{136} Despite the Kabila government’s strategy of 'siphoning off Hutu soldiers from Nkunda’s force', as the same researcher testifies, Nkunda's CNDP - like the M23 today - has always had in its army as in its political structures, Hutu and people of other ethnic groups even if the official propaganda, the media and even the academic literature stubbornly make them Tutsi movements.\textsuperscript{137}

It is therefore surprising to see Stearns present Nkunda, with such a profile, as ‘the most infamous of Congo's warlords' in a country that is full of hundreds of militias who kill, rape and loot the civilian population; a country where the government army itself becomes champion in these atrocities; a country where officials engage in hate speech and go unpunished; a country where persecution and targeted killings of Tutsi have become commonplace in the total indifference or complicity of the state authorities. A Congolese NGO published a report in December 2022 showing, among other atrocities, that FARDC (government soldiers) from the 12\textsuperscript{th} brigade in collaboration with a Mai Mai militia group called Biloze Bishambuke burned down three villages inhabited by Tutsi Banyamulenge in South Kivu; a Tutsi FARDC soldier, Munyaneza Charles, hanged in North Kivu; a Tutsi judicial police officer, Amani Gasanabandi, killed with batons and burned in Lumbishi in North Kivu; a Tutsi FARDC officer, Major J. Kaminzobe, burned, killed and eaten in Kalima in Maniema, etc.\textsuperscript{138} This report mentions many other cases that are only indicative, and social media has often relayed untold scenes of other atrocities.

\textsuperscript{132} Interview with a CNDP official, March 2007.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.; citing MONUC sources in Kinshasa, Stearns speaks of 200 to 400 victims, then reduces the number to 150, this time citing a weekly MONUC report. See Stearns, ‘Laurent Nkunda’, 252; Stearns, \textit{From CNDP to M23}, 29.
\textsuperscript{134} Stearns, ‘Laurent Nkunda’, 245.
\textsuperscript{135} Ibid. 265.
\textsuperscript{136} Interview with a CNDP official, March 2007.
\textsuperscript{137} Stearns, ‘Laurent Nkunda’, 255.
\textsuperscript{138} 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.

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A collective of lawyers also published a press release in March 2023 informing that a 'complaint of several hundred pages concerning the abuses committed against the Banyamulenge' filed in September 2021 had not yet been investigated, because of 'the total absence of means to investigate the complaint' according to the general prosecutor of Bukavu. The lawyers also referred to '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.' For an unbiased researcher, 'the most infamous' should be the government responsible for such atrocities and its associates, not Nkunda whose rebellion came precisely to remedy such mis governance.

The bitter defeats of his military offensives against Laurent Nkunda's CNDP have sometimes forced President Kabila to resort to negotiation. With the facilitation of Rwanda, the two parties agreed in 2006 on the process of 'mixage'. Nkunda accepted that CNDP units could be integrated in the national army, on the condition that there is no redeployment outside the Kivus provinces, and that the first priority task for the integrated units be to fight FDLR. The 'mixage' process took place in the first half of 2007 but was subsequently seriously opposed by both Congolese and international actors who felt that integration strengthened the CNDP rather than dissolving it. Its detractors were also unhappy with the operations against the FDLR. In December 2007, the government launched a major offensive of 20,000 men supported by the FDLR and other tribal militias against the CNDP, but it ended with the defeat of Mushaki on 10 December 2007.

Under pressure from international actors, including the European Union, who wanted to guarantee Joseph Kabila a second presidential term without the threat of a strong rebellion in the east, Kabila plotted with Rwanda to have Laurent Nkunda arrested on Rwandan territory on 22 January 2009. General Bosco Ntaganda had declared himself a few weeks earlier CNDP leader to replace Nkunda. In a statement at the Ihusi hotel in Goma on 16 January 2009 alongside Congolese and Rwandan officials, Ntaganda pledged that CNDP forces would join the Congolese army in fighting the FDLR, well before the agreements between the government and the CNDP are signed in Goma on 23 March 2009.

