



FARDC soldiers, 2012 (Fabien Blanc)

EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTIONS

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**Is Africa's Great Lakes
region balkanised?**
by Fabien Blanc

IS AFRICA'S GREAT LAKES REGION BALKANISED?

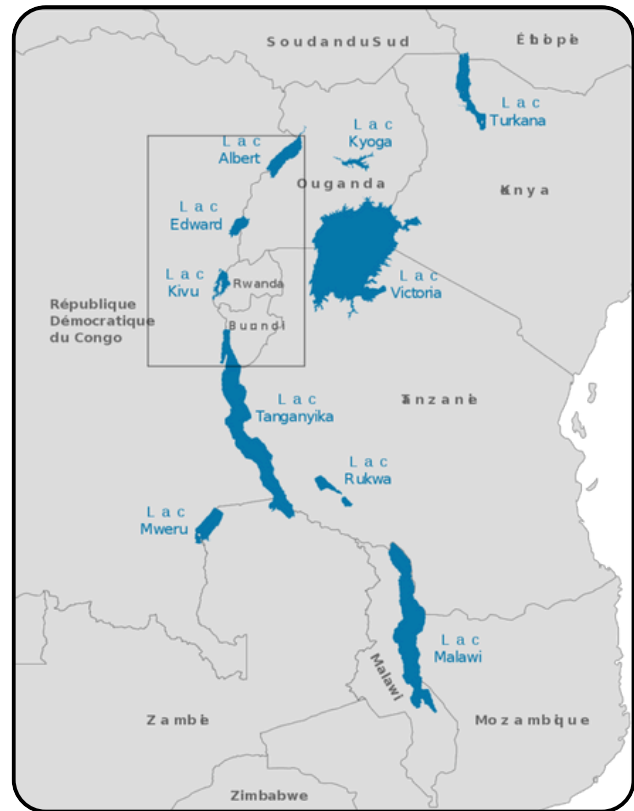
A FEW GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL FACTS

For geographers, the Great Lakes are all those of the Rift Valley [1], an area encompassing ten or so countries, from southern Africa to the southern part of the Horn.

-It is far too vast to analyse geopolitically as if it were a single entity. The expression 'Great Lakes' will be used here to describe only the area on either side of the borders that run from Lake Albert to Lake Tanganyika: in Ituri and the two Kivus, in Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, the issues are similar, the stakes are linked and the consequences conflictual.

The sub-region is complex because it is a crossroads between Central Africa and East Africa, a crossroads that is also landlocked and dependent on the two competing corridors [2] to the north (Kampala - Nairobi - port of Mombasa [3]) and south (Kigali - Dodoma - port of Dar es Salaam [4]).

Kinshasa is geographically cut off from the eastern part of its territory: to the east of the River Congo, the DRC looks out towards the Indian Ocean, its hinterland and the direction of its human and commercial flows. The vernacular language is not Lingala, but Kiswahili [5], and Goma and Bukavu are in fact much more connected to and dependent on Kampala and Kigali than on their official political capital [6].



While it is true that, following colonisation, the Great Lakes region found itself at the junction of the French-speaking and English-speaking zones, where competition between the former colonial powers was exacerbated, this no longer constitutes a relevant explanatory grid for tensions in the region. The famous Fachoda syndrome (which in the last century explained France's behaviour) is no longer relevant, except for certain sections of the French army. Even less so since the arrival of the young Macron, who was 16 in '94, and who is busy trying to clear up all the post-colonial issues (including opening the Rwandan archives).

What's more, unlike most other parts of Africa, the old borders of certain kingdoms have been largely preserved,

allowing a better coherence between population and political power [7]. While this does not preclude divergent interests, power games and border issues, the dynamics of conflict in the sub-region deserve to be analysed in the light of contemporary structural factors that are specific to it.

STRUCTURAL FACTORS IN CONFLICT

The Great Lakes are a cluster of interrelated crises that reinforce each other, with one consequence becoming a cause and vice versa. The resulting conflict is more or less open, more or less overt, but when one area of the sub-region falters, the others are immediately affected, particularly as refugees crossing the porous borders put even more pressure on already precarious situations, to the point of tipping them over.

