THE RWANDAN CONFLICT
Origin, Development, Exit Strategies

A Study ordered by:
The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission

Conducted by: Dr Anastase Shyaka

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FOREWORD

The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) has great pleasure to present a study on **"THE RWANDAN CONFLICT: Origin, Development and Exit Strategies "**.

This is not only important for NURC but also for other policy makers and development practitioners in setting up programs that address core causes of conflict and prevent the reoccurrence of the dark past.

The NURC has among its key functions the role of undertaking research on topical issues regarding national processes and to analyse their implication on unity and reconciliation work. In the past, NURC conducted opinion poll surveys on Gacaca, Democratisation and Decentralisation and Land Reform processes. The data were analysed and processed in a manner to give us reference indicators on social cohesion of local communities and trust citizens have in their government.

The study on the conflict in Rwanda will enhance our critical analysis on understanding of varied perceptions on the question of identities as we endeavour to build national unity as a basis for lasting peace and development.

This study done by NURC was conducted by Dr Anastase Shyaka, a Professor at the National University of Rwanda (NUR) and a Researcher with the Center for Conflict Management (CCM) based at the NUR.

I invite you dear fellow Rwandans, friends and partners, to thoroughly examine the conclusions of this study and we are sure that they will be very useful in your policy guidance, community policing and research.

Fatuma Ndangiza
Executive Secretary

TABLES OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

A conflict leads to destruction. It is also a driving force in history of humanity and a powerful motivation in the peace-building process. For instance in the first half of the 20th century, Europe was - with its two world wars, its totalitarian regimes, its concentration camps and its civil wars - the most violent region of the world. With the creation of the European Economic Community and the European Union in the second half of the 20th century, today the continent has become one of the freest, most secure and most prosperous regions of the planet. It is vital that the Rwandan conflict should not be regarded as ever lasting, in spite of the massive destruction it has caused and the huge difficulties linked to its effective resolution.

The existence of a conflict reflects the presence of antagonisms, which, by and large, originate from a difference of interests between two or among several parties. For the conflict to outbreak, the parties should not only have or pursue incompatible interests, but they should also more importantly become aware of that situation. Consequently, the building process of sustainable peace in Rwanda should consider as vital the knowledge of the conflict, its nature and its causes - direct or indirect - and the challenges and opportunities for the Rwandan society. This study is obviously in line with that imperative.

INTERPRETATIVE VIEWS AND CONFLICT GENERATING INCIDENCES ON THE RWANDAN SOCIETY

The Rwandan conflict has been defined in different ways. Those differences in definition have generally been the result of how people have understood the Rwandan society and its components. Hutu, Tutsi and Twa communities have been given different definitions according to writers and periods. They have been qualified as being races, tribes, social states or social classes[1]. Both Rwandans and foreigners have produced extensive literature about that issue since the colonial era till now.[2] Deep analysis shows clearly that those identities do not, in reality, correspond to any of those categories, to which they have been confined for a long time.

By definition, the term race "is not adequate to provide for those social groups found in Rwanda, and even in Burundi, since those groups belong to the black or Negroid race. Relating the Tutsis to the "Caucasoid race" is just part of the Hamite -Tutsi stereotype.[3] Furthermore, the notion of caste refers to a social stratum of heredity and endogamic nature, whose members belong to the same race, the same ethnic group, the same profession, the same Religion [...][4] but, that has never been the case either in Rwanda or in Burundi. The contact between a Hutu and a Tutsi has never entailed either any notion of stain or performance of any expiatory rites that are found in caste-system societies[5]. Having said that, the concept of caste is also inappropriate to explain what the Rwandan society is and the conflicts that it has experienced.

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[1]See : Pages A., Un royaume hamite au centre de l'Afrique, Bruxelles, Marcel Hayez, 1933; Vansina .J., L' évolution du royaume du Rwanda des origines à 1900, Bruxelles, ARSOM, 1962; Maquet J.J., Le problème de la domination Tutsi, in Zaïre, vol. VI, n⁰ 10, 1952: Hiernax J., Les caractères physiques des populations du Ruanda et de l'Urundi, ISNB, Bruxelles, 1954 ; D'Hertefelt M. et al. Les anciens royaumes de la zone interlacustre méridionale. Rwanda, Burundi, Buha, Tervuren, MRAC, 1962 ; De Lackger L., Ruanda, Kabgayi, 1959; De Heusch L., Le Rwanda et la civilisation interlacustre, Bruxelles, ULB, 1966 ; Codere H., The biography of an African society. Rwanda, 1900-1960, Tervuren, MRAC, 1973.

[2]See: J.P. Chrétien, Le défi de l'ethnisme. Rwanda et Burundi : 1990-1996, Paris, Karthala 1996 ; J. Semujanga, Récits fondateurs du drame rwandais. Discours social, idéologies et stéréotype, Paris-Montréal, L'Harmattan, 1998.

[3]See: J. Semujanga, op.cit., p. 93 et sv.

[4] E.Willems, Dictionnaire de la sociologie, Paris, Librairie M. Rivière et Cie, 1970.

[5]J. Semujanga, Récits fondateurs du drame rwandais, op.cit., p.87.

Other writers have used the terms of social status and social classes to make a distinction between the Hutus and the Tutsis. If the definition of social status[6] can to some extent be applied to the pre-colonial Rwandan society, it is nonetheless true that the distinction in status according to the European societies in the Middle Ages does not cover the distinction made between the Hutus, the Tutsis, either in Rwanda or in Burundi. All the Tutsis do not belong to the nobility and in many regions; aristocratic Hutu families were in power by heredity. For those reasons, the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa categories were not social classes in the European sense of the term. The Tutsis themselves have lived in different social conditions. Economically, politically and even socially they were organized into hierarchies in comparison with one another. The same situation has prevailed for the Hutus.[7].

In Burundi, for instance, the nobles-called the Ganwas - have formed a separate group, identifying itself and identified as being different from the Tutsis. Western ideological representations have diluted the Ganwas into the Tutsi group while categorizing all the Tutsis on the basis of references so far exclusive to the Ganwas. The conflict which has been devastating Burundi today finds its roots in that misleading interpretative view that the Western world has imposed on the Burundian society.

From all the anthropological concepts, which have been used so far, the most fashionable has been that of ethnic group for four decades. In fact, two human groups form two different ethnic groups if, and only if, they belong each to a different corn of language, culture, history and territory. However, as the case of Rwanda - and also of Burundi - demonstrates such a difference has never existed. And even if we considered that the common territory was de-structured due to the successive exiles, and that the common history was put into question by division ideologies, we should recognize that the common language and culture have so far resisted to the ordeal of de-structuring discourse and to the identity fracture[8]. If the otherness of language and culture is a constructive element of ethnic group, it should then be admitted that there exists one unique ethnic group in Rwanda: the ethnic group of *Banyarwanda.* This is also true in Burundi.

As a matter of fact, in neighbouring countries such as Uganda and DRC, where there is an important Rwandophone community, all Rwandophone people have been considered as members of the same ethnic group, that of Banyarwanda (people of Rwanda). The distinction between the Hutus and the Tutsis has only been made very recently, due to divisionist discourse and successive anti-Tutsi pogroms in the two Belgian ex-colonies, which became more radical after the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

Two closely related deductions could be made from what has been said so far. First, the Hutu and Tutsi entities which have been at root of the conflicts in the contemporary Rwandan society have constituted neither races, nor tribes, nor ethnic groups. Second, those conflicts more politically-based than anthropologically based.

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[6]E. Willems, op.cit.
[7]J. Semujanga, op.cit. p.88.
[8]S.M. Sebasoni, Les origines du Rwanda, Paris, Harmattan, 2000, p.117.

During the pre-colonial era, the Hutus, Tutsis and the Twas of Rwanda human groups swore allegiance to the same monarch, "Umwami", had the same culture, the same language "Ikinyarwanda" - and lived together on the same territory from time immemorial. That set of links was also an important element of social cohesion. Everybody recognized one another as being Banyarwanda and each recognized the other as having the right to be a Munyarwanda.

At that time the Rwandan identity reference was the clan first. When a person was required to disclose his/her identity, he/she would mention his/her clan without ambiguity. Belonging to the same clan implied that the concerned persons were of the same origin, the same distant ancestor. Furthermore, the myths related to their origin made the Hutu, the Tutsi and the Twa, sons of the same ancestral father, called Kanyarwanda[9]. That brotherhood relation placing the three entities -Hutu, Tutsi and Twa- in the same family of fellow creatures has been preserved even in folktales which present the myth of Gihanga in a register of inequalities and injustices.

Even though the sense of belonging to the Hutu, the Tutsi and Twa groups prevailed before colonization, it is without any doubt that they did not have the same content and were neither primary identity references nor genetically locked as was advocated by the colonial discourse. They had come on top of other more significant identity belongingness, such as clans and lineages, and were generally in connection with achieved economic activities[10].

Furthermore, "Tutsiness" and "Hutuness" did not mean some belongingness, which was invariably unchanging. The mechanisms of social promotion to "Tutsification" for the Hutus but also for the Twas, were characterized by a gain of an important herd of cows, could be the result of 3 fundamental acts: the King's decision, the marriage with an "important Tutsi" and the adoption by a Tutsi[11].