The M23 rebellion, whose paternity is attributed to Rwanda in the usual pattern, was in fact created by the clumsiness of Kabila’s Western advisers who wanted to destroy what they perceived as ‘the growing and disproportionate power’ of ex-CNDP within the Congolese army. The Group of UN Experts on the Congo (GoE) led by Steve Hege, -the same person mentioned above making a passionate advocacy for FDLR- revealed in a 2012 report that during their mandate from 2010 to 2011, they denounced ‘the growing and disproportionate power of commanders and units of the ex-CNDP within Amani Leo operations of FARDC in the Kivus’. The report ads that at the beginning of 2012, ‘in the midst of the renewed international and local pressure for the arrest of General Ntaganda, the FARDC have sought to take advantage of the situation to gradually weaken the role and the influence of the CNDP into the army’.

Referring to interviews with Western diplomats in Kinshasa, Stearns reveals on his part that donors 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 International Criminal Court (ICC).

According to this testimony, these Western donors also aimed to destroy the influence of the CNDP through these so-called reforms, especially the arrest of Ntaganda. They were unhappy with the election results because the same group of UN experts on DRC had warned in its report (compiled earlier but published in December 2012).

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140 Stearns, From CNDP to M23, 30.

141 Ibid. 31.

142 Diatezwa, Invité de l’émission, (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2CZjMuRygA)

143 Stearns, From CNDP to M23, 31.

144 For more details, see Rutazibwa, ‘Paix et sécurité’.


146 Stearns, From CNDP to M23, 42.
(2011) that former members of Rwandophone armed groups led by General Bosco Ntaganda 'fear that the elections slated for 2011 and 2012 pose significant risks to their positions in FARDC' and that they 'have deployed officers to command positions by means of the regimentation process in North and South Kivu, giving them the capacity to influence the electoral process in favour of their candidates'.

On 07 April 2012, Kenneth Roth, the executive director of Human Rights Watch (HRW), the organization from which Hege, the coordinator of the group of UN experts came, sent a twitter message to President Kagame and Rwandan Foreign Affairs Minister Louise Mushikiwabo stating: 'Congolese are dying due to Bosco crimes. All know failure to arrest stems from fear of Rwanda reaction. Your stand?'

It was this conspiracy and pressure from international actors to ‘destroy the influence of CNDP’ that prompted Kabila to deploy his forces to arrest Ntaganda first, and to attack all Tutsi soldiers thereafter, that sparked the M23 rebellion proclaimed on 6 May 2012.

Probably pushed by the same Western advisers, Kabila had requested - as in 2009 for the arrest of Nkunda - the cooperation of Rwanda to arrest Ntaganda and dismantle the ex-CNDP. To this end, several high-level meetings took place from December 2011 to April 2012 in Kigali, Rubavu and Kinshasa between Rwandan and Congolese delegations. During one of these meetings held in Rubavu on 8 April 2012, the Congolese government delegates had exposed the indiscipline of Ntaganda also accused of preventing the soldiers of the ex-CNDP to obey the instructions of the military hierarchy to be deployed elsewhere than in Kivu. Officers representing Rwandophone soldiers at this meeting explained that it was not Ntaganda's lack of discipline that prevented them from agreeing to be deployed outside Kivu, but rather the extremist ideology of hatred that particularly exposed Tutsi soldiers to be targeted and sometimes killed by their colleagues in the army and even by the civilian population. They also accused the higher military hierarchy of treating Rwandophone soldiers with discrimination with regard to ranks and salaries. Finally, they denounced the collusion of this same military hierarchy with the FDLR: it refused the ex-CNDP the logistical means to fight the FDLR, and it had kept the old complicity with the Rwandan genocidaires to whom it communicated information on imminent attacks before the operations.

At the end of this meeting in Rubavu, it was agreed to immediately end the hostilities which had broken out on 01 April 2012 in South Kivu between FARDC and a small number of soldiers loyal to General Ntaganda. The Rwandan facilitation also recommended that the two Congolese delegations set up a joint technical committee to study the administrative and operational problems raised by the ex-CNDP. Concerning Ntaganda, the Rwandan facilitation recalled the resolution of a previous meeting in Kigali between Rwandans and Congolese which recommended to President Kabila to maintain the amnesty in favour of General Ntaganda, and that the latter in exchange renounce indiscipline, keep low profile and withdraw from Goma. It was also recommended at the end of the Rubavu meeting that the Rwandophone ex-CNDP and ex-PARECO soldiers be initially redeployed to Kivu to avoid escalation, and that the redeployment in the other provinces be done gradually.