The demographic factor is fundamental in a context of very strong pressure on land and agricultural resources, which translates into tensions over identity. Rwanda is particularly cramped, with a density of 459 inhabitants per km² [8], as is Burundi (422 inhabitants per km²). In Uganda, demographic growth is very strong, but the territory is much larger (164 inhabitants/km²). Lastly, population density in the Kivus is around 100 people/km², and even lower in Ituri (70) [9]: the theory of communicating vessels feared by the Congolese people is easy to understand (see below).

An aggravating factor is the generation gap between the vast majority of the population [10], who are very young, and elderly leaders [11], who monopolise positions of power and the resources that go with them, in 'eating-cracies [12]' where 'politics of the belly [13]' reigns, with the notable exception of Rwanda.



Lac Kivu, North Kivu, 2015 (Photo MONUSCO)

This young people's frustration with a closed future is a major source of unrest, which is not channelled through organisations that are part of civil society, although they do exist, but they are embryonic [14].

The importance of the extractive industries factor must also be taken into account, but not exaggerated [15]: in sub-Saharan Africa there are areas without mining resources, but with violent conflicts, and conversely there are mining areas with no conflicts. So the issues at stake in the sub-region are not to be understood in a traditionally geopolitical sense, i.e. with the main aim of gaining access to strategic resources and territories. Rather, they lie in the solutions that need to be put in place concomitantly to emerge from a state of semi-permanent conflict that is severely affecting tens of millions of people: the issue of conflict is the issue itself, not a consequence of external issues.

The impact of players from outside the region on local geopolitical dynamics is fairly limited, for at least two reasons:

Firstly, because the agency remains with the first parties concerned, peoples and states, especially as the causes are endogenous and any potential solution will necessarily come from them.

Secondly, while external players may have been active in the past (often for the worse), they are now mainly providers of funding, although this does not give them the capacity to act on eminently complex local situations.

The UN [16], the AU [17], the EAC [18], the CEPGL [19], the WB [20], the IMF [21]: neither governments nor recipients are

under any illusions about the role of these institutions, conferences, summits, '2030 targets', etc., which have no control over events. These bodies only seem to continue to exist out of inertia, and because to stop would be an admission of failure. They are even part of the problem in that not only do they co-opt and absorb the very talents and skills that could otherwise be driving forces, but they also suggest that the solution can only come from elsewhere, from Washington, Addis Ababa, New York or Brussels.

Congolese civilians, faced with UN inaction to prevent the recurring violence against them, have on several occasions physically attacked Monusco 'forces'; their anger at the sight of Pakistani peacekeepers who speak none of the three languages in use in the region and rarely leave their entrenched camp, or Chinese peacekeepers indulging in trafficking, or 4X4s with the UN logo parked outside nightclubs is understandable... So the problem of Monusco's glaring ineffectiveness is not just a question of funding or available troops, or even the nature of its mandate.

As for the bilateral players - China, the EU, Russia, the United States, India, Turkey, Qatar [22], etc. - they have no leverage, since they too are confronted with chaos and a pile-up of inextricable situations.

Without even mentioning the level of the Trump administration, whose isolationism was exacerbated when it came to 'shit hole countries' [23], it is quite unrealistic to think that Biden's US - although it has a military presence in Uganda - will have a plan for the sub-region.



MONUSCO peacekeepers, 2013 (Fabien Blanc)

Lastly, China is not politically interventionist and refrains from interfering, as its doctrine of effectiveness is based on strict economic realism, in particular through the signing of infrastructure contracts and the granting of loans [24]. Recently, however, it has also moved towards a strategy of diplomatic influence by obtaining various strategic posts at the United Nations, and has tried its hand at soft power in the fight against Covid-19.

France is a rather special case: not so much because of the fantasies surrounding the former colonial power (which had no presence in the sub-region[25]) but because of its eminently reprehensible role before, during and

after the Tutsi genocide in 1994. It is walking on eggshells and keeping a low profile, at least since Operation Artemis [26].

French interests are now more economic than strategic. Although it is busy in the Sahel, French diplomacy in the Great Lakes is primarily economic, in the NICT (Orange) and energy (Total [27]) sectors.

THE FANTASTIC FOUR

Against a backdrop of chain reactions and mutual destabilisation, it is difficult to study each country in isolation, especially as we are not interested in their internal situation independently of their neighbours. However, a few details on Burundi and Uganda are worth mentioning for the sake of clarity, before focusing on the heart of the problem, the Rwandan question and the crystallisation in eastern Congo.

