

Speech

by

*H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni
President of the Republic of Uganda*

15th January, 2014

Luanda, Angola

**His Excellency Eduardo Dos Santos,
President of the Republic of Angola,**

**Your Excellencies, the Heads of State and Government,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

I greet Your Excellencies.

As I said in South Africa, the concept of the Great Lakes is not a new one but an ancient one in our area. Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Eastern Congo, South Sudan have, since time immemorial, been linked to the East African Coast of Zanzibar through mainland Tanzania. We would get textiles (*emyenda*), glass beads (*enkwaanzi*) and guns from or through the Coast and we would send elephant tusks (*emiino*) to the Coast. We would also send them bark cloth (*ebitooma-embugu*) and iron-ore (*obutare*) products (hoes, pangas, spears, arrows, etc). Out of the Congo forest, we would get copper products (*emiriinga*), animal skin products (*amooshe*), timber products as well as ivory products (*engoro*). The word lake is translated as “*Nyaanja*” or “*Nyaanza*” in many of the Bantu dialects of the area.

That is why you hear of the *Kinyaanja* of Malawi, Zambia and Mozambique and of *Nyaanza* province in Kenya. Actually, in my other

role as a linguist of African dialects, I have proposed that the interlacustrine Bantu dialects of the Great Lakes found in Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Eastern Congo, North-Western and Western Tanzania, Western Kenya and even, Northern Zambia and possibly Northern Angola, should be given the collective name of *Kinyaanja North* to distinguish them from the *Kinyaanja* of Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique. In that connection, I have not yet understood why Malawi and Mozambique are not part of the Great Lakes' fraternity because, historically and culturally, they are very much part of this region. Therefore, the Cushitic, Nilotic, Bantu and Semitic peoples of this area are either similar or linked culturally. Besides, as mentioned above, they have been trading among themselves for millennia. It was colonialism that interfered, for some decades, with these linkages by establishing Belgian, British, French and Portuguese colonies in the different parts of this vast region.

It is good that we have re-assembled this region under the ICGLR, COMESA and EAC.

The conflicts that have afflicted this area are actually linked. They, essentially, came from three sources as indicated below:

- (i) the colonial manipulation of the indigenous castes (occupational specializations) of Rwanda and Burundi in the colonial period, climaxing into the first genocide organized by the Belgians in Rwanda in 1959 and 1960;
- (ii) the wrong foreign and domestic policies of Mobutu of, on the other hand, harbouring enemies of neighbours (Angola, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Brazaville) and, on the other hand, denying the rights of some of their own people as not being Congolese; and
- (iii) the failure by the people of Sudan (the former United Sudan) to resolve the issues of their diversity resulting in the prolonged civil war in that country, involving eventually, Uganda.

The Belgian sponsored genocide of 1959-60 in Rwanda created a Tutsi diaspora that dispersed in the region (Uganda, Congo, Burundi and Tanzania).

After being told by Kayibanda and Habyarimana for 30 years that they can never go back to their country because the people who had remained in Rwanda and taken their property had multiplied and, therefore, there was no space for them in the country of their heritage, they organized (under the RPF) and launched the attack of 1990 on Rwanda. The sectarian and bankrupt Hutu regime, spurred on by the greedy foreigners who are always hovering around with a lot of confusion and shallowness, thought that genocide was the solution to the “Tutsi” problem — just like Hitler with the Jews of Europe. Hence, to the bankrupt Hutu regime of Rwanda, there was a “Tutsi” problem, just like to Hitler was a “Jewish” problem in Europe. The second genocide of Rwanda of 1994 did not save the Hutu regime. The Hutu regime fled with a million people to Goma, Congo, with arms. With Mobutu’s

support, they were threatening to re-invade Rwanda and finish their genocide programme. That is what started the first Congo war of 1996 that resulted in the down fall of Mobutu. Apart from Mobutu threatening to re-launch the Hutu reactionaries into Rwanda, he had also started a campaign against the Banyarwanda of Eastern Congo, especially the Tutsi — targeting a group known as Banyamulenge.