It was curiously on this very day of the Rubavu meeting that the executive director of HRW sent the tweet mentioned above to President Kagame and his foreign minister to ask for Rwanda's cooperation in the arrest of General Ntaganda. It is probably to this message from the head of HRW, among others, that President Kagame was referring in July 2012 when he declared that 'representatives of the international community' had contacted him shortly before the outbreak of the M23 rebellion 'to request Rwanda's cooperation in the arrest of Bosco Ntaganda'. President Kagame had called shortly after his Congolese counterpart to ask if he was aware of this move by representatives of the international community and if he approved of it. Kabila admitted

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148 For more details, see Rutazibwa, ‘Paix et sécurité’.
149 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 journal *Le Soir* of 29 August 2012.
150 Minutes of the meeting held in Rubavu on 08/04/2012. Annex to the Response of the Rwandan Government to the GoE report.
152 Revelations made by President Paul Kagame during a meeting of the executives of his party, the RPF at the Sports View hotel in Kigali; and during one of his monthly press conferences, (Kigali, July 2012).
in an embarrassed reply that the same people had indeed contacted him for Ntaganda's arrest, but that he had no intention of handing him over to the International Criminal Court (ICC); his intention was rather to arrest him and have him tried by the Congolese courts for acts of indiscipline.\textsuperscript{153}

It was this miscalculation by Kabila with his bad Western advisers that was going to trigger the M23 rebellion and not Rwanda as claimed by Stearns who paradoxically bases his accusations on the reports of the real instigators of this rebellion.

Rwandan support for M23 has now been well documented, in particular by the UN Group of Experts. Their conclusions have been confirmed by Human Rights Watch, by MONUSCO, and by at least three embassies in Kigali through internal investigations. Research for this report—including interviews with over a dozen M23 defectors, local eyewitnesses and 15 ex-CNDP officers who stayed in the Congolese army—supports their conclusions.\textsuperscript{154}

Ignoring the resolutions and recommendations of the Rubavu meeting of 8 April 2012, Kabila's government therefore chose the strong way by first attacking Ntaganda and his small group of supporters who had already retreated to his farm in Masisi from 7 April 2012. The FARDC however failed to disarm or capture them. But very quickly, the other Rwandophone soldiers and especially Tutsi began to be threatened. Colonel Sultani Makenga, who had remained loyal to the government army and who had even advised certain mutinous Rwandophone soldiers in South Kivu to negotiate the surrender rather than to join Ntaganda finally decided to desert on 4 May 2012, retreating to the Runyonyi maquis in Rutshuru territory.\textsuperscript{155} More popular than Ntaganda, who had replaced Nkunda under obscure conditions thanks to an arrangement between Kigali and Kinshasa, Makenga will attract many other ex-CNDP soldiers to him in his desertion, and the conflict will gain in scope and intensity. On 6 July 2012, exactly two months after the creation of the M23, this movement seized the border town of Bunagana, then Rutshuru, and other towns before taking the provincial capital Goma on 20 November and Sake on 22 November 2012. The capture of Goma finally forces the Kinshasa government to negotiate. The rebels agree to leave the city after 11 days of occupation and talks begin in Kampala from 9 December 2012 under the auspices of the CIRGL (Conférence internationale sur la région des Grands Lacs / International Conference on the Great Lakes Region) then chaired by the Ugandan President.

In the draft agreement with the government prepared by the M23 and scheduled to be signed in Kampala in April 2013, this rebel group demanded, among other things, that the government declare the eastern DRC (North Kivu, South Kivu, Ituri, Haut-Ouele, Maniema and Tanganyika) as a 'Disaster Zone', with 'a special development plan' and 'a particular operational concept for securing it' (art. 5). The M23 undertook to carry out joint operations with the government 'to pacify and stabilize the eastern part' over a renewable period of five years, with among other objectives 'the definitive eradication of all negative foreign forces operating from Congolese territory (LRA, ADF-NALU, FNL, FDLR...)' (art. 12). The rebel movement also called on the government to 'set up a mixed and independent commission of inquiry, to shed light on selective assassinations within the national army, of soldiers in Kamina, Dungu, Rutshuru, Shabunda in South Kivu and elsewhere' (art. 14). The M23 also asked the government to set up a 'local police made up of people recruited locally' and to undertake 'to penalize the actions, words, attitudes, expressions in whatever form, which convey xenophobic, racist, tribalistic and discriminatory thoughts' (art.21). Finally, this rebel movement made the following solemn commitment:

As soon as the Eastern part of the DRC will be secured, cleared of all foreign negative forces and all national armed groups and that, internally displaced persons and refugees will be returned, resettled and reinserted in their places of origin, the M23 undertakes to:
- Definitively lay down arms;
- Demobilize members of the ARC [Armée révolutionnaire du Congo / Congolese Revolutionary Army, M23 military wing] who do not wish to integrate the FARDC;

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{154} Stearns, \textit{From CNDP to M23}, 46.
\textsuperscript{155} Among the annexes to the GoE report (S/2012/348) are testimonies from Congolese FARDC officers testifying to Makenga’s loyalty.
These claims of the M23 seem reasonable to anyone with common sense. Many Congolese find them justified and have the courage to express themselves on private televisions in the DRC even at this time when the official discourse has become more radical, and to plead for living together and to condemn ethnic extremism, stigmatization and persecution of the Tutsi and those who are assimilated to them. But our academics, analysts and other activists ignore this other opinion of the Congolese to focus and reproduce only the discourse of radical extremists, and they unfortunately seem to have a lot of influence in international decision-making circles.

It is this kind of influence that led the UN Security Council to adopt in March 2013, Resolution 2098 establishing the Intervention Brigade within the MONUSCO (Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en République démocratique du Congo / United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo), ‘with an unprecedented UN peacekeeping mandate for offensive operations to neutralize armed groups’ in the DRC, the main target being the M23. The latter was defeated by the UN force and retreated to Uganda. Emboldened by the defeat of its adversary, the Congolese government lost interest in the peace agreement. The joint mediation of the ICGLR and the SADC (Southern African Development Community) contented itself with concluding the Kampala dialogue with two respective declarations by the M23 and the Congolese government with watered down content, signed in Nairobi on 12 December 2013. The M23 was suppressed, but the international community and the DRC government gave no response to its demands. Its fighters led by General Sultan Makenga will return from Uganda in 2017 to settle in Virunga Park. From November 2021, skirmishes begin, generally triggered by the FARDC to dislodge the M23, and the latter launches its real offensive on 27 March 2022.

The third observation is that influential decision-makers in the West, with a colonial mindset, oppose that the Tutsi can have any political role in the region, whatever the level. The process which led to the creation of the M23 as described above shows that the Congolese authorities do not actually govern, but take their instructions from certain Western decision-makers. The latter have an interest in chaos reigning continuously in this country to maintain their indirect domination, and they perceive particularly political organisations identified with the Tutsi as a threat to this state of affairs. The attitude of these Western players is not new, however; it stems from the Hamitic ideology that has been current in the Great Lakes region since the colonial era and also seems to visibly inspire neo-colonial strategies. Upon their arrival in the region, the Europeans found kingdoms with a relatively advanced political organization, and they attributed everything positive they found to those they called the 'Hamites', identified especially with the Tutsi in Rwanda and in the region. Yet the creation of a kingdom over a period sometimes dating back several centuries, with a national identity, a common culture and common institutions, could not be the result of a single component of the population, but rather the construction of all citizens up to the highest level of governance, even if the royal line could be identified as Tutsi.