The reverse phenomenon, "Hutufication", a kind of social deterioration, was also true for the Tutsis who could find themselves deprived of their herds. Those facts show clearly that, at that period, "Tutsiness" and "Hutuness" did not have in the concerned persons' mind; "a genetic dimension" contrarily to clan belongingness for instance. Then, at what level, is the cause of conflicts situated and how has it functioned?

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[9]Voir: S.M. Sebasoni, Les origines du Rwanda, op.cit., passim. Other accounts give the name of "Gihanga" to that ancestral father of all Rwandans.

[10]The Hutus were rather farmers, the Tutsis cattle breeders and the Twas fishermen, hunters and potters

[11]The most known case is that of a Twa named Busyete, promoted Tutsi by the 19th century, became chief of province and married the king's daughter. His descendants became Tutsis known under the name of Basyete.

The Specific Weight of the First View of the Western World

A close look at the works published during the colonial period on Rwanda and Burundi and at their populations' social relations shows that the majority of those works repeat or refer to the data provided by the first German explorers of the 19th century without being concerned with the sources on which those works were based. Observations made by the first German explorers such as O. Baumann, Earl G.A. Von Gotzen or Dr R. Kandt, are articulated with the same facts: "A considerable population, hundreds of thousands of Bantu Negroes, the Wahutus, in slavish subordination to the Watussis. A foreign caste, the Watussis, governs and exploits ruthlessly the Wahutus and the Watwas, that tribe of dwarves".[12]

From that viewpoint, the demographic weight of the Hutus (85% or 90%), of the Tutsis (9% or 14%) and of the Twas (1%) is a particular element of reference. As a matter of fact, any of those percentages has not been advanced on the basis of adequately collected and periodically updated numerical data. They are rather a repetition of the representation of the colonial view society when the latter came into contact with the West, notably Belgium. But in reality, the use of those figures refers back to the representation of collective identity-based perceptions of Rwandans and therefore, to the representation of the real people's self-identification of the moment.

With regard to that, Vidal C. points out for instance that the first historiography accounts were written from a specific main reference line, such as the king's and the notables' residences. She goes on saying that those accounts were extended to the whole country, and the small society moving in those residences' circles was taken as a general model to explain the Rwandan society[13]. That pattern is almost identical to the one found in Burundi. It is from a combination of two ideological registers, notes Rutembesa F., that the concept of feudality was adopted.

The first concept refers to the population in the two kingdoms, which is closely linked to the Hamitic theory. It asserts that the Rwanda political, social and economic organization was achieved by the invading Tutsi, whose distant ancestors would have been of Eurasian origin. The second concept refers to the relations between the Hutus and the Tutsis and defines them in terms of domination and submission, thus opposing the Hutus who were submitted and destitute to the Tutsis, who were rulers, well-off and oppressors[14]. He continued arguing that that concept was adapted to

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[12] Quoted by Vidal C., Sociologie des passions. Rwanda- Cote d'Ivoire, Paris, Karthala, 1991, p.23
[13] Ibidem.
[14] F. Rutembesa, in Cahier du CCM n " 5: ruptures socioculturelles, ed. de l'UNR, 2001.

explain a vitiated situation similar to that of the medieval Western Europe requiring, like the latter, to undergo some changes[15]. For that reason, the changes wished to occur in Rwanda were thought in terms of the mutations that the old continent had had to go through as well.[16]

The "Ubuhake" system in Rwanda, once assimilated to the concept of feudality, was the arrival and the departure of new ideological references, which would be used to damage social relations. In Burundi, the relation based on cattle was called "Ubugabire" and the one based on land was "Ubugererwa". "Ubuhake" designates the ancient Rwandan system, in which cattle breeders would give cows in usufruct to those who had no cattle, in exchange for services. It is worth noticing that another equivalent system called "Ubukonde" existed between farmers from North-West of Rwanda. Its functioning consisted of hiring arable land in exchange for food products: he/she who had more land would give some to a client in exchange for part of his/her harvest.

Ubuhake and Ubukonde systems have not existed for decades. However, there are big differences between them in the Rwandan socio-political thinking. Ubuhake is still perceived as a casual source of contemporary conflicts, whereas Ubukonde has no conflict-generating aspect. That difference is the result of diametrically opposed views on those two systems from the first contacts with Europe. The first was racialised, demonized, fetishized and fully ideology-oriented. The second was not seen as such, as a result, it did not leave any conflict-generating germs.

Western views and discourse on Rwanda have therefore given a new definition to the realities and relations between the Hutus, the Tutsis and the Twas and a new meaning based on socio-cultural references from Europe in order to adapt them to the ideological representations of that period. For instance, in Kinyarwanda, as well as in Kirundi, the word "Ubwoko" (amoko in plural) meant "clan". Today it means something else...

From the general point of view and at cultural level, those "euro-centric" views have resulted in emptying the Rwandan society of some of its intrinsic values and altering some others. That situation has had an impact on the "cultural reservoirs" of social cohesion and of conflict resolution in such a way that, in the face of the development of the factors of division and conflicts, the Rwandan people have not been capable of "becoming immune" against contamination and of producing "antibiotics" to fight the disease imposed on them by those factors.

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[15] *F.* Rutembesa, in Rwanda. Identité et citoyenneté, Butare, Ed. de l'UNR, 2003.
[16] B. Badie, Le développement politique, Economica, Paris 1988, p.5.

Made genetically unchanging by the racial theories of the Hamitic myth theories about the population of those two countries, the racialization of their relations and the use and the manipulation of identity cards by colonial and post-colonial powers, belongingness to the Hutus, Tutsis and Twas have today replaced clans at semantic level [ownership of the term "ubwoko" (sg)] as well as at the level of identity conscience[17]. Therefore what is the nature of the conflict, which has come on top of those identity particularities, and what are their reference characteristics?

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[17]Shyaka A., Conflits en Afrique des Grands Lacs et Esquisse de leur Résolution, Varsovie, Ed. Dialog, 2003.

THE RWANDAN CONFLICT: A DEEP-ROOTED AND IDENTITY- BASED CONFLICT

The conflict which has been devastating Rwanda for several decades is an identity-based conflict. There is an identity based conflict when a human group is convinced, rightly or wrongly that it is threatened by another group "enemy" (or perceived as such) of disappearing or of being reduced physically or politically.[18] That type of conflict generally breaks out between communities which have been living together for a long time and the frontlines are set up along identity distinctions, whether material or not.[19] The identity-based conflict is therefore a conflict in which collective narcissisms confront each other. They crystallize on the basis of the sense of belonging to an ethnic group, a territory, a language, a religion and a culture. It could also be based on history, ideological constructions and political affiliations. The latter elements are specifically typical to the Hutu-Tutsi conflict in Rwanda and in Burundi.

Identity mechanisms do not arise ex nihilo. They have an origin, an evolution that marks out the itinerary of their forming. During the genesis process of an identity-based conflict, there is existential fear and negation of history and any identity movement carries out a sort of timeless reasoning, which determines community history in a kind of an eternal essence.

The identity mechanism functions like the gnostic myth. At first, there is a perfect entity, then arises a disturbing element which could be a conqueror a rival religion or a dominating ethnic group and finally in order to reintegrate and restore the primitive state, it is up to the community in jeopardy to free itself and destroy those who threaten it.[20]

Conflicts in Africa of the Great Lakes, in particular the conflict of Rwanda, are a good illustration of that phenomenon. At first, there is a perfect entity, the sedentary Bantu "Hutuness" (it matters little if " Twaness" was anterior to it), then arises a disturbing element, the Nilo-Hamitic invading "Tutsiness", and in the third phase, in order to

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[18]Thual F., Les conflits identitaires, Paris, Ellipses, 1995, passim.

[19]A. Shyaka, op.cit

[20] Ibidem.

restore the primitive state, which is to be perfect by definition; it is up to the Hutuness in jeopardy to mobilize the whole group in order to destroy the threat of that "deadly" otherness, in such a case, the "Tutsiness" and finally to get free from it. All the conflict situations in Rwanda from the 1959 revolution to the 1994 genocide, places emphasis on that three-phase dynamics. It is not rational but that does not prevent it from being functional in society.

Identity crises are the result of long-lasting phenomena. Three elements should be combined for the sense of identity to take form: the socio-economic crisis, the state crisis and the internal or proximity heterogeneity[21]. The socio-economic crisis dooms such or such other group to exclusion and toughens collective identifying perceptions of groups around ontological needs. The state crisis results in its incapability of properly assuming its duties and the state places itself in the service of a minority of the privileged by giving its backing to injustices and frustrations against other groups. Those two aspects have characterized Rwanda under the first two Republics, without sparing the neighbouring countries, including DRC. The heterogeneity factor has also played a significant role. In the case of Rwanda and Burundi, the sense of distinction has been the result of ideological constructions and has relied on parameters which are a little rational but functional: height, big or small nostrils, the shape of the face, etc... Ethno-cultural heterogeneity has also characterized the conflicts in DRC and Uganda with the specificity of the latter that it was superposed to religious heterogeneity.

However, contrarily to Rwanda and Burundi, at linguistic and cultural level, the distinction lines are not clearly established in the two other countries.

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[21]Thual F., op.cit

CONFLICT- GENERATING FACTORS IN RWANDA

Countries forming the African continent are very different by their history, culture and geography, by their internal policies and international relations. The sources of the conflicts which are devastating them reflect that diversity and complexity. Some are the result of internal factors, others depend on the dynamics of a region, and others comprise even significant international dimensions[22].

