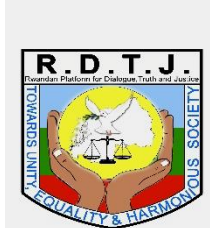

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A REFLECTION ON THE ONGOING ARMED CONFLICT IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO: A NEO-IMPERIALISM IN THE MODERN AFRICA

The role of the western countries, especially the United States (USA) along with its European allies, in particular France, Israel, the United Kingdom, and Belgium in the current conflicts of the M23 in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) of the Great Lakes Region is moot. We have seen conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) since 1996. All this started by Rwanda in 1996, when it invaded the DRC to depose the former President Mobutu. This invasion was successful through Laurent Kabila's Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo. The 1996 – 1997 invasion is historically known as “the First Congo War”. In this war, Rwanda was allied with Uganda and Burundi, whose government was headed by Presidents of the Tutsi background, supported by USA and its allies. Their aim was to establish the Hima -Tutsi Empire in the Great Lakes region. However, the core aim of invading the DRC was and still to sustain the neo-colonization or imperialism.

When President Laurent Kabila came to find out that his allies had the agenda of installing a Tutsi in power in the DRC, he decided to chase away the Tutsi who assumed top and senior positions in his government. Kabila's uneasy government subsequently came into conflict with his allies, setting the stage for the [Second Congo War](#) in 1998–2003. In this war, Rwanda established and supported the Congolese Rally for Democracy–Goma (French: Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Goma, known as RCD-Goma). Ethnic conflict between the agrarian tribes native to the DRC and neurotic Tutsi tribes that had emigrated from Rwanda at various times was relied on to rebel against the Kabila regime. The neurotic or semi-nomadic Tutsi tribes known as “Banyamulenge” claimed that they were discriminated against and that their lives were threatened by Hutu refugees, who were accused to have committed genocide against the Tutsi in 1994.

The RCD-Goma was later replaced by Gen Laurent Nkunda's National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP), which later came to be known as "M23". Combatants of RCD-Goma, CNDP and M23 are either former soldiers of the President Kagame's army or trained by his army. **Whereas President Kagame supports this war to ensure the supremacy of the Tutsi in the region, his agenda is indirectly supported by the powerful countries whose aim is to loot the natural resources of the DRC.**

It is therefore trite to state that the reality behind the current M23 conflict is an extended plan of imperialism of the United States of America (USA) along with its European allies, in particular France, Israel, the United Kingdom, and Belgium. The imperialism can therefore be sustained through **balkanization** of the DRC. That is to **establish and install a permanent and independent state of Eastern DRC, under the hegemony of the Rwandan Tutsi minority government.** The implementation of this balkanization took another level after deploying the UN peace keeping mission in the DRC in or around 2000. **This becomes clearer after the signing of the bilateral agreement between the USA and the DRC on 16 August 2021ⁱ to restore and maintain security in the eastern region of the DRC. After this agreement, the USA government sent special military troops and intelligence agencies into the eastern region, obviously NOT TO ASSIST the DRC government to repel the M23 and other negative forces, but to BACK the destabilizations of the DRC.** In other words, the balkanization of the DRC through the Kagame regime and his M23 proxy is supported by the USA troops, and its European allies. **The M23 receives the USA support (both military and intelligence)** comparable to that enjoyed by the Ukraine.

We should recall that the defeat of the M23 group and its allies (i.e. Ugandan and Rwanda troops) in 2012 did not sit well with the powerful Western countries as this could have marked the end of ethnic conflict in the DRC. It could have meant a new dawn. In actual terms, the defeat of M23 in 2012 could have marked the end of exploitation of natural resources by western based multinational cooperations. Using the Hutu and Tutsi conflict in Rwanda, the West trained the Front Patriotic Rwanda (FPR) army, equipped it with modern weapons and funded with intent to re-destabilise the DRC under the pretext of defending the interest of Banyamulenge on the one hand and of hunting down the Hutu militia or genocidaires. The Rwandan army invaded the DRC under the banner of M23, which is a Rwandan proxy.