Up to now the presence of the Rwanda genocidaires in Eastern Congo has not been solved — leading to endless problems such as the 2nd Congo war, the Nkunda uprising, the M-23, etc. All these have been linked to the original problem of the Rwandese genocidaires in Eastern Congo. Yet, this should never have been a problem if there was clarity. In order to avoid the Hutu diaspora of 1994 substituting for the Tutsi diaspora of 1959, the solution should have involved the right of return by those new exiles but with accountability for the crimes they committed using a graduated scale of separating the misleaders from the misled and being harsh on the former and lenient on the latter. If there are those that did not want to go back to Rwanda, they should have been removed from the border to deep inside Congo and should have been disarmed. This has never been done conclusively. This must be done. All the other eruptions have been the consequences of this mistake and the one of denying the Banyarwanda of Eastern Congo, especially the Tutsi, either overtly or covertly, the inalienable right to the land of their ancestry. To deal with the consequences without dealing with the cause is not a durable solution.

Meanwhile, the failure to handle the issue of diversity in the Sudan had generated a Civil War right from 1956, at the dawn of Independence of that country. The Southern Sudanese who spearheaded the rebellion against the Arab Government of the whole of Sudan after independence

were very closely linked to our own Nilotic and Bantu peoples of Uganda, Kenya, Congo, Tanzania and Ethiopia. Therefore, some of the elements in Khartoum were always very suspicious of the neighbours. When our Movement won the protracted civil war in Uganda in 1986, against the fascist dictators of Uganda (Idi Amin and groups), some elements in Khartoum declared it as un acceptable and resolved to remove us, by force of arms from Government. Working with remnants of the old regimes (Obote, Amin, etc), they sponsored two groups: Kony's so called LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) claiming to be Christians and ADF (Allied Democratic Front) claiming to establish Islamic fundamentalist rule in Uganda which is 86% Christian and where the tribes mainly practiced symbiosis of barter trade even before colonialism, apart from some few inter-tribal wars that were being promoted by myopic chiefs. We defeated the two groups. Where did they flee to? They fled to the poorly controlled areas of Eastern Congo and CAR. At one time, the Congo Government allowed us to flush Kony out of Garamba National Park. Otherwise, there has been the exercise of terrorism conservation in Eastern Congo supervised by the UN all these years — since 2003 when our army withdrew from Congo under the Lusaka Agreement. Fortunately, we are working well with the Congo Government to end the presence of the ADF in Eastern Congo and also our problems with Khartoum have improved.

Last year, the democratically elected Government of CAR was removed by a bankrupt, reactionary group known as Seleka while regional forces looked on. This bankrupt group entered the heavily populated Bangui, murdered people, raped women and looted the meagre properties of those already impoverished people. This is a real betrayal of our people. Why should we allow or tolerate armed groups overthrowing elected Governments in African unless they show that they are fighting

genocidaires? After all, we should not forget that Hitler was elected in 1933. Even elected Governments can lose legitimacy if they do not respect, especially, the right to life and property. You cannot say that an elected Government has a right to kill people extra-judicially or loot their property.

Now that that bankrupt regime has collapsed in Bangui, I hope new problems will not be created for the people of CAR by those who are wheeling and dealing targeting the natural resources of CAR. Let the people elect their leaders freely, without interference or manipulation and let the elected leaders respect the legitimate interests of all the citizens of the country without discrimination.