Some originate from historical processes implying collective identifying conflict-generating perceptions, others arise from cyclical factors linked to among other things the violation or the absence of satisfaction of ontological needs[23]. However, and beyond all the underlying causes, the role of the rulers and the attitude of those aspiring to rule are constantly at the heart of political violence and conflicts.

In spite of their diversity, the sources of conflict in Rwanda and in Africa of the Great Lakes in general, can be classified into three categories: colonial heritage, chronic bad governance and inadequate and conflict-generating political systems.

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[22]Annan K., Rapport du Secrétaire Général de I'ONU au Conseil de Sécurité sur les causes des conflits et la promotion d'une paix et d'un développement durables en Afrique, NY, avril 1998.

[23]Shyaka A., Conflits en Afrique des Grands Lacs et Esquisse de leur Résolution, Varsovie, Dialog, 2003; voir aussi Burton W. (ed.), Conflict: Human Needs Theory, New York, St Martin's Press, 1990.

THE COLONIZATION AND MISSIONARY CHURCH HERITAGE

The colonial and missionary heritage as a causal factor of conflicts has developed along three main lines: the ideological line focused on the Hamitic myth and the theories about the populating of Rwanda, the institutional line related to the artificiality of the borders of states inherited from colonization and the political line based on "divide and rule" practices which have characterized colonial policies and which are at the root of the political instrumentalization of ethnicity in modern African states, in Rwanda in particular.[24]

Due to the idea they had of the local populations, to the racial theories and the mythologies they had introduced into colonies, the segregation judgments they practiced, colonial powers – whether German or Belgian - and European missionaries passed on to Rwanda identity antagonisms which today are putting the country of the thousand hills to fire and sword.

In his effort to "civilize" and dominate, the colonizer concocted a range of myths which have been the subject of several publications in the metropolis and which will be cultivated in colonies through instruction to such an extent that the interested persons themselves have ended up identifying themselves with them up to the present day[25]. How did the missionaries and the colonizer, while thinking that they were "civilizing" those peoples of Africa and of Rwanda in particular, managed to empty them of the best part of their values before destroying their cohesion and sowing the seeds of conflict-generating otherness?

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[24] Shyaka A., conflits en Afrique, op.cit.

[25] B. Kadima-Tsimanga, Pratiques ethniques, pratiques politiques: face a l'hypothetique émergence de nation zairoise, in Bulletin of Francophone Africa, vol.5, nr 10, Winter1996/97 pp. 112-123.

The Hamitic myth: ideological matrix of the Rwandan conflict

The hamitic hypothesis has been the ideological matrix at the root of the colonial racial vision of African peoples and in the long run the foundation of the identity-based thinking in several African countries, particularly in Rwanda. That hypothesis has developed step by step and originates from the biblical myth of the origin of man and from the place allotted to the black man in mankind structure[26].

Colonial explorers at the end of the 19th century had noticed, notably in East Africa and in the Great Lakes region, different types of populations who did not meet the caricatured image of the black, which was popularized in Europe at that time. To explain that diversity, the colonial circles adopted that Hamitic hypothesis which instituted a distinction between "genuine Negroes" and other blacks" less Negroes" of "Caucasoid white" type.

By the end of the 18th century, archaeological findings led to the conclusion that pharaonic Egypt was black. That idea brought the then scientists to take up again the idea of the repopulation of Africa by Noe descendants asserting this time that the curses called down by Noe was only upon Canaan, the son of Cham, and his descendants, but that Cham himself and his other descendants had two main, branches: a cursed one born from Canaan, Negroid or " genuine Negroes" and another non-cursed one born from Canaan's brothers, Hamitic, encompassing among other races, Egyptians, Berbers and Abyssinians[27]
.
The second development of that hypothesis allowed to affirm that among the populations in the depths of Africa who were considered to be "genuine Negroes", there were significant variations, some of them being close, according to them, to Hamites who had previously been identified. As a result, the categories of the Tutsis, the Himas and the Masais were related to that group, but it was preferred to apply the term to semi-hamitic or semi-Nilotic to them.

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[26] Edith R. Sanders, The Hamitic hypothesis: its origin and function in time perspective, in Journal of African History, vol.x, no 4, 1969, p.521-532.
[27] Idem

It is within that perspective that in Rwanda and in Burundi in spite of the absence of the traces of cultural or linguistic otherness in those societies, ideology activity has been very prolific, organising each society into 3 races: a "conquering" race (the Tutsis) a Bantu race (the Hutus) and the Twas considered as pygmoids. Numerous hypotheses, which were sometimes quite hare-brained, have been put forward to explain the origin of the Tutsis and have supported the idea that they form a "superior race": from Hamitic, Semitic, Caucasoid, Chamitic (Cham's descendants) Adamatic (Adam's descendants from Eden), Nilotic, Egyptian even Asian and even Tibetan[28]! Paradoxically, missionary writers have much contributed to that! [29]

Those mythical and ideological constructions from colonial inspiration established a relation between those two big families, Bantu on the one hand and Nilotic on the other hand, between communities which had nothing in common, did not know one another and were often far away from one another. They crushed, at the same time, the conscience of having the common roots for communities, which had lived for a long time together in harmony identifying themselves as belonging to the same clans and nations.[30]

The Hutus and Tutsis learned that they belonged respectively to the Bantu and Nilotic-Hamitic family, that they were definitely strangers to one another. At the same time, they learned that the first is an inferior race and the second a superior race, which was enough to arouse resentment of frustration on the one hand and conceit on the other hand. Through continual consciousness-raising of the victimization of the first by the second and the eternal domination of the second over the first, the foundations of ancestral enmity were finally laid up. In line with those ideologies, two complementary processes of identity-based restructuration, one "de-structuring " and the other "structuring", have been put into place: on the one hand, the progressive destruction of identity references common to the Hutus and Tutsis and on the other, the crystallization of the exclusive otherness which has become genetically hereditary in the eyes of the colonizer.[31]

In the face of the cultural and linguistic unity of the Hutus and the Tutsis which challenged those theories, other "complementary theories" were invented to "preserve their practicality" in that new environment: the Tutsis, conscious of their numerical inferiority, adopted the Hutus' language, culture and religion, after having abandoned theirs, so that they could submit to the latter. In other words, the Tutsis, in order to dominate the Hutus, mixed with them and had their own identity absorbed into that of the Hutus! ! !

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[28] J.M. Balencie et A. de la Grange, Mondes rebelles, Michalon, Paris 1999, p.353.

[29] See Pages A., Au Ruanda. Un royaume Hamite au centre de l'Afrique, Bruxelles, 1933

[30] S. Sebasoni, Les origines du Rwanda. L'Harmattan, Paris 2000.

[31] A. Shyaka, in Rwanda. Identité et Citoyenneté op.cit.

Besides numerous other historical, archaeological and anthropological references, which contradict them[32], those constructions contain contradictions, which lay bare their inconsistency. Firstly, they start from the idea of "inter-breeding" to justify themselves and bring out the idea of "racial purity" to exist. If we accepted to adhere to the idea that the Tutsis and the Hutus have each come from elsewhere, after centuries of "interbreeding" and assimilation, how could they manage to remain the same as they used to be, a human group on its own? Secondly, those theories are in contradiction with all the theses of domination and hegemony. Culture, language and religion are instruments of domination in the hands of powers and colonizers. That fact could be demonstrated if we refer to European colonization in Africa or even to Soviet domination in Europe.

If we translate the Hamitic myth into the theory of power we could say that the Tutsis have dominated the "Bantu ethnic groups" to which the Hutus belong, by soft power. But, among the fundamental elements constituting soft power are language, religion and culture. If that was really the case, we would today find cultural, linguistic and religious traces of "Nilo-Hamitic" origin in that region. As a result of the European colonization Africans have spoken French, English, Spanish and Portuguese and have become converts of christianism. None of those three elements of Nilo-Hamitic origin has been known in Africa of the Great Lakes. And due to Soviet domination, Eastern and Central Europe have "inherited" cultural, religious and even political identity references proper to Russians. That sort of phenomen is non-existent in our region. What emerges from that is that assertions according to which the "Hamitic" Tutsis have worked their way into that region and imposed themselves upon the other groups by soft power are without any scientific basis! [33]   But that has not prevented those affirmations from being destroying elements.

From the ideology of races, colonial ethicist practices and hypotheses about the distant origins of one another has resulted in ethnicist consciousness-raising of populations. Through that "ideological trend", communities of Rwanda and Burundi went through an ontological rupture unknown during the previous periods. For that consciousness-raising to translate into violence, another ingredient had to be added: the manipulation of ethnicity for political purposes.

Instrumentalizaton of the "ethno-racial" factor in political life

The use of the ethnic phenomenon in political affairs by the colonizer has resulted in some factors which are sometimes closely related: ideological beliefs, the principle of "indirect" colonization which is likely to rely on competent and favourable natives, segregation in schools, the principle of "divide and rule" and the decolonization context[34].

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[32] Kanimba M.C., in Peuplement du Rwanda, Cahier du CCM n" 5, ed. de l'UNR, 2002.
[33] A. Shyaka, in Rwanda. Identité et Citoyenneté, ed. de l'UNR, 2003.
[34] A. Shyaka, Conflits en Afrique des Grands Lacs et Esquisse de Resolution, op.cit.