BURUNDIAN DERELICTION

The country's situation has deteriorated so much in recent years, both in terms of development and security, that observers continue to be surprised by its capacity for self-sabotage. Its 'elites' are primarily responsible for this, and the mirror effect this produces with Rwanda is cruel.

Even if recent political developments in the country are not necessarily linked to its neighbours in the '3K' [28], the myth of the resurrection of the Belgian colony of Ruanda-Urundi under Rwandan impetus is fuelling immense mistrust among the Burundian people and leaders alike [29]. The very tense internal political situation and the opposition to President Pierre Nkurunziza also had a strong impact on Rwanda, as the two countries are very similar in terms of ethnic and political issues. Many Rwandan refugees found refuge in Burundi and vice versa, while others from both countries found themselves in neighbouring Kivu. These exchanges of populations with strong resentments against each other are a source of great tension.

However, the arrival in power of Évariste Ndayishimiye and the unexpected death of Nkurunziza on 8 June 2020 could lead to a calming of relations with Rwanda. After years of tension fuelled by mutual accusations of destabilising the current government, the foreign ministers of the two countries met on 20 October 2020 to begin talks aimed at normalising their relations. In addition, 3,000 Burundian refugees from the Mahama camp (in Rwanda) returned to their country this year, the largest wave of returns since the 2015 crisis [30].

UGANDAN FRUSTRATIONS AND AMBITIONS

Paul Kagame helped Yoweri Museveni seize power in 1986, then Museveni allowed Kagame's troops to use his country as a rear base ahead of the offensive on Kigali in 1994. When studying their relationship, we need to take into account the psychology of these two gang leaders, 'M7' (Museveni's nickname) on the one hand and the ex-young Kagame on the other, who owe each other so much and know each other so well: fratricidal quarrels are the most difficult to resolve.

Rwanda now accuses Uganda of supporting rebels hostile to it, while Uganda accuses Rwanda of maintaining a network of spies within its institutions and army. These respective accusations have led to the Rwanda now accuses Uganda of supporting rebels hostile to it, while Uganda accuses Rwanda of maintaining a network of spies within its institutions and army. These respective accusations led to the closure of their land border in early 2019.



President Kagame meets Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni in Addis Ababa, 30 January 2018.

Once allies, the two countries now maintain an attitude of exacerbated mistrust, and their rivalry remains in the background of the conflicts in eastern Congo, despite an agreement signed in August 2019 to calm the situation. A good part of Uganda's gold production actually comes from Kivu, and one of the reasons for this rivalry is competition for Congolese ore [31].

On 25 October 2019, the commander of the UPDF ground forces [32] refused to sign an agreement to develop joint military operations with Rwanda and Burundi against rebel groups operating in the DRC. The reason for this refusal was that it would have authorised the Rwandan army to deploy on Congolese territory close to the Ugandan border.

On 9 November 2019, the FARDC [33] dismantled five operational bases of the Ugandan rebel group ADF [34]... a few days after Museveni met President Félix Tshisekedi to convince him to

accept the postponement of proceedings before the ICJ [35] in exchange for cooperation from the UPDF in neutralising the ADF: It is not without reason that Rwanda, Monusco and the DRC are convinced that Uganda is offering refuge to members of the ADF.

Despite a meeting between Museveni and Kagame in Luanda in February 2020, the situation has still not been resolved. That said, the risk of fighting between Ugandan and Rwandan forces will remain very low as long as they are not both deployed in the east of the DRC: the two presidents know the mutual damage their armies could inflict on each other in an open war. What's more, all their financial efforts are currently focused on keeping their countries afloat in the face of the economic and social consequences of Covid-19.

THE RWANDAN QUESTION

In power for 26 years, Kagame can still be re-elected for two five-year terms (until 2034), following an amendment to the constitution. He also has total control over the legislature, the judiciary and, of course, the Rwandan armed forces. Efficient, well-trained and well-equipped [36], they are totally loyal to the regime.

Under international perfusion (like its neighbours), the country benefits from the sense of guilt of Western donors and the UN.

It also has a certain moral authority in Africa, which is respected, envied and feared. From a realpolitik point of view, the Rwandan democrature is producing convincing results in terms

of development and stability. Given the situation that Kagame inherited on coming to power, the expression 'Rwandan miracle' does not seem overrated. In the face of criticism of the treatment meted out to opponents, Kagame insists on the need to build a stable and solid Rwanda after the trauma of genocide. Two stumbling blocks remain: firstly, genuine reconciliation between Hutus and Tutsis is still a long way off, and secondly, the country's total population has returned to pre-genocide levels.