Recently, we had an outbreak of serious fighting in our young brother country of South Sudan . There are two versions of how that fighting started. The Government says that there was an attempted coup which was defeated in Juba but spreading to the Provinces: Bentiu, Jonglei and Malkal. The opposition says that it is the Government that provoked the fighting by trying to disarm some of the soldiers on a sectarian basis. The truth will come out with time. What is clear is that the problem started within the SPLM, the ruling party, as a power struggle. You detect ideological, organizational and discipline issues in this situation. Why should there be sectarian undertones or overtones in a political debate? Why should intraparty matters go public before they are resolved within the party? Why should we have so many reported killings, lootings of people's property, etc. but never hear of soldiers who are executed for committing those crimes by the different actors in these situations? We were able to stabilize Uganda in security terms but also in politics by disciplining the Army. You kill a person or you rape

a woman, you are a dead person in the very place where you committed the crime.

Coming back to the issue of whether there was an attempted coup in South Sudan or not, the question is: *“If Riak Macher did not plan a coup in Juba, then why did his supporters capture Malakal, Bor, Akobo, etc?”* The SPLA has flushed them out of Bentiu and Malakal. Only the other day, 13th of January, the SPLA and elements of our army had a big battle with these rebel troops at a point about 90 kms from Juba where we inflicted a big defeat on them. Unfortunately, many lives were lost on the side of the rebels. We also took casualties and also had some dead. By yesterday evening, the Government of South Sudan, with the support from our troops, had regained control of Jemeza and the SPLA troops, on their own, had gone ahead to Sudan Safaari. In my opinion, if Riak Machar had not planned a coup and it had all been mistakes on the Government side, he could have done two things: withdraw to a remote area of the country to avoid attack and to start talks unconditionally so as to resolve the problem quickly and not to protract it. The SPLM party should resolve their disagreements within those structures. If some people are not satisfied with the SPLM, they should go out and form another Party and the Government should neither stop them nor impede them. However, to turn a political problem into a military one, having mismanaged the political problem itself in the first place is not acceptable.

In my view, the problems, of the Great Lakes, as already stated have been ideological, organizational and the discipline of the actors. The manipulation of tribes and religions is a pseudo ideology — is a false ideology — not reflecting the interests of the people but those of the opportunists and parasites — spurred on by foreign interests.

I always like to use the example of my tribe the Banyankore, who are cattle keepers and grow bananas, coffee and tea. How does my tribe benefit me as an individual producer of the four commodities? I produce milk and beef and so do my neighbours. They cannot buy from me because they are producing similar products and nor can I buy from them. The people who make me rich and prosperous are the people of Kampala, the people of Kigali in Rwanda, the people of Nairobi in Kenya, the people of Bukoba and Mwanza in Tanzania, the people of Juba in South Sudan, the people of Eastern Congo and Burundi, who buy my milk and beef. The only support the people of my tribe render me, is that by producing similar products in big volumes, they make processing and marketing easy. Even if I only cared about my tribe, I would have to care about the whole of Uganda, the whole of East African, the whole of the Great Lakes because it is those that give us prosperity by buying what is produced in my locality. It is, therefore, the parasites that promote this pseudo – ideology. With the conflicts in Eastern Congo and South Sudan, the food prices in Uganda have collapsed to the detriment of the farmers that were getting used to the higher prices because of the bigger demand in the region. It is only the parasites who do not engage in production that do not see these issues.

The last problem of the Great Lakes is lack of infrastructure — roads, the railways, electricity, piped water and ICT backbone. It shows you the great potential of the region that business is booming, provided there is peace, even when the infrastructure is absent. What would happen if there was peace, infrastructure and free — trade? The sky would be the limit.

Down with the pseudo –ideology, down with opportunism, down with parasitism, down with the indiscipline and impunity of soldiers and long live infrastructure development, peace and socio transformation of the Great Lakes.

I am always very happy to come to Luanda, Angola, because I started working with the MPLA in 1967 in Dar-es-Salaam with Dr. Augustinho Noto, Dr. Boavida and other comrades. I am always very happy to associate with the old freedom fighters in Angola, Tanzania, Mozambique, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, etc. It is always a pleasure to be here.

I thank Your Excellencies.

15th January, 2014

Luanda, Angola