It is this ideology which transformed the Tutsi, Hutu and Twa groups into hierarchical 'races' that led to the genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda. Historians Jean-Pierre Chrétien and Marcel Kabanda rightly note that 'the ideology that led to the genocide in Rwanda is rooted in a thought of contempt for all of Africa'. Colonial science inspired by European theories of race imposed ethnic governance in Rwanda as everywhere in Africa, and from the start, explorers, missionaries and colonial administrators were unanimous to first 'destroy the power of the Watusi' in order to better establish the colonial order. Political realism and colonial opportunism subsequently led to the co-option of some Tutsi as 'privileged' auxiliaries of the colonial administration, but the...
plan to destroy what the colonizer called ‘the power of the Tutsi’ ended up being implemented by Belgium from 1959, against the nationalists of UNAR (Union nationale rwandaise / Rwandese National Union) who demanded independence, opportunely identified with the Tutsi, and against the backdrop of racist propaganda and genocide against the Tutsi.\footnote{Rutazibwa, ‘The genocide against the Tutsi’.
Rwasamanzi, ‘RDC : la citoyenneté’.
Ibid.

The Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) initiated by refugees from families exiled by the colonial power but bringing together over the years Rwandans from various backgrounds, succeeded in defeating in 1994 the racist and genocidal regime installed by the colonizer and in initiating the reconstruction of the country with a style of governance that seeks greater prosperity and well-being, and offers the same opportunities to all citizens. But it has been confronted to this day with the hostility of various neo-colonial actors who continue to identify it with the sole Tutsi and who particularly use the Congolese dossier to support the Rwandan genocidaires established in Congo and to call for sanctions against Rwanda.

In eastern Congo, the mistrust and hostility of Western decision-makers towards the Tutsi also dates back to the colonial period. In 1956, the Belgian provincial governor of Kivu could give the following instructions to the district commissioner of North Kivu: ‘We must do everything to keep the indigenous authority on different levels in the hands of the autochthones, ... the immigration and installation of new Watusi coming from Rwanda should be avoided as much as possible’. Here, the distinction of the governor between natives (Hunde and others) and immigrants is situated within the framework of the MIB (Mission d’Immigration Banyarwanda / Banyarwanda Immigration Mission), operational between 1937-45 (first phase) and 1945-60 (second phase) to bring from Rwanda to Congo, Hutu and Tutsi as manpower in the plantations of colonizers.\footnote{Ibid.}

But even for the non-immigrant Banyarwanda having their ancestral lands in the Congo, the Belgian colonial administration had already worked to systematically destroy their traditional chiefdoms, especially those of the Tutsi, and the latter found themselves the only ones out of more than 450 ‘tribes’ not to have this single mark of autochthony at the independence of the country in 1960.\footnote{Bucyalimwe, ‘Land’, 512-13.} Activists of anti-Tutsi racism and hatred still sometimes use this argument to contest their Congolese nationality. In South Kivu, the chiefdoms of Gahutu, Budurege and Kayira were inhabited exclusively by Tutsi Banyamulenge, and they were recognized and confirmed successively by the colonial decrees of 1891, 1906 and 1910. They were however suppressed by a decree of 1933 and dismembered in favour of the neighbouring small chiefdoms of the Bembe, Fulereu and Rega tribes. Their suppression was justified by the fact that ‘this community of Tutsi herders was ungovernable because of its arrogance and its lack of cooperation with the new colonial authorities’. Their respective chiefs Sebasaza, Muhire and Sebuhunga had indeed refused to sign the ‘investigation report on the expropriation of indigenous lands in the Itombwe region’, and some of them paid for this refusal by exile or prison. The chiefs of the three other neighbouring ethnic groups whose extremist members claim today the monopoly of being natives had ceded their lands to the Belgian colonizer in exchange for compensation of 73,000 F.\footnote{Rwasamanzi, ‘RDC : la citoyenneté’.