In the most densely populated country in Central Africa, where every hill is cultivated down to the last plot, four-fifths of the population live from agriculture, but there is virtually no uncultivated land left [37], and the fertility rate remains high. In addition, the Hutu refugees who fled at the end of the genocide are being forced to return to Rwanda by their host countries, which since 2013 have no longer been obliged to grant them refugee status. This return further increases demographic pressure and raises the risk of a resurgence of community tensions.

In December 2018 and October 2019, two attacks took place in the country, resulting in the deaths of 16 civilians and 19 rebels (killed by the army's response). The groups responsible for these attacks are the FDLR [38] (composed mainly of Hutus who took part in the genocide, but also of members too young to have experienced it) and the RNC [39] (mainly Tutsis who disagree with Kagame's policies), allegedly supported by Burundi [40] and Uganda to destabilize Kagame's regime, another reason for the strong tensions between Rwanda and these two countries. Moreover,

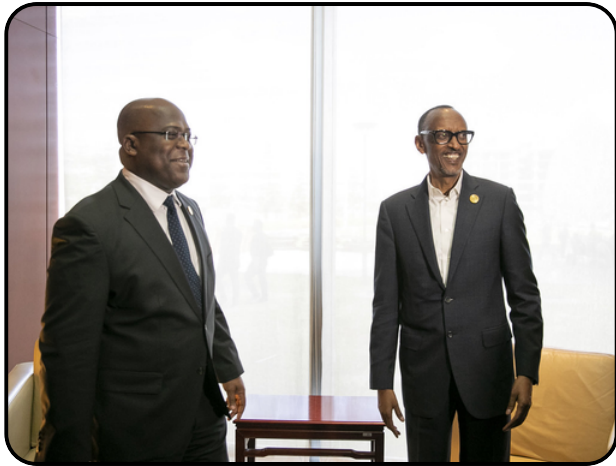


FARDC soldiers, 2012 (Fabien Blanc)

Kagame viewed the understanding between Pierre Nkurunziza and Museveni with suspicion, seeing it as an alliance against his regime. He accused Museveni of deliberately allowing the mediation between Rwanda and Burundi to fail, despite being the official mediator. As mentioned earlier, the unexpected death of Nkurunziza and the rise to power of Ndayishimiye could change the dynamics between Kigali and Bujumbura.

Rwanda is also strengthening its collaboration with the DRC, especially since Tshisekedi's election. Fortunat Biselele, a close advisor to the latter, is actively working toward rapprochement with Kagame [41]. This alliance is promoted within the framework of a tripartite discussion led by Angola,

with the stated goal of eradicating militias in Kivu. However, the expected benefits are not solely security-related: in January 2020, the DRC and Rwanda signed an agreement for a railway line between the two countries to reroute Congolese freight (notably minerals) through the southern corridor.



President Kagame meets President Félix Tshisekedi during the 32nd Ordinary Session of the African Union in Addis Ababa, 2019.

CONGOLESE CRYSTALLIZATION

It is in the eastern DRC that the impacts of various regional actors converge, along with the related crises. The three eastern provinces of Congo appear, during certain periods of conflict, to serve as a vast battleground for proxy wars. Tshisekedi can promise whatever he wants, but the eastern provinces remain beyond the control of the state [42] and its army, which is notorious for corruption, human rights violations, and even links with armed groups. The FARDC are clearly part of the problem and are sometimes perceived on the ground as just another armed group.

The First and Second Congo Wars were the humanitarian disasters we know [43], leaving the country even more

depleted and trapped in an unresolved cycle of causes and consequences that are difficult (to say the least) to break, leading to the proliferation of ethnically affiliated armed groups. In North Kivu, the land conflict between the Nande, Hunde, and Banyamulenge (Congolese Tutsis with distant Rwandan roots) is explosive. As a minority, the Banyamulenge remain the target of hostility from other communities, seen as occupiers and hunted by Mai-Mai groups [44] incited by ethnic hate speech propagated by politicians.



FARDC soldiers, 2012 (Fabien Blanc)

Economic motives of spoliation are not absent, as it is evident that a youth in distress serves as a reservoir for armed groups. Certainly manipulated by politico-economic entrepreneurs, intertribal distrust is deeply rooted, visible on the ground, and now very difficult to defuse—an undeniable reality that must be taken into account.



