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THE QUESTION OF THE RECENT EXPULSION OF RWANDANS FROM TANZANIA¹

Charles GASARASI

Abstract: From 2000 to 2006, more than 33 000 Rwandan immigrants were expelled from Tanzania. Most of them were expelled without regard to international conventions on rights and duties of countries that host legal or illegal immigrants. Tanzanian authorities accused the expelled persons of illegal settlement and implication in various crimes. The expelled immigrants, on the other hand, deplore acts of injustice, corruption, humiliation and theft of their goods perpetrated against them by Tanzanian local and regional authorities of Kagera Region. A correct diplomacy, facilitated by the « Joint Technical Team » set up to resolve the expulsion related problems, has helped to moderate deterioration of relations between Rwanda and Tanzania, even though some problems still remain unresolved.

Sommaire : Depuis 2000 jusqu'en 2006, plus de 33,000 ressortissants Rwandais ont été expulsés de la Tanzanie. La plupart de ces immigrants ont été chassés d'une manière peu ou pas respectueuse de toute convention internationale relative aux droits et devoirs des pays qui hébergent des étrangers en situation légale et illégale. Les autorités tanzaniennes reprochent aux expulsés la résidence sans papiers et des implications dans divers crimes. Les expulsés déplorent quant à eux des actes d'injustice, de corruption, d'humiliation et de vol dont ils ont été victimes au vu et au su des autorités locales et régionales de la région de Kagera en Tanzanie. Une correcte diplomatie soutenue par le « Joint Technical Team », mis en place pour résoudre les problèmes issus des opérations d'expulsion, a pu tempéré le refroidissement des relations bilatérales entre la Tanzanie et le Rwanda même si quelques différends restent toujours irrésolus.

1. Introduction

In recent years (2000, 2003, 2006), Tanzania has frequently carried out formal round up operations and expulsions against alleged Rwandan illegal immigrants, particularly in Kagera region where most of them reside. In the latest expulsions, which began in March 2006, Rwanda received 16,022 expellees from Tanzania between May 2006 and March 2007, while an estimated 17,000 others were expected for the remaining part of 2007.² This became great cause for concern not only on the part of the Government of Rwanda, but also the general population. Although both the Government of Rwanda and the population were willing to welcome back the expellees, despite the logistical burdens involved, there was a widespread sense of indignation and resentment every time the horror stories of expulsion from Tanzania were told. At another level, there was

¹ Paper presented at the International Conference on "TRANSITION AND PEACE IN THE GREAT LAKES REGION", Kigali, 31st May-1st June 2007.

² MINALOC, Report, 30/3/2007

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

a general feeling among Rwandans that Tanzania was against Rwanda's admission to the East African Community, which was still under negotiation at the time.

Tanzania has justified its operations for cracking down on illegal immigrants, including Rwandans, on several grounds. The most common is that: illegal immigrants are major culprits in murders, armed robberies, cattle theft, poaching of wild game, attacking vehicles on high ways, attacking villages and stealing foodstuffs, unlawful possession of arms and armaments, illicit trade in arms, and environmental degradation caused by overgrazing.

On the other hand, Rwandans who have experienced the frequent round ups and subsequent repatriation have expressed complaints and allegations. The most common are: confiscation of their herds by local authorities, immigration officials, police, and other predatory authorities; confiscation of their money by the same; beatings; burning of their houses; asking them to give bribes in order to obtain legal immigration papers; destroying their legitimate immigration papers if they don't accept to pay bribes; forcing them to leave their properties behind; causing family separation; blacklisting of those who submit complaints to the Sub-Joint Technical Committee³; reluctance by Tanzanian authorities to expedite the processing and verification of legal immigration papers, and expulsion of some who fulfil immigration conditions.

In this article, an explanation is provided as to who these "illegal" Rwandans in Tanzania were; how the illegal status for some of them evolved; how Tanzania justifies the expulsions; and how a mix of political, ideological and other factors may have made Rwandans (particularly those perceived to be of Tutsi origin) vulnerable to xenophobic resentment in Tanzania. We finally argue that appropriate diplomacy helped to avert a potential degeneration of bilateral relations between the two countries.