As the Rwandan society was organized into racial hierarchies, the Tutsis, the superior group by definition, became the "natural candidates" for assisting colonizers. Considered as inferior, the Hutus were condemned to be "naturally dominated". The indirect colonial rule system, like a company director who recruits employees for his/her company branch, had no other option but to select the intermediaries among the elements who were "genetically the best".

A typical example of segregation based on racial thinking was the exclusion of all the Hutu chiefs from the traditional political structures in Rwanda and Burundi in the 30's by the colonial administration (Morthehan Law) and with the agreement of missionaries and they were the replaced by the Tutsis[35].

Those ideological convictions of racial inequality and genetic and natural domination have sown the seeds of social injustice and, when applied to the local administration, they have undermined the social fabric. The privileges granted arbitrarily to some and often to the detriment of others have resulted in frustrations, by transforming ethnicity into a political phenomenon. Belgians in their colonies, following the example of the British, the French or the Portuguese, have not hesitated to apply the "divide and rule" principle with the purpose of not only having their representatives on the ground but also of better submitting them[36]. In several African countries, faced with the resistance and the reluctance from some relatively strong groups, the colonizer has managed to neutralize them by annihiling them or by opposing them to other weak ethnic groups on the pretence of liberating them from oppression. The deposition of King Musinga of Rwanda in 1930, who would have refused to convert to Catholicism and whose deposition would have been negotiated by Mgr. Classe to the king of Belgians, constitutes a major example[37].

The other factor of instrumentalization was segregation in schools in the very rare secondary schools built in colonies. Admission in schools was mainly reserved exclusively for children of chiefs assisting colonizers and from the preferred ethnic groups or "races". And yet the role of those schools was to prepare the future indigenous senior staff. By defining ethnically access to school and to education, colonial powers and missionaries were ethnically defining those who will be in positions of political responsibility in colonies. It is within that context that the School of Astrida, the unique secondary school in Rwanda-Urundi (besides seminaries) trained from1932 to 1953, almost exclusively the Tutsi over 80%)[38]. That cultural alienation against the Hutus from Rwanda but also from Burundi automatically excluded them from the race for positions in colonial administration and therefore from political life.

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[35] Semujanga J. op.cit.
[36]C. Braeckman, Terreur africaine, op.cit., p.28.
[37]King Musinga would have refused to become a convert of Catholicism, what made the job of evangelizing difficult for missionaries- as simple Rwandans preferred to imitate their king and retain themselves from becoming catholic. It is Mgr Classe who would have requested the king of Belgians to depose him. See: J. Rumiya, Le Rwanda sons le regime du mandat belge (1916-1931), L'Harmattan, Paris, 1992.
[38] J.P. Chretien, Le défi de l'ethnisme, op.cit.

Nothing can better paraphrase that phenomenon than the words said by the Crown Prince L. Rwagasore in reaction to an article by the colonist A. Maus, which was inciting to "Hutu revolution in Burundi like that of the neighbouring Rwanda" and was published in La Dépêche du Rwanda-Urundi of 11 November 1959: "[…] You *Talk,* Sir, *almost like a person who is irresponsible, about vast Tutsis monopolizing all the posts in all sectors: you again prefer to ignore the work done by Belgians for almost fifty years in this country; but now, as if by chance, it's the Tutsis: and yet schools had been created for the benefit* of *those children so that the latter could assume higher administrative duties. Are you reproaching them for having put them to use and let themselves being educated? [...] One thing is certain, Mr. Maus: there is a problem in this country: the problem of poor and weak people, and those have no race.*
Whether they are of noble origin, Tutsi Hutu or Twa, they are first of all from the race of proletarians, ignoramus and poor people. Let's give to everybody a chance, the right to develop, to emancipate, without any distinction of race, in that way we will have deserved of Burundi [...][39]" ».   '

The context of decolonization, which started in 1950's, also complicated the situation. When the Rwandan elite (Tutsi) started to claim for independence by the end of 1950's, to counter them, the colonizer revived the "racial problem" inciting the " Hutu people" to free themselves from the "invader Tutsi". It is within that context of instrumentalization of politicized ethnicity by the colonial power that the 1959 "revolution" took place, engendering the phenomenon of statelessness for a part of the Rwandan population. In huge Congo, in the face of intransigence from young indigenous elites who had been privileged for a long time and had become nationalists, the ancient colonial power had to create and back up the rebellion in Katanga [40].

However, the problem of Rwanda and Africa in general is not only attributable to the colonial era or to the colonizers alone. The destructuring factors have been set up even after independence. The post-colonial predatory powers, instead of getting the country rid of the negative colonial practices, have often institutionalized them for the power. Consequently, if independence has put an end to the colonial system, had the colonizer gone away and "set up again" the nationals, it has also, as far as the sectarian ideologies and instrumentalization of ethnicity are concerned, replaced and reinforced the colonial heritage. And that pattern has established itself in most of African countries.

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[39] Le Patriote (Burundi) du 24 October 1997.
[40] C. Braeckman, Terreur africaine. Rwanda. Burundi. Congo, Les racines de la violence. Paris. Fayard, 1996 Artificiality of state borders and identity- based insecurity

During the Berlin Congress in 1985, Western powers divided Africa in territorial units, which they then shared among themselves, after having divided and regrouped arbitrarily in the same entities peoples and kingdoms, which had no link in their past.[41]   According to the pre-colonial African conception, states and kingdoms were separated by social environments. Frontiers therefore meant the places where those social environments met.

Colonization has put Africa of the Great Lakes at the crossroads of three zones of interests and influences: the zones of German, Belgian and British influence.[42]   That situation has created territorial appetites and mutual incomprehension among powers. To overcome that situation, they had to conclude agreements or bilateral and international arrangements. But those agreements signed at several kilometres far away from the field did not take the realities in the colonies into account.

Even if in its internal conflict situation the colonial frontiers do not play a part as a causal factor, Rwanda was the most affected by those colonial tractions and its borders were the subject of several conventions and arrangements. The 1St August 1885 declaration had already deprived Rwanda of all its Western part of Congo Nile, the Volcanoes and the River Rusizi in favour of Congo, which was private property of the king of Belgians[43]   In the North, in conformity with three German-British arrangements, the conventions of 1st July 1890, of 14 May 1909 and of 14 May 1910,

Rwanda definitely lost the province of Bufumbira in favour of present Uganda.[44]   In the East, the accord called ORTS-MILSNER of 30th May 1909, as modified by the Treaty of London and approved by the League of Nations (LN) on 6th September 1936, had set up the present bordering line between Rwanda and Tanzania.[45]   With the Belgo-German convention of 14th May 1910, Rwanda recovered its present West provinces (to east of Lake Kivu) but it definitively lost the Western part of Lake Kivu.

All those tractations related to the modifications of borders did not displace inhabitants. As a result, Rwandan populations at that time were massively distributed in other "states-territories" newly created by colonization. And today, Rwanda is the only country in the sub-region, whose citizens of times gone by are confronted with nationality-related problems in countries inherited from that period.

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[41] *K. Annan. Rapport du Secrétaire Général de FOND au Conseil de Sécurité sur l'Afrique, op.cit.*
[42] *At the end of First World War, the British and the Belgian remained the only ruling powers of the region.*
[43] J. Jentgen, Les frontières du Congo, Bruxelles, 1952, p. 9.
[44] Ibidem
[45] Ibidem

Those Rwandan populations turned into Congolese or Ugandan have become today the core of insurrection anytime their nationality is put into question. In DRC where driven to the brink of statelessness, they were at the heart of the rebellion, which toppled Dictator Mobutu Sese-Seko in 1997 and are still one of the major sources of the conflict, which is tearing the country apart for the same reasons.

In Uganda, the crises of 70's and 80's went back to their roots from " Rwandophobia" and populations, who were, wrongly or rightly, related to Rwandan identity, became potential targets of violence in that country for various reasons. The situation is also likely to become explosive in Tanzania if nothing is done. As some political personalities were, rightly or wrongly, associated with Rwandan identity, they lost their legitimate citizenship and, in the Western part of the country, Tanzanian populations speaking Kinyarwanda were subjected to threats and rejection.

CHRONIC BAD LEADERSHIP AND BAD GOVERNANCE

African problems are not only due to lack of good governance of the state. They are also related to lack of management and eradication of negative ideologies inherited from colonial times. Nepotism, clientelism, corruption and exclusion which have been practiced by the successive powers in this country since it acceded to independence have led to social split and identity-based fission and, eventually, to the crystallization of conflict-generating cleavages.

The role of politicians continuously remains at the heat exacerbation of identity-based conflicts, which are tearing African peoples apart. Identity-based wars would not occur today in Rwanda if post-colonial leaders had not systematically built their political discourse on themes dividing communities. Bad governance as a causal factor has formed around three fundamental structures: A bad start of independences, unequal distribution of national resources and conflict-generating systems.

Challenges of Decolonization: A Bad Start of Independence

When we take a panoramic look at African countries, we quickly realize that countries, which have been less affected by conflicts, are those, which managed to avoid chaos in the wake of their independence. Those who have had a very bad start of independence are still affected by the spiral of chronic crises. The three former Belgian colonies are a typical example. They successively became real political orphans due to the physical elimination of their leaders who incarnated and wanted to realize national unity.