M23 fighters, 2012 (Fabien Blanc)

Hemas against Lendus, the people adhere to it even more than their elites, who benefit from the manipulation of the identity question, while for the people it is both about eco-territorial competition and preventive actions or revenge, fueled by fear, perpetuating an ever-growing cycle. When refugees (Hutus or Tutsis) arrive in Congo, there is violence in response; however, this new cycle of violence itself generates refugee flows, which in turn destabilize another area in a domino effect.

Identities are thus highly sensitive, and the Minembwe episode speaks volumes about the depth of the problem: on September 28, a group of villages with around 40,000 inhabitants, mostly Banyamulenge, was granted the status of a commune. However, the Minister of

Decentralization [45], himself a Banyamulenge, is a former member of the RCD, one of the former pro-Rwandan rebellions (between 1998 and 2002). A national scandal, intense activity on social media [46], and calls for mobilization due to renewed fears of a potential balkanization of the DRC.

The Banyamulenge created their own self-defense militia, the Twigwanehos, also accused of atrocities, and counting among its ranks deserters from the Congolese army, as well as young people from neighboring countries coming to lend support to the community. Rwanda does not even need to intervene directly for the Rwandan-origin population to be blamed. The fact that the country

blamed. The fact that the country intervened in the past fuels current fantasies; its actions at the time have consequences today. Young people were trained and armed, and it is difficult to reverse that.

Thus, when in 2012 the M23 [47] took Goma, the events of the First Congo War seemed to repeat themselves [48]. Is there a will for Rwandan expansionism? Should we validate the idea of a "Tutsi land prepared by creeping balkanization," spread on social media and by certain politicians? Probably not, but the concept remains devastating because it is widely accepted by the populations of the Kivus and Ituri. They have not forgotten the previous wars, and they pass on this memory, as well as the image of the Tutsis as hereditary enemies [49]. In fact, the Rwandan-origin diaspora is not large enough to impose a partition [50]. Furthermore, the South Sudanese exception [51] is the perfect counterexample that rehabilitates the inviolability of borders, which the AU should never have deviated from.

In the meantime, there is an habituation to violence by generations who have known nothing else, and each episode of violence adds another piece to the machine. Every community talks about peace to the media, NGOs, and the UN, while preparing for revenge: the situation has deteriorated even further over the last two years, which is not surprising since stability in this context could only be apparent. Furthermore, DDR [52] programs are extremely inadequate, and the conflict resolution mechanism often resembles a reward for those who have the power to cause harm: one

literally bargains to lay down arms, only to take them up again a year later under a different name, with no post-conflict justice.

Tshisekedi did try to invite his three counterparts for a meeting in Goma in September 2020, but he faced a barely diplomatic refusal from Rwanda and Burundi. While no country has a rational interest in allowing the situation to escalate into an interstate conflict, neither does any country truly control the situation, and there are no real mediators [53]. Moreover, even if they were to genuinely commit to resolving these intertwined conflicts, managing to integrate the various armed groups with the help of an effective external mediator, the stabilization of the Great Lakes region will not be effective until structural issues are addressed: to insist once again, it is primarily the economic and demographic saturation of Burundi, Rwanda, the two Kivus, and Ituri—overpopulated and with economies mainly based on agriculture—that triggers the numerous land conflicts exploited by politico-economic-identity-based warlords.

CONCLUSION

In this subregion, as in others, there are conflicts between herders and farmers, driven by growing pressure (demographics) on increasingly scarce resources (erosion and climate change). However, here the consequences of population displacement due to the Rwandan Tutsi genocide, followed by the country's takeover by the FPR, further exacerbate tensions. Moreover, a Rwandan diaspora was already present in the DRC, and while the xenophobia stemming from this is tragically typical, it is again intensified by the potential for intervention from the small but powerful neighbor.

As long as there is Rwandan mistrust of the Congolese chaos that serves as a

refuge for hostile forces to this traumatized country, and Congolese mistrust of the small neighbor willing to intervene when it deems necessary, the cycle will continue to perpetuate itself. The grievances of all the actors [54] are legitimate, and the obligation to coexist is inescapable. Thus, one can understand both the indigenous farmer who feels invaded and the farmer of Rwandan origin, settled in the DRC for generations (or even the one more recently displaced by war). One can understand both Kagame's trauma, walking into a country on the graves of his people, and the frustration of the Congolese giant with clay feet, facing the threat of its neighbor (Rwanda has been a kingmaker, so it is understandable that it is still suspected of expansionist desires [55]).