2. Categories of Rwandans Who Migrated to What Is Now Tanzania

Rwandans who migrated to present-day Tanzania over a long period are not a homogeneous group. They consist of the following categories:

1. Some individual families (number unknown), which fled the country after falling out with traditional rulers, particularly chiefs, mainly in the 1920s and 1930s (during the

³ This was a joint team of officials from both governments assigned to investigate the allegations on both sides and recommend proper action.

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

power struggle between the Kabare-Kanjogera Axis, the Kayondo-Colonial Administration Axis, power losing King Musinga, and demoralized Abiru)⁴. Some of these immigrants became successful pastoralists, particularly in present-day Kagera and Tabora regions.

2. In addition, some other Rwandans, due to many factors including looking for better pastoral land after some conflicts with neighbours and relatives, decided to cross the rivers of Kagera into the neighbouring Kingdoms of Karagwe; Bugufi and Bushubi (present Ngara); Biharamulo; Bukoba; Geita and Sengerema; Mwanza; Musoma; Shinyanga; Tabora; Kigoma and Rukwa. So social relationships in those Diasporas grew and exchange visits and intermarriages thrived. This was already happening during the period of expansionisms of the interlacustrine Kingdoms e.g. Gisaka/ Rwanda conflicts, which date as far back as the 18th and 19th centuries. Thus, at the time of the European partition of Africa, these people of Rwandan descent were already residing in what came to be known as Tanganyika under the Germans.
3. People who fled colonial harshness (number unknown) e.g. forced labour, floggings, taxes, etc. Normally these people became migrant workers on sisal, sugar, tobacco, tea, and cotton and coffee plantations in colonial Tanganyika. Some secured jobs in mines, manufacturing industries and various enterprises while others became domestic servants in well-to-do households both in urban and rural sector. This group constituted a large section of the producers of cheap labour in Bukoba (in the famous "Nyarubanja" system; Karagwe; Tanga and Morogoro. In Tanga and Morogoro, they were called "Manamba".
4. Refugees of 1959 through the 1960s and 1970s (estimates range from 20.000 to 30.000). Most of these were placed in formal rural refugee settlements in Kagera, Tabora and Rukwa regions of Tanzania. Some settled spontaneously in rural areas, particularly in Kagera and Mwanza regions. Gradually, a few settled in towns across the country. The majority repatriated just after the RPF liberated the country in 1994 and after. A significant number of these (between 20.000 and 26.000, according to official figures), but much less in this author's view, had acquired Tanzanian nationality by mass naturalization as a result of Julius Nyerere's presidential decree that took effect since 1980.

⁴ This particular regime crisis is well described in Alexis Kagame, *Un Abrégé de l'Histoire du Rwanda de 1853 à 1972*, Tome Deuxième, Editions Universitaires du Rwanda, Butare, 1975.

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

5. Economic migrants of the late 1970s-early 1980s under the Habyarimana regime (number unknown). These settled in an area named Ndiyo near Kanyinya refugee settlement for Rwandans in the Ngara District of Kagera region, and because the regular Rwandan refugees found this group's stated motive to migrate and settle nearby rather dubious, they nicknamed them "abamilita" (MRND militants).⁵
6. The massive wave of the 1994 refugees (estimated to be between 460.000 and 750.000). Most of these were settled in camps in Kagera region, the most notorious of which was Benaco camp. Most of these were repatriated "en masse" in 1996. There were, however, remnants after this mass repatriation and their numbers grew as new refugees fled Rwanda. Their number of residual refugees reached a high of 23.677⁶ by the time their repatriation was completed in 2003. These had been settled in camps in Ngara and Biharamulo districts. Completion of the repatriation of this group led to the tripartite signature of the cessation clause of the 1951 Refugee Convention with regard to Rwandan refugees in Tanzania, meaning that de jure, no Rwandan was to be recognized as a bona fide refugee in Tanzania. Of the 1994 refugees, there was an elite group (former Rwandan officials, businessmen, etc.) who got asylum in urban areas, particularly in Dar es Salaam (number unknown). These were not repatriated with the rest. Because of their financial means, many obtained residence/work permits. Others obtained certificates of naturalization and Tanzanian passports.
7. Others: There is a mixed bag of other Rwandans who migrated to Tanzania over the years, even before independence, for a variety of reasons (women who married Tanzanians, agents of missionary establishments, students supported by relatives living in Tanzania, small business people, etc.)

