

H.E President Kagame,

H.E the First Lady,

Y.E's the Heads of State and Government,

Leaders of delegations,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I greet you and convey to Your Excellencies and the People of Rwanda the greetings of the People of Uganda.

Rwanda, along with Burundi, Uganda, parts of North Western Tanzania, Eastern Congo, Western Kenya, is part of the Great Lakes area that has, since several millennia, been occupied by the interlacustrine Bantus, Nilotics, Nilo-Hamitic and the Sudanic peoples.

The Rwanda people themselves are Bantu, part of the interlacustrine Bantus.

This area of the Great Lakes is unique because it had a quite advanced level of centralization, civilization and state formation (kingdoms and chiefdoms); advanced agriculture and livestock industry; unique industrial practices such as the processing of bananas into alcohol and juice, the milk industry, the cereals of sorghum and millet and their derivatives, etc., etc.; the science of converting iron-ore (obutare) into iron was also advanced — totally vertically integrated — as was the workings on other metals such as brass (emiringa), copper (ekikomo), etc., etc. There was also the unique technology of making textiles out of the ficus trees (emitooma).

In the socio-economic spheres, a feudal system was sitting atop symbiotic societies of agriculturalists (abahinzi), cattle keepers (abarozi), craftsmen such as blacksmiths (abaheesi), Wood workers (ababaizi), pottery workers (ababumbyi), textile workers for bark cloth (embugu, ebitooma) known as abakomagyi, leather workers (abaremi), etc. and professionals such as medicine men, magicians, musicians, etc.

At the top, the system could be parasitic where the kings and other rulers could expropriate property from citizens (kunyaga), do partial expropriation (kunogora), practice obuhakye — a form of serfdom, Kibooko etc.

The rulers could also take tribute (emitoiyo, amatuuro in Kinyarwanda) from the ordinary people.

At the base of the society, however, the system was symbiotic with the different groups specializing in crops, livestock, fishing (abajubi), seamen (abarimbi), craftsmen (as already narrated), medicine men (abafumu, abaraguzi) and, then, exchanging products (okuchurika) — barter trade — with one another.

It is, therefore, a historic crime that external forces, working with local traitors, could turn a symbiotic society into the theatre of the most fiendish reactionary crimes — genocide.

To the credit of one of the Kings, Rudahigwa, he had abolished obuhake and Kibooko. He also enforced sharing of economic resources (cows and land) between chiefs and ordinary people, both Hutus and Tutsis.

Unfortunately, he was assassinated as was Prince Louis Rwagasore of Burundi. Rudahigwa and Rwagasore were patriots and Pan-Africanists. That is why the parasitic forces grew desperate and started using sectarianism, assassinations and genocide.

All that did not save those traitors. Where they still exist, it is on account of the mistakes of the International community.

Trade, within the Great Lakes and between the Great Lakes and the Coast of the Indian Ocean, was booming although inconvenienced by the greed of the egotistical chiefs on the trade routes.

Ruswaruura of Bujinja distinguished himself in that skill of extorting “hongo” — tax from travelers.

The benevolent Kings like Rumanyika, Oruguundu, of Karagwe, on the other hand, encouraged the travelers and traders and assisted them.

The fatal weakness of the Chiefs and Kings of that time was the failure to see the wisdom of political integration.

Although the Europeans spent about 400 years at the coast of the Indian Ocean before they had the capacity (automatic weapons, the steam engine and quinine) to penetrate in the interior of the continent, the myopic kings and chiefs, engrossed in self glorification and, sometimes, tyranny, could not see the wisdom of political integration in order to defend themselves against the strangers (the Bazungu) that were frequenting the coast of East Africa ever since 1498 when Vasco Da Gama went around the Cape of Good Hope.

Eventually, that ego-centrism of our kings and chiefs proved fatal. Once the Europeans had used the 4 centuries to advance themselves in technology, they called the Congress of Berlin in 1884 to partition Africa among the British, the French, the Germans, the Portuguese, the Spanish and the Dutch in South Africa. Except for Ethiopia, the whole of Africa was conquered. This was a big shame for Africa.

That interaction with Europe came with the slave trade, mass killings, imported epidemics of small pox and other diseases, colonialism and the looting of our natural resources.

When Africa joined the worldwide anti-colonial struggle, along with India, Indonesia, Indo-China, China, parts of Latin America and some parts of the Middle East, assisted by the socialist countries (the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, etc.), also assisted by the wars among the imperialist countries (1st and 2nd World Wars), we regained our freedom.

This made certain circles among the imperialists very desperate. That is how they launched the

criminal schemes of genocide, mass killings, assassinations of prominent political leaders, the secession schemes of Katanga and Biafra, etc., etc.

Rwanda, one of the most highly centralized indigenous states, fell a victim to these schemes.

A bankrupt pseudo-ideology of dividing the People of Rwanda, who have got a common language and culture, was hatched and promoted in the form of sectarianism.

While there could have been antagonistic relations between the rulers (Abanyiginya and other nobles) and the people, there could be no antagonistic relations between ordinary Batutsi and Bahutu.

Those groups had a symbiotic relationship that I have talked about above. Specialization in production and, then, exchange of products.

You could not have an ordinary Mututsi extorting tribute from an ordinary Muhutu. It is only the rulers that would take tribute (amaturo) from both the Tutsis and Hutus.

Using their military force (e.g. Kakomankongyi – helicopters), the Colonialists supported a criminal sectarian group of Gregoire Kayibanda whom they had trained in their Seminaries in Europe, to take power and launch the first genocide of 1959 to 1963.

That genocide, apart from killing hundreds of thousands, produced a Tutsi diaspora that, eventually, numbered 1 million.

The reactionary regime told these people that they could not go back to their Country because it was over-crowded. When that bankrupt group was challenged by the RPF, their answer was genocide.

In spite of killing 1 million people, the traitor criminal regime could not defeat the revolutionary forces. They fled to link up with their ideological colleague – Mobutu Sese Seko of Congo – Kinshasa.

That is the tragic story of Rwanda, of Burundi, of Congo, of Uganda, of Sudan etc. – where local reactionaries link up with the foreign parasitic interests to cause haemorrhage of life, on an unimaginable scale in Africa and do so with impunity.

I want to congratulate the People of Rwanda and the RPF for defeating these traitors and ensuring that they will never come back to kill the People of Rwanda again.

We all can witness the economic growth in Rwanda and its stabilization. As a veteran patriot of this area, I would like to warn those who hobnob with the genocidaires to know that they will have to contend with the patriotic forces that defeated the traitors with their external backers when they were still much weaker.

We are now much stronger in every sense of the word: politically, militarily, socially and

economically. The People of Rwanda should know that they can always count on the People of Uganda. Uganda is steadfast in the support for African emancipation.

Again, I congratulate the RPF for defeating the traitors. I call them traitors because they created unprincipled and pseudo contradictions among the Banyarwanda.

It is good that you have transcended that phase by relying on patriotism to defeat sectarianism.

I wish you continued prosperity.

I thank you.

Yoweri Kaguta Museveni  
President of the Republic of Uganda