Coltan mine of Luwovo near Rubaya, North Kivu, March 18, 2014. MONUSCO/Sylvain Liechti

The dismantling of such an interconnected conflict system cannot be gradual, because all its components must be addressed at once, or the resurgence of even one factor may reignite the cycle of violence. Some have therefore proposed a quasi-UN protectorate with a Marshall Plan. The alternative is to let the process go through its Darwinian course, which is, of course, unthinkable (or rather unthought of, given the exhaustion of the actors who testify behind closed doors).

The populations, aspiring for peace and reluctant to join large conflicts, make the risk of the subregion igniting low, though not null. The greatest fear is ultimately a continuation of conflicts of varying intensity, and their corollary: even more displacement of populations, but towards more distant and less populated areas [56]—because they are less fertile—relying on international food aid to prevent their subsequent destabilization.

It seems to us that the genocide is still on everyone's mind, suggesting to each group that anything is possible, even the worst. Many unfounded allegations and silences stem from this, and rumors play a significant role in the economy of conflicts in the subregion. Sometimes they are enough, in a self-fulfilling prophecy, as they *"cause community retreat, (and) feed identity processes based on the construction and rejection of an Other whose demonization is amplified by the media and their hate speech"* [57].

The raw truth is that the matrix is the people, that heads of state can do little about it (except, in this case, Kagame, by infiltrating the problems), and that identities cannot be instrumentalized:

they escape and become autonomous in ethnic conflicts, and by then, it is too late. It becomes very difficult to turn back once the blood has been spilled. One then leaves the political realm and enters the communal one. And the more everything goes wrong and the world is dangerous, the more people feel the need to take refuge within their community, like in a cocoon, thus worsening the initial problem. How then can one put the tribal genie back in its bottle, halt the cycle without relying on the miraculous emergence of a local Mandela, who apparently succeeded in reconciling a people against all expectations, but only for a time?

Sources

- [1] The three largest lakes in the area, from south to north, are Lakes Malawi, Tanganyika, and Victoria (the latter, as large as Ireland, is the source of the White Nile which joins the Blue Nile – originating in Ethiopia – at Khartoum). Other lakes include Mweru, Rukwa, Kivu, Edward, Albert, and Turkana: although smaller, each of them is still five to ten times the size of Lake Geneva.
- [2] This has exacerbated the Kenya-Tanzania rivalry, which neither the character nor methods of the recently re-elected President Mafuguli, nor border tensions related to the fight against COVID-19, will ease in the medium term.
- [3] Strengthened by the railway under construction by the Chinese company Afristar.
- [4] Especially since the pipeline route to transport oil from Lake Albert has been set to the south of Lake Victoria, which is less direct but safer than the route ending at Lamu (Kenya), at the Somali border.
- [5] And French is being rivaled by English, the official language in Uganda and now Rwanda.
- [6] The capital of a state that can also be described as failed or predatory, which may be worse.
- [7] Thus, contemporary Uganda originates schematically from the kingdom of Buganda, populated by Bagandas, speaking Luganda, just as contemporary Rwanda originates from the kingdom of Rwanda (which was even larger at some points in history than the current territory), populated by Banyarwandas, speaking Kinyarwanda.
- [8] For comparison, 115 in the EU and 105 in France.
- [9] These figures depend on the sources, and statistical data are very patchy and outdated.
- [10] In the four countries studied, those aged 0-14 make up 41-47% of the total population.
- [11] Museveni, for example, came to power 34 years ago.
- [12] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2PnNVn11XdQ>
- [13] According to Bastien François, "the expression, of Cameroonian origin, refers to a conception of the state apparatus seen as a place to access wealth, privileges, power, and prestige for oneself and one's clan members."
- [14] With exceptions, offering hope even if minority, such as the movements Lucha or Filimbi.
- [15] Coltan, gold, etc., and, recently, oil exploration, with notably the British company Soco in the Virungas or Total in Lake Albert.
- [16] United Nations.
- [17] African Union.
- [18] East African Community.
- [19] Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries.
- [20] World Bank.
- [21] International Monetary Fund.
- [22] Rwanda's situation, being surrounded by hostile neighboring countries, is familiar to it.