3. Evolution of the Illegal Immigration Status in Tanzania

The 1961 Citizenship Law of Tanganyika⁷ conferred citizenship by right to anyone if that person and one of his/her parents had been born in Tanganyika, and by registration in certain other circumstances.⁸

⁵ These new arrivals were, indeed, by Rwandan Law de jure members of the then ruling party MRND and therefore suspect in the eyes of regular refugees.

⁶ Tanzania Government figures

⁷ What was known as Tanganyika was changed to Tanzania.

⁸ See Nyerere, "The Principles of Citizenship", *Freedom and Unity*, Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 126.

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

Many in categories 1, 2 and 6 above who had not been keenly following the evolution of Tanzania's citizenship and immigration laws falsely believed they had automatically acquired Tanzanian citizenship by virtue of their pre-independence arrival and settlement. They were wrong, because those who did not qualify for citizenship by the birth clause were given a grace period of two years until 9 December 1963 to renounce the citizenship of another nation.⁹ Thus, since the passing of the 1963 Citizenship and Immigration Acts, those in this category who had not acquired citizenship by registration after renouncing their other citizenship automatically became illegal migrants. Since the passing of the 1972 Immigration Act, these people were required by law to either seek naturalization or residence permits. For those who did not, unpleasant surprises awaited them from 1995 to-date.

It is generally agreed among scholars of Tanzania politics that 1995 marked the transition from Julius Nyerere Administration's "Open Door Policy" toward immigrants of all types¹⁰ (e.g. refugees, freedom fighters from all over Africa and beyond, etc.) to a less welcoming policy that sometimes bordered on xenophobia.

Two well-known casualties of this post-1995 policy change who are of Rwandan origin are Ambassador Timothy Bandora and former District Commissioner/Member of the National Executive Committee of the ruling party CCM, Jenerali Ulimwengu. These two high-ranking members of the regime were stripped of their rank and status overnight on the grounds that they were not citizens of Tanzania. What followed was quite a saga. We hasten to add that in these cases, it was not only policy change per se that caused the saga. Instead, much had also to do with the politics of the invented "Hima Empire"¹¹ xenophobic ideology to which we will turn a little later.

Those in categories 2.3 and 2.4 above who were around at the time of mass naturalization and could not get naturalization for various reasons (e.g. not being processed for mass naturalization during the prescribed time frame due to bureaucratic flaws, not willing to take up Tanzanian nationality, etc.) fell into illegality if they did not obtain residence permits. Such old caseload refugees became virtually stateless when former refugee settlements were transformed into ordinary villages administered by

⁹ *Ibid*, "Tanganyika Citizenship", p. 259.

¹⁰ See for example, Rutinwa, B., "Beyond Durable Solutions: An Appraisal of the New Proposals for Prevention and Solution of the Refugee Crisis in the Great Lakes Region," in *Journal of Refugee Studies*, Vol. 9, No 3, 1996, p.317.

¹¹ "Hima Empire" pseudo-thesis is a conspiracy theory, which asserts that people of Hima/Tutsi ethnic descent have a hidden, resolute agenda to rule all the countries of the Great Lakes Region.

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

local authorities outside UNHCR protection. Some of these resorted to acquiring immigration papers fraudulently, thus unwittingly aggravating their illegal status.