King Mutara Rudahigwa, in Rwanda, died on 25th July 1959 (just 3 months before revolution) subsequent to a routine medical check-up visit to his Belgian doctor in Bujumbura. Prince L. Rwagasore, in Burundi, was assassinated on 13th October 1961 by a Greek national named Kageorgis in complicity with close relations to missionaries and colonists, a short time after a crushing victory of his UPRONA (Union for National Progress) in parliamentarian elections. E. Patrice Lumumba, a nationalist and the first Prime Minister of Congo-Kinshasa was assassinated early 1961 by Katanga secessionists with Western complicities including Belgians, following a series of political tractations and unrest which had to lead to the Katangese secession and the deposition of the Prime Minister[46].

The young Rwandan state has constantly been incapable of acknowledging the institutional identity to all its citizens and the post-colonial powers have used exile and statelessness for a part of its population as a political strategy.

In Uganda, the path to independence was marked by regional, ethnic, but especially religious identity-based demarcations[47]. Those exclusion-oriented identitarisms contributed to the outbreak of Ugandan crisis in 1966 and to the decline of the state (1966-1979), which followed. The successive powers since independence, by

encouraging ethno-regional and religious hegemony, have deprived the country of the possibility of righting the wrongs of the past[48].

Both in Congo and in the other Belgian colonies, ethnization was the only guarantee of political success. Ethnic groups and political parties were one and the same. Tribal associations changed automatically into political parties and the decolonization process was combined with struggles among local political leaders through intermediary tribal segments[49].

As a result, the ethnic problem, engendered and exacerbated by the colonial power then cashed in on national leading classes, has tremendously confronted social relations, to such an extent that, the creation of real nations in some African countries remains a problem whose solution is still fragile or non-existent.

Injustice and unequal distribution of national resource

Poor management and unequal distribution of national resources are the epidemics that have been devastating Africa since independence, particularly in DRC. In Rwanda, the new political oligarchies monopolized the power and the resources of the young independent State on the basis of identity, be it "ethnic" (Hutu), regional (South, North) or other. As a result, political powers favoured the climate of corruption, hegemony and exclusion. Jobs, schools were distributed unequally in favour of groups in power. This situation complicated social relations, resulting in frustration of the underprivileged and in crystallization of the sense of belonging to an identity, from crises and conflicts. Burundi did not do better and inequalities of opportunity arose around regionalism and ethnism. The cleavage "North-South" in Uganda was based also on unequal distribution of resources to which the country has failed to eliminate.

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[46] Shyaka A., Conflits en Afrique... op.cit.
[47]Ibidem.
[48] Samwiri Lwanga-Lunyiigo, Ouganda l'ère coloniale (1894-1962); A. R. Nsibambi, la crise ougandaise de 1966, in L'Ouganda contemporain, op.cit.
[49] Kabamba Nkomany A. B. V., Pouvoirs et ideologies tribales au Zaire, L'Harmattan, Paris Montreal, 1997.

In Rwanda where poverty, a population growth not yet mastered, the deterioration of economy and the crystallization of negative ideologies were prevailing, bad governance entailed the development of violent identitarism faced with insoluble social problems.

Shaky political systems: Democratic pattern and conflict-generating partisan cleavages.

Since independence, the democratization of African countries has been a permanent demand from both African people and foreigners. And the continent has been attempting to start up the democratic process without success. Most of African countries have constantly adopted a model of democracy imported from the west and incompatible with their socio-cultural and political particularities. And partisan cleavages have permanently focused on identity. In such circumstances, ethnocracy has become the synonym of democracy and the former was preached as being the latter. Rwanda has failed to avoid turmoil from the idea of democracy, which was misunderstood and had a bad start. To cap it all, even some Western democracies pleaded for ethnocracy in Africa....

The majority model, applied to pluralist and divided societies like Rwanda, instead of bringing democracy, progress and social welfare, has become a source of tensions and conflicts. This again confirms the Nobel Economy Prize, Sir A. Lewis, who asserted that in "pluralist societies", the government by the majority and the political model "government versus opposition" which it implies are the principles of exclusion, therefore non-democratic.[50]

In the world of democracy, systems of political parties are characterized by seven partisan cleavages: socio-economic, religious, ethnic cultural, rural-urban, support to the system of government, foreign policy and post materialism (like ecologism).[51] The situation is quite different in Rwanda and in Africa in general. First, primacy of identity has excessively dominated ideologies of political parties. Secondly, the socio-economic cleavage has been completely absent from partisan cleavages whereas it is the real catalyst of sustainable development and remains the main cleavage in authentically democratic countries.

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[50]W.A. Lewis, Politics in West Africa. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1965, p. 64-65.

[51]See A. Ljphart, Partis politiques: les dimensions ideologiques, in D. Butler, Democracy of the Polls, Washington, AEI, 1981.

The principal axiom of the democratic and electoral discourse of political leaders undoubtedly focuses on "Vote for me since I am one of yours" and not "vote for me since I have a more liable vision of society." As a result, a politician from the majority ethnic group already sees himself as the winner of election before the electoral verdict is announced, even before he presents his program and his vision of society. Consequently, democracy becomes expression of identity and not a vehicle of social and economic progress of populations!

Thus "Rwandan" democracy used violence and exclusion against the Tutsis. The latter were constantly considered as being the troublemaker of sovereignty and therefore of democracy. All democratic processes, from the 1959 revolution up to 1994 genocide, went back to their roots and found their legitimacy in the victimization of the Tutsis.

Moreover, when pushed to an extreme degree, that "ethnocratic democracy" presents two huge difficulties for ethnically and culturally pluralist countries like DRC and Uganda. It virtually renders them ungovernable for two major reasons: first because no group, in both countries, represents 25% of the total population. Second because even in case of "ethnic coalitions" minority groups will have difficulty accepting that state of perpetual exclusion from the government, even called democratic.

In its constitution, Rwanda has opted for a democratic model, which is close to the consensual model. But for democracy to operate, here and in the neighbouring countries, we should bring the populations to define their democracy as a tool which resolves conflicts and enforces the rights for all, guarantees the rights to life and nationality, banishes genocide and crimes against humanity, stimulates social human development, provide people with the capacities for analysis and discernment through education and training. It is vital to reduce poverty of unemployed youth so that they would be prevented from putting their potential to the service of violence to survive.

INTENSIFYING FACTORS OF CONFLICTS

Staub E. highlights 5 intensifying factors of identity-based conflicts: harsh living conditions, deep violations of human needs, scapegoat ideology, the syndrome "Us versus Them" and leniency from inactive onlookers[52.]   Girard R. has also worked on those phenomena, with the mimetic theory[53] and the scapegoat theory.[54] All those factors are responsible for explosions of violence in Africa, notably within the electoral perspective which is related to the question to know who is going to control who, who has the right to what, and who has access to which advantages or who is going to face the risk of being marginalized.

Extreme poverty and scarcity of resources, population increase and unemployment have constantly made living conditions particularly difficult for the population and catalysed crises and identity-based conflicts in Rwanda. It is the same situation in the other countries of the sub-region, Burundi and DRC in particular.

During the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, the ideology of ethnic hatred met with resistance in some regions of the country, particularly in south and in east. Already in 1993, within the context of ethnicist radicalization and genocidal consciousness rising, "Hutu power" leaders were yelled at by supporters of their own party in Buganza[55]. However, in the same region, Hutu extremists managed to mobilize the killers by encouraging them to "kill the Tutsi so that they could take over their possessions (houses, banana plantations, plots, cows....)". As a result killings caused unrest in the whole Kibungo Prefecture and the objective of the Hutu killers was not simply to kill the Tutsis for what they were but also for what they owned. And it was with that context of precariousness and the longing for things that the Hutus whose possessions were coveted by the killers were also targeted and slaughtered.

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[52]Staub E., Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992.

[53]Girard R., La Violence et le Sacre Ed. Grasset, Paris, 1972.

[54] Girard R., "The Scapegoat" (original: Le Bouc Emissaire, Paris, 1982), trad. Y. Freccero, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986. Voir aussi: R. Girard, Shakespeare- les feux de l'envie. Trad. B. Vincent, Paris, 1990.

[55]In a political rally of MDR party in Kibungo, one of the leaders, D. Murego, came under a throw of stones from members of his party in that region when he started singing "Hutu ethinist » litanies.

As a direct consequence of hard living conditions in post-genocide Rwanda, the practices of taking over the property of others (generally by former refugees) known under the term "Kubohoza" have had the effect of fueling distrust and existential fear among communities and reviving tensions.

Moreover, it is because of that material precariousness, which came on top of the syndrome "We-They" that the FRODEBU party failed to strengthen peace and unity after his election victory in 1993 in Burundi.

In DRC and in particular in Kivu, violence against the Banyarwanda was triggered by the intention of people to take over their land and their property. According to Congolese people, Rwandophone people are known for being a community whose members have succeeded socially, economically and politically. For instance, it is among them that we could find the big farmers in Kivu, which is the real agricultural storehouse of DRC with big plantations and herds of cows. In addition to that, whether in East or in Kinshasa, they are among those whose businesses flourish best.

Within the context of social explosions, jealousy of any kind, identity-based and ideology-connoted political rivalries, with the help of lack of state control in Congo, those Rwandophone people have automatically become the scapegoats of the Congolese evil and have been targeted not only for who they are but also for what they possess. It is worth noting also the north of Uganda is prone to insurrectionary activities since it is economically underprivileged.