Another current strategy used to achieve the object of destabilizing the DRC was to convince it to join the East Africa Community (EAC). The EAC member states include Rwanda and

Uganda, who have been aggressing the DRC. When the DRC became a member, the EAC Member States therefore decided to establish a joint military operation to restore the peace in the DRC. These joint military operations included Rwandan and Ugandan troops. The EAC Member States also opted to calling for the DRC to engage with the M23. These negotiation engagements are facilitated by the former President of Kenya, Uhuru Kenyatta. The balkanization of the DRC is more evident in the UN Security Council Resolution to impose a military embargo on the government of DRC that prohibited it from buying arms and munitions. These aforementioned strategies were quickly implemented in order to frustrate the DRC's efforts to respond to the Rwandan aggressions.

The hidden agenda idea behind the involvement of western power countries in the Eastern DRC is an extended plan, dated before the Rwandan genocide of 1994, aiming to get full control over the rich mineral region through the detachment of such region (a well-known 'hub of mineral resources') from DRC administrative boundary, and to become an independent State under the hegemony of Hima - Tutsi empire ideology in the region, led by the government of Rwanda and assisted by Uganda. This ideology has been used to achieve political and socioeconomic goals related to the maintenance of power in the hands of the Tutsi - Hima minority and to the sustenance of the control over natural resources in the regionⁱⁱ. The first attempt to have the DRC controlled by the Tutsi - Hima minority was in 1986 when Rwanda and Uganda invaded the DRC. Although Uganda and Rwanda deployed, their troops in this invasion that resulted in the deposing former President Mobutu in 1997. President Laurent Kabila was picked up by Rwanda and Uganda to lead the proxy war. Many people were deceived by this strategy as they thought it was Laurent Kabila who deposed Mobutu. It was not him.

Things got worse when Laurent Kabila assumed power and thus sought to expel Tutsi - Hima (who fought to depose Mobutu). The attempt to expel the Tutsi - Hima from the DRC cost the life of President Laurent Kabila in 2002. Those expelled include Gen James Kabarebe, who was Chief of General Staff in the DRC. He returned to Rwanda to become the Minister of Defense and now Advisor to President Kagame on the national security matters.

The M23 conflict is fueled by Rwanda, which enjoys financial and military support from the USA government and its European allies. It is supported by the UN because of the USA's influence over it.

In conclusion, the government of DRC needs to identify those involved in the M23 conflict and understand what the Tutsi - Hima want to achieve. *There is a need to know the double standard of the USA, EU, EAC and the rationale behind arming Rwanda by the USA, France, and UK.* The DRC must object to peace talks between the M23; rather engage directly with Rwanda and Uganda. Peace will prevail if foreign rebel groups are also engaged in peace talks. The DRC should do whatever necessary to defend its territorial boundaries by denying and termination of USA and EAC agreement to control peace and security in the Eastern region of DRC.

The president of DRC, His Excellence Felix Tshisekedi, should use his power to provide all necessary supports to strength the **FARDC**, and assign the full power to **SADC FORCES** (as trusted army to restore security and peace – referring to the current positive work of in Mozambique), together with other African countries – that support democracy, independency, sovereignty and self-determination – to assist the DRC to defend itself in the same way the Ukraine is supported. *Imperialism of Western countries, and domination and supremacy of the Tutsi - Hima minority headed by Rwandan government in the region – exercised through civil wars and proxies - should be brought to an end for the peace, security, stability and development to reign in the Great Lakes region.* Learning experience from the involvement and conspiracy of Western countries in Rwanda civil war - 1994 genocide, the government of DRC should react strategically and fast to protect its territory before the final stage of the Balkanization. This should be done by immediate suspensions of all the Nairobi peace talk with the M23 (Rwanda army) and fight them; the removal of EAC forces in the DRC; and termination of USA security intervention agreement (army and intelligence services in the DRC) as they serve the M23, instead of assisting the government of DRC. Lastly, Africans should be united to object to and resist to imperialist expansionism of the USA and its allies in Africa.


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ⁱ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/8/16/dr-congo-accepts-us-military-help-against-adf-militia>

ⁱⁱ Rwandarugali, S. and Ngetar, N., 2021. A hidden empire: origin and evolution of violent armed conflict in the Great Lake Region of East and Central Africa. *African Journal of Democracy and Governance*, 8(34), pp.43-64.