Those refugees in category 2.5 who did not repatriate as part of the organized repatriation programs mounted between 1996 and 2003 and who have not obtained legal immigration papers have been rendered illegal immigrants since the tripartite signing of the 1951 Refugee Convention cessation clause in 2003.

4. Tanzania's Handling of Real or Alleged Rwandan Illegal Immigrants

Since the days of refugee settlements in the 1970s, some Tanzanian authorities, particularly Settlement Commandants, began to harass refugees even though at the time the latter had no illegal immigrant status. A common threat at the time was "driving the refugees across the recently inaugurated Rusumo Bridge and handing them over to the Kayibanda/Habyarimana regime." Such seemingly benign, isolated and -- one could say-- jocular attitudes seem to have sewn the seed of a more pronounced antipathy against Rwandans, particularly those of Tutsi descent.

This antipathy has, in more recent years, been observed among a wider circle of the politico-administrative class of Tanzania. It has also occasionally surfaced among some ordinary people in the form of chauvinism. Some Rwandans who have taken time to reflect on this matter have generated the hypothesis that some of the authors of such anti-Tutsi sentiments in Tanzania were beneficiaries of the propaganda machines of the Kayibanda and Habyarimana regimes.

In recent years (e.g. 2000, 2003, 2006), formal round up operations against real and alleged Rwandan illegal immigrants have become frequent in Kagera region where most of them reside. Prime Minister Edward Lowassa himself authorized the 2006 operation. It should be noted that in such operations, it is not only Rwandans who are apprehended. However, such operations are rare in other border regions compared to Kagera region, which has a great proportion of Rwandans among its immigrants, both recent and those who settled as far back as before the African partition but never changed much culturally.

5. Tanzania's Justification of Round -Up Operations and Expulsions of Immigrants

Tanzania justifies its operations to crack down on "illegal" immigrants on several grounds. The most common are: illegal immigrants (Rwandans being many in Kagera

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

region) are major culprits in murders, armed robberies, cattle theft, poaching of wild game, attacking vehicles on high ways, attacking villages and stealing foodstuffs, unlawful possession of arms and armaments, illicit trade in arms, and environmental degradation caused by overgrazing.

Some of these allegations may not be correct. For example, upon examination of some reports, it was not evident that the murders and armed robberies reported to have been committed by Rwandans in Muleba district in 2003 involved Rwandans, and this was because our reading of the names of the suspects turned up few Kinyarwanda names.

On the other hand, the accusation of Rwandans' involvement in attacking vehicles on highways, attacking villages and stealing foodstuffs, unlawful possession of arms and armaments, illicit trade in arms and environmental degradation sounds rather plausible, particularly during the stay of the 1994 and post-1994 refugees (1994-2003). Cattle theft by Rwandans is, however, a legitimate accusation. It was thus likened to the common problem found among local cattle keepers (Masai, Kurya and Wasukuma). Cattle theft in Tanzania is a serious offence, which is specially handled by the anti cattle-rustling unit of the Tanzania Police Field Force Unit (FFU). However, unlike in the case of Rwandan offenders, similar culprits, when caught, are punished as individuals and not as families, clans or tribes. (The Rwanda-Tanzania Joint Technical Team received testimonies from Rwandans themselves that this phenomenon existed).¹²

Environmental degradation due to overgrazing caused by large herds and poaching are also legitimate accusations. In April-May 2007, on a random short visit, the Joint Technical Team caught Rwandans grazing about 350 heads of cattle in Chato Game reserve out of an estimated 6000 heads, which allegedly graze there illegally on a regular basis. The Team found another 450 heads of cattle grazing illegally in Nyantakara Game Reserve. The other aspect to this phenomenon is that of Rwandan pastoralists trespassing with their cattle into Tanzanian territory (e.g. in May 2004, Rwandans were caught grazing their cattle across the border in Kimisi forest and their 1,200 heads of cattle were impounded by Tanzanian authorities). With regard to poaching, that people living in game reserves with their cattle would live off game is also plausible.