Furthermore, international politico-financial choices have their part of responsibility in the intensification of conflicts. When significant reductions of social expenditure due to structural adjustment programmes are associated with the fact that some social groups have the feeling of being wronged during the distribution process of resources that are running lower and lower, a risk of conflicts increases.[56]

By and large, population increase and land-related conflicts in Rwanda, in Burundi and also in Kivu plus "human underdevelopment" are the real catalysers of explosions. Be it in Rwanda, in Burundi, in Uganda or in Congo, young people who have no training, no job, no income and no promising future, enlist easily in popular partisan militia of any kind and are potentially candidates for activities of violence and rebellions.

There is also the effect of intensification of conflicts due to serious violations of human needs. In the region of the Great Lakes, this means violating rights violations (of ethnic groups victimized by other groups) particularly as regards freedom, security, sense of fulfilment and development, exclusion from instruction, from employment, refusal to nationality, exile, persecution and massacres.

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[56] K. Annan, Rapport du SG au Conseil de Sécurité de l'ONU sur les causes des conflits et la promotion d'une paix et d'un développement durable en Afrique, NY, avril 1998.

In Burundi, the 1972 massacres against the Hutus and their exclusion, which followed, over-determined them to go to war. The exile and the successive massacres in Rwanda against the Tutsis since 1959 have resulted in mobilizing them for the 1990 war. Oppression by M. Obote and Idi Amin's dictatorship against southern populations, especially Baganda, radicalized antagonisms and led the victimized groups to launch a war against the "oppressors". Refusal of nationality and persecutions against Rwandophone populations in DRC led the latter, having their back to the wall, to resort to military activity to defend their rights: it is those Rwandophone Congolese, called Banyamulenge of South and Banyarwanda of North Kivu who were behind the war which toppled Mubutu's regime in 1997 and the one which is being waged, against "Kabilas" regimes[57]

Anytime there was a deep crisis, the powers sought to find a remedy for that by carrying out a scapegoat hunt. That was the case in Rwanda, during the 2nd Republic which, mined by economic crisis, internal opposition and social injustice got involved in the hunt of the Tutsis who were accused of being troublemakers of peace and responsible for all ills. That fact can also be noticed in the conflict situations in Congo where the Banyarwanda serve as scapegoats. Public authorities who have always failed to run the country and take up a social and economic challenge, in order to conceal the lack of stateship and to remain in power, have always chosen to find resources from identity by targeting the "common enemy", i.e., the Rwandophone foreigner, whereas some time ago there were several specific conflicts. And in that context where a little earlier they were several specific conflicts - political, ethnic and regional - there is once again a Congolese community united to share their hatred for the Tutsis.

Above all there is also the syndrome "us-them". It is for us-natives" against "them-non natives" that "People of Katanga origin" slaughtered the "Balubakats early in 90's. During the same decade, around "us, the autochthones" against" them the foreigners", different ethnic groups in both Kivu indulged in killing Rwandophone populations. In Uganda, the syndrome us - them" inflamed the conflicts, by resorting to regional, religious, political and ethnic identity-based differences, as mentioned earlier.

In Burundi and in Rwanda, it is not only on the dichotomy "Hutu-Tutsi" that the syndrome "us-them" relies on. There is also, in the Burundian situation, "us", natives from Bururi against "them", the rest of Burundians, "us", the Bahima against "them" the Banyaruguru. Political parties and especially the armed rebel groups is today the real "centre" of the Burundian identitarism. In Rwanda, we find the "us", former refugees against "them" those who did not leave the country; "us", those who are favourable to the current regime against "them", those favourable to the former one, originated from the North opposition to those from the south and the East.

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[57]L.D. Kabila was assassinated on 16 January 2001 and it is his son, Joseph Kabila who replaced him in power. What has led his opponents to call the regime "Kabila dynasty" which is incompatible to the idea of Republic?

And what is worse with the syndrome "us versus them" is that it has a natural affinity with the identity proliferation and fission: within each of the "us", there are heterogenization mechanisms, resulting from intra-identity dissidences or differences, resulting in some "us" in the face of some "them" of the same identity, whether regional or ethno-cultural. A typical example can be found in Rwanda again where the "us former refugees" split up into "us", the Anglophones against "them", the Francophone; "us", those who came from Uganda against "them" those who came from Burundi, DRC and those who stayed in Rwanda. The "us" regional is also vested with the "ethnist" cleavage. Similarly, the Burundian "us Hutus" is experiencing the same identity-based fragmentation.

Finally, E. Staub has identified leniency from the bystanders as an intensifying element of identity-based conflict. In the Great Lakes region, the bystander is the neighbour, the state and its authority, neighbouring countries, but especially Western powers and international organizations, faded into the ambiguity of the term" international community".

If we refer again to the Rwandan conflict situations, we could notice that, anytime there were massacres against the Tutsis, neighbours, either by complicity or by fear of being lynched, did nothing (when they did not follow the movement). Likewise the institutionalization of impunity by the state, even though we agree with the thesis that top authorities were neither the perpetrators nor the people behind the massacres, they however supported and reinforced that identity-based violence.

But the inactive bystander whose leniency has more negative effects is the international community, in such a case U.N and the Security Council (especially its 5 permanent members: U.S.A, France, United Kingdom, China and Russia). Its failure to act, its omissions and its lack of firmness with regard to violence in DRC since 1991, to massacres in Burundi since 1993, but especially during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda supported the crimininal attitudes in those countries. Poor management of Rwandan refugee camps in Kivu and Ngara (Tanzania) by the international community and its leniency towards genocidal forces who were controlling the camps, between 1994 and 1996, intensified and regionalized the conflicts. In addition to those 5 factors mentioned by Staub, the conflicts in that region have been intensified by the structural hegemony, the rhetorical element, the dehumanization and the demonization of the opponent.

There are hegemony structures before and after the conflicts in that region for two major reasons: unequal distribution of the public wealth (and especially the power) and existential fear. On the one hand the identity-based dominating segment (religious, political, regional or ethnic) practices, through politics, unequal sharing of the national wealth to the detriment of those who are defined as "others" in terms of identity, thus leading to clientelism-nepotism for the benefit of his members alone. On the other hand, fear of the other, or identity-based mistrust can lead him to withdraw to his own folk and practice exclusion of others so that he could protect himself against that "dangerous and deadly being" who is the Other. In other words, that structural

domination can therefore result from the fear of being surprised by the other, with the will of keeping away in order to better control him.

That was the case in Burundi, after 1965 but particularly after 1972, when the Tutsis, in the aftermath of the attempts of the Hutus to seize power by force, decided to totally exclude them from exercising power for two decades, thus provoking the crystallization of resentment and frustration from the Hutus and their determination to go into open conflict. In spite of the policy of National Unity and Reconciliation, which is bearing fruit that risk is also still hanging over Rwanda after the genocide. As a matter of fact, the wounds left by the genocide which are not healed yet and the fear of another genocide constitute a significant constraint which implies that key positions are often assigned to the Tutsis to maximize the guarantee for security.

There is also clientelism, where the dominating group monopolizes the wealth and the affairs of state, as is the case of the clan of Mobutu in DRC, who have ruined that country and, after him, the Balubakats, late L.D. Kabila's ethnic group, who are fueling cleavages and conflicts of all kind. That is also the case of the "Tutsi-Hima" of Bururi, in Burundi, who have monopolized the power and the army. The "Hutus from North", under the second Republic in Rwanda, after having toppled the "Hutus from South" had also become famous for resorting to those practices. Uganda was not an exception to the rule. The disparity between the South, which is rich and privileged, and the North which is poor, has urged the groups from underprivileged regions to rebel.

The rhetoric element is a preferred medium of identity-based profusions and violence in the 4 countries. The social and political discourse which catalyses the conflict comes on top of a certain number of ideological constructions. The most widespread of them include the myths and stereotypes relating to the Hamitic theory and the "allochtony" of the Tutsis, feudality and Tutsi domination and the threat of the Hima-Tutsi Empire in Central Africa.[58]

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[58] Much research has been done on that issue. For more details, see: J.P.Chretien et al., Les medias du genocide, op.cit., passim; J. Semujanga, op.cit., passim. The 10 commandments of the Hutus (1991) see: S.M. Sebasoni, op. cit.p. 152: 1. Mistrust of the Tutsi woman; 2.dignity of Hutu woman; 3. Who should bring the Hutu to his senses; 4. Tutsi's dishonesty in business; 5. Hutu monopole in strategic key positions; 6. monopole in education; 7. In the army no Tutsi or a Hutu who married a Tutsi, 8. no pity for a Tutsi, 9. Developing solidarity with Bantu brothers, 10. Teaching all of this to all Hutus. For the Hima/Tutsi empire, ibidem.

There are psycho-political phenomena of demonization and dehumanization, which transform the opponent into a non-human and dangerous being, which should be killed if one wants to survive. The purpose of this is to change violence against him into a redeeming action, which, at the same time, constitutes a justification. And he who refuses to incarnate that salutary violence is treated as a "traitor" and assimilated to " the enemy". It is within that logic that the Tutsis, in particular in Rwanda, in times of the successive crises and conflicts, were given the names of insects such as "Inyenzi" (cockroaches) or "inzoka" (snakes) and the Hutus who were unfavourable to violence were persecuted.