The Banyamulenge of Itombwe have spread as far as North Katanga in search of pastures and there, they are commonly called Banyavyura. The lands occupied by the Banyamulenge in the Congo were not part of the kingdom of Rwanda as is the case with those occupied by the Banyarwanda of North Kivu. Colonial literature places their migration from Rwanda under the reign of King Yuhi IV Gahindiro (starting around 1746 according to the chronology of Alexis Kagame).\footnote{A. Kagame, \textit{Un abrégé de l’ethno-histoire du Rwanda}, (Butare, 1972), 38. On the emigration of the Banyamulenge, see among others, G. Weis, \textit{Le Pays d’Uvira : Etude de géographie régionale sur la bordure occidentale du lac Tanganika} (Bruxelles, 1959).} Their emigration would however be much older and would take place towards the beginning of the 16th century under the reign of Ruganzu II Ndoli (1510-1643). The most important clan among the Banyamulenge (with the largest number of individuals) is that of the Banyabyinshi, that is to say the descendants of Byinshi, son of Prince Bamara whom he succeeded to reign over the part of Rwanda east of the Nyabarongo river, the partition following a war of succession which had opposed Bamara’s camp to that of the legitimate king, Ndahiro II Cyamatare (1477-1510) who reigned only over the part of Rwanda west of the Nyabarongo. King Cyamatare was eventually defeated and killed by a coalition including Bamara; Nzira, king of Bugara; and led by Ntsibura I Nyebunga, king of Bunyabungo who occupied Rwanda west of the Nyabarongo.
for 11 years. When Ruganzu II Ndoli succeeded his father Cyamatare, he avenged him by attacking his enemies and put to death among others Byinshi, son of Bamara, reunified Rwanda and made new territorial conquests.\textsuperscript{166} It is very likely that descendants of Byinshi and other ancestors of future Banyamulenge left Rwanda at this time.

In North Kivu, there were five traditional chiefdoms ruled by Banyarwanda (Tutsi and Hutu) and forming part of the kingdom of Rwanda until the colonial borders were drawn in 1910. They were all abolished by the Belgian colonizer between 1916 and 1958. The chiefdoms of Jomba and Bwishya were abolished in 1922. The former was led at that time by Nshizirungu, grandfather of General Laurent Nkunda, with his Hutu deputy, Bihiizi. The second was led by Kabango with a Hutu deputy, Bikamiro. These notables were deposed by the Belgians 'on the grounds that they continued to remain loyal to the King of Rwanda, and that they resisted their orders'.\textsuperscript{167} These two chiefdoms which they ensured the direct administration were in fact under the authority of Prince Nyindo, son of Rwandan King Kigeli IV Rwabugiri (1853-1895), and who had his residence at Gisoro (Kisoro in Bufumbira in present-day Uganda) where his command extended. The chiefdoms of Jomba and Bwishya were replaced by a new entity, the territory of Rutshuru, which the Belgians entrusted to Daniel Ndeze, a Hutu whose father Mburano had emigrated from Ruhengeri region in Rwanda to Bwishya some thirty years earlier. On his release from Irumu prison where he had learned Kiswahili, Ndeze became courier-orderly and translator from Kinyarwanda to Kiswahili with the colonial administrators who then made him the Mwami (king) of Rutshuru.\textsuperscript{168}

The chiefdom of Byahi, also called Munigi which covered the current city of Goma and its surroundings, was led until 1916 by the Tutsi Karera of the Bagunga clan, appointed by the King of Rwanda. He was driven out by Belgian troops who accused him of being pro-German during the First World War (the two colonial powers had clashed around Goma and in Gisenyi during this war). The Belgians replaced him with an elephant hunter nicknamed Gahebembe (little horn) because of his job of selling ivory. Gahebembe was from the Kumu tribe and was originally from Lubutu, on the border between Maniema and Province Orientale. He adopted this Kinyarwanda name and took wife in the Bagunga clan. His son Bigaruka and his grandsons Nzabonimpa (who succeeded him) and Butsitsi bore Kinyarwanda names. But the Belgians have nevertheless baptized the new entity 'Chefferie du Bukumu' (chieftaincy of Bukumu) to erase the Rwandan traces.\textsuperscript{169}

The Gishari and Kamuronsi chiefdoms in what is now Masisi territory were ruled by Chiefs Rwubusisi and Semugeshi respectively when they were abolished in 1923. Rwandan King Kigeli IV Rwabugiri (1853-1895) had an important residence in Kamuronsi where one of his successors, the future Yuhi V Musinga (1897-1931), was born in 1883. Rwabugiri also had large herds of cows in Kamuronsi called 'Imisagara'. When these chiefdoms were abolished, the Belgian administration demanded that the Banyarwanda populations accept the authority of the new Hunde chief Andre Kalinda whom they had just created and installed, or else return to Rwanda. In 1937, the Belgians were obliged to re-instate the chiefdom of Gishari in order to be able to obtain labour from Rwanda for the development of their colony in Kivu. It was then led from 1937 to 1939 by Joseph Bideri, and from 1939 by Wilfrid Bucyanayandi until his dismissal in 1957. Gishari, the last chiefdom led by a Tutsi in the Congo was definitively abolished in 1958.\textsuperscript{170}