Sources

- [23] With the support of MONUSCO, they are gradually resuming bilateral cooperation with the Congolese army (through training of soldiers, provision of intelligence, equipment, and barracks), while supporting Tshisekedi's diplomatic efforts to facilitate exchanges with his counterparts in the subregion. For while Museveni and Kagame benefited in the 1990s from Washington's favor, seeing them as the new generation of African leaders, their longevity and style of governance have changed the situation.
- [24] Thus, Uganda's diplomatic and economic relations with China continue to strengthen, both as sources of imports and through the growing number of Chinese companies operating in the country. Investments also concern extractive infrastructures, and the Ugandan government seems determined to deepen its relations with Beijing. The risk of over-indebtedness to China is also increasing year by year. Moreover, while 90% of Congolese cobalt and copper is exported to China, it mostly comes from Katanga.
- [25] DRC, Rwanda, and Burundi being former Belgian colonies.
- [26] A military mission led by the EU in 2003, under the authority of the UN Security Council, to end fighting in Ituri, in which France played a leading role.
- [27] Total, in collaboration with the Chinese company CNOOC, is leading a large project (Tilanga) to exploit hydrocarbons in Lake Albert, on the Ugandan side.
- [28] Kigali, Kinshasa, Kampala.
- [29] Bujumbura officially accused Rwanda of fabricating the Red-Tabara rebel group, which launched an attack on Burundi on October 22, 2019.
- [30] In Tanzania, too, Burundian refugees are numerous, mainly in the northwest of the country, especially since the 2015 crisis. On the other hand, most Hutu refugees from post-94 Rwanda have already returned to their home country, in a common policy between the two states.
- [31] Kagame is now working to change the image of his country, which was long seen as a platform for illegal Congolese mineral trafficking, into a hub for traceability and environmental respect.
- [32] Uganda People's Defence Force.
- [33] Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- [34] Allied Democratic Forces.
- [35] A lawsuit filed by the DRC in 1999 against Kampala for compensation for its military actions in the country.
- [36] Since 2010, mainly with Russian-origin equipment.
- [37] Not to mention soil erosion and climate change.
- [38] Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda.
- [39] Rwandan National Congress.
- [40] The December 2018 attack was launched from Burundian territory.
- [41] This support is not unanimous; for instance, François BeyaKasonga, special advisor to Tshisekedi for security, regularly reminds the Congolese president of the frequent and illegal incursions by the Rwandan army.
- [42] In practice, there is no administrative, security, or other sovereignty.

Sources

- [43] At least 200,000 deaths [source: http://adrass.net/WordPress/wp-content/uploads/2010/12/Surmortalite_en_RDC_1998_2004.pdf]
- [44] Militia of Congolese farmers.
- [45] Azarias Ruberwa.
- [46] Who revel in the ever-unifying themes of "fifth column" and "Trojan horse."
- [47] Supported by Kigali.
- [48] The FDLR (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda) remain a constant nuisance in the region since their creation in 2000, the deadlock being that their return to Rwanda is the official position of the Congolese authorities, which the individuals concerned obviously reject. Paul Kagame admitted without hesitation in a 2001 interview that "from the beginning, we had a problem in Congo: that of former soldiers (ex-FAR) and militias involved in the genocide (the Interhamwe)."
- [49] The jealousy, which was traditionally that of farmers towards those who owned cattle, a factor of mobility as well as wealth accumulation, is now, it seems to us, compounded by that of the Congolese citizen before Rwanda's successes. In front of "the Switzerland of the Great Lakes," former Zairians might wonder what their Kivus would look like under Tutsi administration?
- [50] But apparently significant enough to fuel fears, conspiracy theories, resentment, and xenophobia, as seen in Ivory Coast against Sahelians or in South Africa against Zimbabweans, Mozambicans, Nigerians... and Congolese.
- [51] Became independent in 2011, with the results that are known.
- [52] Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration.
- [53] Despite Angolan attempts.
- [54] Except those of the FDLR and Interhamwe, of course.
- [55] Referencing the rise to power of Laurent-Désiré Kabila in 1997. The Congolese also know that the Rwandan army can enter their country without encountering much resistance: their sense of humiliation in this regard is comparable to that of Arab countries towards Israel (which, it is true, benefits from US support).
- [56] Migratory flows also head, albeit to a lesser extent, to the already overcrowded slums of large regional cities, as well as to South Africa.
- [57] Roland Pourtier, geographer and specialist in contemporary Africa, who analyzed the effect of rumor in the context of ethnic tensions in the Kivus.