When the Congolese authorities were inciting people to slaughter the Rwandophone populations in 1998, they assimilated the Tutsis to microbes[59]. All those factors have an impact on identity-based primacy, catalyze conflicts and complicate their resolution.

It is quite normal and absolutely evident to have, in Africa Great lakes, a multitude of ethnic groups, several identities and identity-based segments. It is not either a specificity of Africanness or any property of underdevelopment. Developed European countries, such as Switzerland or Belgium have also identity-based segments which are afraid of one another, sensitive and reluctant one toward the other and ethnically (linguistically) well defined to such an extent that they can even define their democracy.

What is terrifying, in case of Africa and in particular in Africa of the Great Lakes, is the way those identities express their demands. It is their over-determination over any other dimension. It is nature and their affinity with explosive violence. It is their capacity to take hostage any dynamics of inclusive assimilation and formation of "state-nations". It is the prejudices and ideological clichés, which boom their general rapid development and the extreme rejection of the other until he is left with just one option: exile or extermination.

Faced with that terrible situation of African realities in general and the Great lakes region in particular, a series of relevant questions are worth posing? Faced with ethnization of politics, does democracy stand any chances of being established in Africa? How could Africa of the Great lakes be disinfected, healed from identity-based exclusion? Will ideas of panafricanism and Nepad's ideas survive the rise of pan-ethnism? Unless some ideologies are brought under control, is it still possible in that region to build equitable and reconciled societies within the same state entities?

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[59] For this, an international warrant was issued by Belgium for the arrest of the then Congolese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ndombasi A.Yerodia.

CHALLENGES, STRATEGIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE IN RWANDA.

The efficient resolution of the Rwanda conflict faces a number of challenges that can be categorized into the following groups:

- **The weight of genocide and recidivism of deadly identities:** Genocide wounds which are not yet healed up in the society, genocide judicial management which does not meet expectations, plural memories - often incompatible - of genocide, existential fear, misunderstanding about historical processes and identity-based crimes which are still under way.

- **The intensifying factors of conflicts that are not settled yet:** A great number of Rwandans live in very hard conditions; economic inequalities and negative ideologies are still persisting in society.

- **The regional environment** is characterized by the increasing "Rwandophobia"; some governments and organization are concluding alliances with genocidal forces and there are possible military confrontations.

- **The internationalization of the conflict and the external judgment.** There are active alliances between negative operating in neighbouring countries and some actors and foreign governments. The international systems, particularly UN and EU systems, have not taken any concrete measures against Rwandan genocidal forces. Some external actors are maintaining conflict-generating perceptions on the Rwandan society. There is external resistance to change dynamics and peace building mechanisms thought out by the Rwandan society and the failure of the international solidarity during the post-genocide period: lack of will to cancel the external debt even the one which is "illegitimate and criminal" is the greatest indication of the sad reality.

Building sustainable peace in Rwanda requires the establishment of strategies responding to two types of factors: on the one hand those that have impeded peace to exist or have constantly weakened it. On the other hand, there are factors that could possibly nip peace in bud.

The strategies should be based on conflict resolution and emergence of citizenship, responsible and democratic governance and sustainable socio-economic development.

With regard to all those aspects, the Rwandan population has generated a lot of opportunities, which can be traced back to the Government action and leadership as well as to the action and attitudes of the population itself. First and foremost, it is a matter of leadership and good governance. After the 1994 genocide, which stood out in whole Africa, Rwanda showed ingenuity in conflict management and resolution thanks to the policy of National Reconciliation as well as participatory and innovative justice known as Gacaca. Rwanda gave honour and pride to Africa when it was

declared World Number One of good governance for the year 2002, out of nearly half of the number of UN member countries. The same year, the international leadership prize was awarded to Rwanda President and, through him, to the Rwandan leadership.

Then, it is a question of the convergence of the three wills underlying the national foundation. Indeed, creating a nation requires individual will, common will and the representative common will which is embodied by rulers. Undoubtedly, some Rwandans, as individuals, have sought citizenship for decades and it is highly likely that most of Rwandans had the same objective. However, both wills have never been politically developed neither by colonial powers or their successors. For the first time in the contemporary history of Rwanda, leaders are openly willing to re-found the Rwandan nation and involve the population in that dynamics. Such a dynamics is likely to make positive major changes in the Rwandan socio-political thinking provided that people are not overpowered by "contradictory dynamics" and they give time to time.

Finally, there is the contribution of the Rwandan Defence Forces (RDF) to national security and stability as well as to the process of the national transformation for sustainable peace. RDF is meant to be a really national army. Various reintegration actions of former ex-FAR soldiers are eloquent examples. RDF is also meant to be a professional, strong and friendly towards the population, which has good reasons to constantly rely on it.

All those opportunities could be developed because the population favourably welcomed them at the outset. Among numerous positive attitudes, which are intrinsic to the Rwandan culture that contributed to the achievement of all of that, one could mention values such as endurance *(kwihangana),* commitment (kwitanga), perseverance *(kugira umuhate)* and voluntary participation *(gukorera ubushake).*

All the strategies, which were set to face the genocide consequences and to firmly build peace have greatly taken advantage of those prior attitudes. For example, one may mention Gacaca jurisdictions whose judges of integrity *(inyangamugayo)* work on basis of voluntary service and devotion as part of their contribution. Moreover, genocide survivors are ready to forgive for everything despite their deep suffering and lack of preconditions for *reconciliation.*

We can also refer to different elections that were held at local and national level in which Individual and Collective contributions from Rwandans have helped a lot in that exercise prior to the peaceful end of the transition period[60].

Moreover, Rwanda has also established a number of numerous mechanisms and tools for conflict resolution and peace building. It is worth mentioning, within the framework of this study, three of them in particular: Vision 2020, the New Constitution and the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission

The Vision 2020

In 1998 -1999, the Office of the President of the Republic organized at Village Urugwiro reflection sessions on the future of the country. On the basis of the ideas expressed, central

level services worked out a document on vision entitled "The Vision 2020". In that document, Rwanda, which was rising from its ashes and healing its wounds could also think of its future and formulate its aspirations. The Vision to Horizon 2020 provides hints at how to address the current, future and fundamental questions: what does Rwanda want to look like and with what type of population and society? How to make Rwanda a real homeland for all of its citizens and a well-integrated country at regional and international level[61]?

The Vision 2020 is based on 6 pillars and 4 cross-cutting areas. The pillars are as follows: The Reconstruction of the Nation, an efficient State capable of unifying and mobilizing its population, human resources development, Town and Country Planning and Development of Basic Infrastructure, Development of Entrepreneurship and Private Sector as well as the modernization of Agriculture and livestock. Cross-cutting areas include gender issue, environment protection, science and technology, including ICT as well as the regional and international integration.[62]

All the sectorial strategic documents refer to and inspire from the Vision 2020 including the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper[63], Decentralization Policy and Good Governance [64].

Through different documents and initiatives, it is clear that the actions and aspirations of Rwanda and its Government aim at developing the Rwandan population as a whole. Thus, for this objective to be achieved, there is a need for the conflicts to be resolved and the national identity to be recovered. The Vision is clear about that: Rwanda is longing for building a nation which is modern, prosperous, strong, united, dignified and proud of its fundamental values, politically stable without any discrimination among its

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[60] See la Commission Electorale Nationale contribution de la population a l'operation electorate isoloirs utilises lots des elections du 06 mars 2001; see also: National Electoral Commission Executive summaries of the Existing Reports by the National Electoral Commission on the 2003 Constitutional Referendum, Presidential and Legislative Elections, Kigali, 2004.
[61] Republique Rwandaise, Ministere des Finances et de la Planification Economique, Vision 2020, Kigali, Novembre 2002.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Republic of Rwanda (NPRP, Minecofin), Rwanda: Poverty Reduction strategy Paper, Kigali 2002
[64] Republic of Rwanda (Minaloc), Decentralisation Policy, Kigali, 2000

sons and daughters even those of the Diaspora. And this should be done in social cohesion and equity. The reconstruction of the country and its social capital as well as its regional and international integration will facilitate and condition the achievement of sustainable development.[65]

The Constitution as a Tool for Conflict Resolution and Building Sustainable Peace in Rwanda

Any country all over the world has a constitution and Rwanda always had one, too. If one refers to the new constitution of the Republic of Rwanda, voted by more than 90% of voters in the referendum of 26 May 2003 and promulgated in June 2004, which could arouse a particular interest with regard to the problem under this study.

Rwanda, through its constitutional history, never had a constitution responding to its own expectations as a nation. All its former constitutions were often copied from foreign countries without considering the realities of the country at all or were just there to fit the interests of the leaders of the time. In either case, the population was not involved in the elaboration process of such fundamental laws at all. The new constitution makes the difference on all these weak points. We will particularly focus our attention on the specificities, which in fact make it a legally tangible tool for conflict resolution.

The key ideas at the root of this constitution show that its elaboration was strongly based on the country's context and challenges and is concerned with finding adequate solutions to the problem. Those fundamental principles revolve around the following: equitable power sharing, establishing the rule of law aimed at improving people's social welfare and social justice, a pluralist democratic system, fighting the ideology of genocide and all its manifestations, eradication of any identity-based divisionism, promoting national unity, equality of all Rwandans and among men and women; and the constant quest for solutions through dialogue and social consensus.