Gaston Nganguzi Rwasamanzi, former Director General of AMIZA (Agence maritime internationale au Zaïre) in Kinshasa and a very close relative of former chief Bucyanayandi, believes that the latter's dismissal was due to his indigenous development policies which entered into direct competition with the Belgian settlers. But the testimony he received from a Belgian, a former colonial territorial officer in Masisi confirms that the suppression of Gishari was more the result of the Belgian colonizer's relentlessness against the Tutsi.

Mr. Jacques Gérard, former assistant administrator of the territory of Masisi who returned within Belgian technical assistance to OFIDA [Office des douanes et accises] in 1982-1984, had confirmed to me that, in addition to these reasons, the colonial hierarchy had decided, in anticipation of the brutal overthrow of the political regime

\textsuperscript{166} Kagame, \textit{Un abrégé}, 87-108.
\textsuperscript{167} Rwasamanzi, ‘RDC : la citoyenneté’.
\textsuperscript{168} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{169} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{170} Ibid.
in Rwanda in 1960, not to allow the existence of a potential rear base where the Tutsis of Rwanda would have withdrawn to recreate their forces after their bloody expulsion programmed by the Belgian administration.\textsuperscript{171}

If this anti-Tutsi colonial racism had Rwanda as its most ardent focus in the region from 1959 until the perpetration of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, it seems to have shifted its epicentre to the Congo as a renowned historian recently noted.\textsuperscript{172} Many other scholars that we have reviewed in this article unfortunately reject this observation or themselves become defenders or propagators of this racism. It is coloniality that continues to dominate the Western mode of knowledge production, even if we must here recall the notion of 'epistemic location' mentioned in the introduction to qualify our remarks. We have indeed seen among these researchers who have not yet carried out their decolonial shift, Africans like Bucyalimwe, or even the once respected Professor Ndaywel.\textsuperscript{173}

**CONCLUSION: DISSOCIATE FROM ANTI-TUTSI RACISM AND ENSURE HUMAN SECURITY IN CONGO**

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 Frenchman Albert Camus wrote that 'to misname an object is to add to the misfortune of this world'.\textsuperscript{174} Ignoring this ideology or finding false explanations for it is the work of the international media, international organizations such as the UN, the diplomacy of the main countries of the world, and even scholars as we have shown above. Those who do so may be doing it out of ignorance or self-interest. But there are probably some who also do it because they themselves have this ideology of hatred against the Tutsi.

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.\textsuperscript{175}

If in areas under the control of the Congolese state, authors of hate messages against the Tutsi and other assimilated groups can go unpunished; the national army can arrest and kill civilians or soldiers simply because they are Tutsi; people can kill someone, roast them and eat them because they are Tutsi; armed groups like the FDLR can kill a shepherd, cut off his head and put it next to his body because he is Tutsi, it is time for the UN to start protecting 'human security' in Congo instead of protect the security of the territory of the Congolese state; find a political solution to these problems, instead of using its planes to fire on the M23, when so far it is this movement - and the CNDP before it - which has shown itself to be more willing than the Congolese state to find a lasting solution to the problem of the security of all people without discrimination in eastern Congo.

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Berlin, June 2023.

\textsuperscript{171}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{172}Interview with historian Paul Rutayisire, Kigali, 19 November 2022.

\textsuperscript{173}Professor Ndaywel has lost the esteem of many people, including his Congolese compatriots, since his participation in a colloquium of deniers of the genocide against the Tutsi of Rwanda, organized in Paris on 9 March 2020, and his very accommodating positions with regard to the anti-Tutsi racism. Among his Congolese critics, see Diatezwa, Invité de l'émission, (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2CZjMuRygA). For a critique of the genocide deniers’ colloquium in Paris, see G.N. Rwasamanzi, ‘Mensonge et manipulation : « L’Afrique des Grands Lacs : 60 ans de tragique instabilité »’, ARIRNA, (Kigali), 06 mars 2020).