The 'gender' issue has been ignored for a long time on the political scene in Rwanda. As a principle, however, the new constitution while making electoral lists makes provision for equal opportunities to women and men with regard to electoral terms of office and elective posts. Before that ideal can be achieved, the new constitution already grants 30% seats in the Chamber of Deputies (art.78).

Concerned with the idea of reducing conflicts through dialogue and consensus from grassroots level, the new constitution has been inspired from the Rwandan culture and has institutionalized the 'Gacaca' courts and has created the 'Committee of Media (Abunzi) in each sector in order to provide people with reconciliation framework prior to the submission of any conflict case to the first degree jurisdictions (art. 170).

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[65] Ibid.

Another innovation has to do with the creation of new commissions: The National Commission for the Fight against Genocide (art. 179); The Office of The Ombudsman (art. 182) The Public Service Commission (art. 181); The Office of the Auditor General of State Finances (art. 183); the Rwandan Academy for the language and Culture (art. 47) and the 'Gender' Monitoring office (art. 185).

The greatest innovation of all in this constitution has been the participatory approach used during its elaboration and finalization process. Therefore, the new constitutional law is the fruit of consensus and ingenuity from the Banyarwanda; and furthermore the latter have actually internalized the feeling that the constitution is their own achievement.

The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission as a Response to The Rwandan Conflict

By toughening the identity-based perceptions, the 1994 genocide has made Unity and Reconciliation for Rwandans as stated in Arusha Peace Agreements of 1993 (art.88), a complex and complicated matter. That situation has made it urgent and imperative to create such a commission so as to re-unify a society which has been torn apart. In this context, a law to establish a non-judicial commission for Unity and Reconciliation was adopted by the parliament in March 1999. The government of National unity set up in July 1994 has made Unity and Reconciliation the priority of its mission.

The commission comprises of three departments, which deal with daily activities so as to achieve its objectives: the Department of Civic Education, the Department of Conflict Resolution and the Department of Community Initiative Support[66]. Various annual reports present its activities in a broader way.[67]   The feelings of the population about the strategies for reconstructing the nation, especially as regards the ongoing process of reconciliation and its challenges are studied in order to bring about the necessary conditions for consolidating strong Unity and Peace[68].

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[66]For details on that commission and its activities see: the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, Annual Report (February I999 June 2000), Kigali 2000.
[67]See on that issue: les rapports annuels pour les années 2000, 2001 et 2002 et 2003.
[68]See on that issue: Sondage d'Opinion sur la Participation a la Gacaca et la Reconciliation Nationale, Kigali, 2003 ; Sondage d'Opinion sur Le Processus de Decentralisation et de Democratisation au Rwanda, Kigali, 2004.

By and large its responsibilities include particularly the following[69]:

- Preparing and coordinating the national programme for the promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation.
- Developing and implementing strategies to restore and consolidate Unity and Reconciliation among Rwandans.
- Educating and sensitizing the population on matters relating to National Unity and Reconciliation.
- Conducting research, organizing debates on Unity and Reconciliation, disseminating ideas and producing publications to strengthen that process.
- Denouncing and banning any acts, writings and attitudes of discrimination, intolerance and xenophobia and making suggestions for appropriate measures in order to eradicate divisionism among Rwandans and strengthen Unity and Reconciliation.

Since the time of its creation there have been some divergences and reluctance regarding the mission of the commission: for some, the commission was to limit itself to Unity claiming that it was too early to talk of reconciliation; for others, it sounded appropriate to talk of "Unity and Cohabitation" because reconciliation for them seemed to be impossible; there were also others who suggested that justice was only to be applied and then reconciliation would automatically come later. All of those differences in views raised a fundamental question to know who was to reconcile with whom: was it about reconciling the Hutu with the Tutsi; the killer with the victim, or new leaders with the opposition?

The genocide was not an accident. It is the consequence of ethnicity-based ideologies leading to exclusion and discrimination and which were institutionalized by successive powers.

For the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission, the concept of Unity and Reconciliation must not focus on the genocide context but on all the causes of the Rwandan evil by considering the historical and ideological framework. It is in fact the reconstruction process of the national identity and reconciliation of the Rwandan with himself/herself and with his/her nation. Furthermore, in order to reconcile Rwandans, one should reconcile their history[70].

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[69] Musoni P., Building a Democratic and Good Governance Culture: Rwanda's Experience and Perspectives, in International Conference on Elections, Kigali, 7-9 June 2004.
[70]See also Shyaka A., Conflicts en Afrique des Grands Lacs. op.cit

Under normal conditions, however, reconciliation takes place between the oppressor and the oppressed through mediation or not. In any case, prior to reconciliation and restoration of mutual friendly relationships, one who has caused harm to the other should admit and regret his/her wrong doings, apologize for them and if need be, give compensation. For the Rwandan case, none of those pre-requisites has been fully met[71]. And this constitutes one of the major obstacles for the process to be successful.

How can Rwandans be reconciled while the weight of hatred is still being felt and the genocide wounds are still too fresh? Can they be reconciled while justice is still underway, sentences have not been passed yet and some criminals, instead, are still far away from abandoning their evil plan of exterminating a portion of the Rwandan population? Should Rwanda wait for those obstacles to be overcome so that it can embark on the reconciliation process? Should the national reconciliation process start after the genocide wounds have healed? All of those questions constitute the backbone of the views of those who contend with good reason that the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission existence and activities will progressively boost the creation of favourable conditions in order for Rwandans to be reconciled.

The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission organized 3 National Summits on 16 -18 October 2000, 26 -28 October 2002 and on 7-9 May 2004 respectively. The objective of the first summit was to discuss the issue of Unity and Reconciliation in Rwanda, the causes of the conflict, the current situation, and the obstacles to Unity and possible solution to the problem. There were debates, which focused on four points including: the problem of governance and leadership; the problem of justice; the problem of poverty and the problem of instruction of history in Rwanda.

The Second Summit had seven main themes including: the problem of unity and reconciliation (outcomes), the democratization, and decentralization process; justice in Rwanda and 'Gacaca' juridictions in particular, poverty reduction policy as a strategy for unity and reconciliation, the new constitution as a means of establishing the rule of law, the strategies to end the transition period in peace; and the security issue in the Great Lakes Region and in Rwanda in particular.

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[71]In most cases' the killers do not admit their acts, do not regret them, do not apologize for them. What is even worse, the survivors were even killed after 1994. There is also negationism and revisionism which constitutes some of the key obstacles to reconciliation.

The Third Summit focused on two crucial points with regard to Rwanda in the wake of the post genocide transition, i.e. the of citizenship and 'Gacaca' jurisdictions.
The reports of all those summits have been published in the official languages in Rwanda and are available at the Secretariat of the Commission.

Solidarity camps, commonly known as 'ingando', constitute also an activity of paramount importance for the commission and for the process as well. Such camps which initially were thought out to ease the reintegration of refugees who were mainly coming from DRC, have been extended to various categories of population - civil servants, students, released prisoners and so on - In order to let them, through discussions and open debates, grasp first hand the unity and reconciliation process, its challenges and numerous opportunities[72]

This commission has been operating for some years and some questions and expectations are still without an answer: will the NURC be able to restore the Rwandan identity which has so far been torn apart? Will it be able to rebuild the Rwandans' wounded hearts and restore the unique identity, which has been so far mislabelled? Will it, throughout its mission, succeed in reconciliation and creating new positive relationships, which are mutually beneficial to Rwandans? In any case, those who are confident and optimistic have always something to say: its impact is being felt and has positively affected the national socio-political stabilization process and has cleared the ground to foster justice, equality, citizenship and peace. For the mission of the Unity and Reconciliation Commission to be successful in Rwanda, in addition to mere conviction and speeches, there should be conducive practices and behaviours. Besides, this is only possible if subsequent determination and mobilization are put in place; and this constitutes the major challenge for the elite and intellectuals, especially those involved in political matters.

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[72] Musoni P., op.cit.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Rwandan conflict is neither racial nor ethnic nor caste-based.   The Hamitic theory and divisionist ideologies, which have been derived from it, are its main leitmotiv. The 1994 genocide has drastically made it more acute, weakened and complicated its resolution but has not made it definitely impossible. Leaders and actors should be constantly aware of that.

The conflict settlement and the building of sustainable peace are indissociable from sustainable development and they condition it. Sustainable development in Rwanda and elsewhere in Africa must be always based on the human element. The latter, in his diversity and as a whole, must be the first actor and beneficiary of that development.

The re-foundation of the inclusive and reconciling national identity, the "rwandanness", is an excellent vector of effective citizenship. The convergence of the 3 wills, which constitute the roots of its existence, must be permanently taught, fostered, encouraged and strengthened. Therefore, the policy of national unity and reconciliation should remain in the heart of the government and its actions. And this is the legitimacy of the mission of the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission towards both leaders and the population.

Since most of the factors that challenge Rwanda security and peace nowadays are external, the Government should then be equipped with strategies and instruments capable of progressively catalyzing the emergence of conducive conditions for sustainable peace in our country. A thorough study on that issue should be carried out.

Within the framework of this study on "the Rwandan conflict" some solutions and mechanisms to stabilize the society have been brought to the fore. However, a study mainly focusing on strategies for peace spelled out by the Rwandan Government is highly recommended. Indeed, the research will show the strengths and weaknesses of the process and will propose ways and strategies for its improvement and consolidation.

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