¹²Unpublished 2006 Mission Report of the Joint-Technical Team to Karagwe.

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

6. Rwandans' Complaints Concerning the Round –Up Operations and Expulsions

Rwandans who have experienced the frequent round ups and subsequent expulsions have expressed complaints and allegations. The most common are as follows: confiscation of their herds by local authorities, immigration officials, police, and other predatory authorities; confiscation of their money by the same individuals; beatings; burning of their houses; asking them to give bribes in order to get legal immigration papers; destroying their legitimate immigration papers if they did not accept to pay bribes; forcing them to leave their properties behind; causing family separation; blacklisting those who registered complaints to the Sub-Joint Technical Committee; reluctance by Tanzanian authorities to expedite the processing and verification of legal immigration papers; and the expulsion of some who fulfilled immigration conditions.

Although these are allegations that require proper verification (and where, need be, litigation of the suspects), the Government of Rwanda could likely corroborate at least some of these accusations. We think it chose to react with restraint. Currently these matters are under investigation by a sub-committee of the Joint Technical Team, which lacks adequate good will of members of the concerned authority to do the job thoroughly, and it is not yet certain that the Government of Tanzania will facilitate the availability of the suspects to undergo due process.

In Karagwe district alone, 32 complaints have been filed against government officials and civilians. Of the ten complaints that have been given preliminary investigation, the suspects include: an Assistant Superintendent of Police /Officer Commanding Station, a District Immigration Officer, members of the militia, village chairmen, and ward/village Executive officers. Implicated also were Tanzania Revenue Authority officials, though none is directly mentioned in the complaints.

7. Politico-Ideological Lubricants of the Round –Ups and Expulsions of Rwandans

The benign anti-Tutsi/anti-Rwandan sentiment that began in Tanzania in the 1970s smouldered slowly without any overt expression until the end of 1990 when the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) launched its war of liberation against the Habyarimana regime. The war marked the beginning of a new politico – ideological offensive on the part of the Habyarimana regime through the agency of his sponsored collaborators mainly in Tanzania and the DRC. In the mid-1980s, some (political genius) invented the "Hima Empire" pseudo- thesis and it spread like bush fire in the region and beyond. Political "gurus" in Tanzania espoused this nonsensical idea because it was being proselytised by some important figures in the political hierarchy.

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

In Tanzania, these political "gurus" tried to illustrate the veracity of their unfounded "Hima Empire" pseudo- thesis by falsifying the plight of Banyamulenge¹³ in the DRC as proof of a "Hima Empire" conspiracy. These political "gurus" told the people that Banyamulenge had withdrawn their allegiance from the state of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and transferred it to Rwanda, soon to be an important bastion of the "Hima /Tutsi Empire¹⁴". In the midst of this propaganda, and insinuating that naturalized Rwandans, particularly the Tutsi, and Tanzanian nationals of Tutsi descent, have no real allegiance to the Republic, the propagandists coined the term "Bizima Karaha syndrome" ¹⁵. This perception spread quickly down to the grassroots. Calling Rwandan immigrants and Tanzanian nationals of Tutsi origin Banyamulenge became fashionable overnight and it persists to date. The Hima/Tutsi Empire campaign reached its xenophobic proportions in 1994 when the Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) took over Kigali.¹⁶ The propaganda worsened when Rwanda took part in the DRC war and succeeded. The "Hima Empire" pseudo- thesis seemed to be a reality, and Rwandans (particularly those profiled as Tutsi) began to be regarded as a real threat in the region. Hima Empire "experts" mushroomed everywhere, even down to the grassroots. They taught the population to:

1. Be careful because their land and their other rights may fall in the hands of Rwandans in the near future;
2. Be aware because Rwandans¹⁷ are power hungry people and that given the slightest opportunity they would rule them; and
3. Be aware and remain vigilant so that the properties gained by Rwandans on Tanzanian soil were not repatriated.

¹³ Banyamulenge are Congolese nationals of ancient Rwandan descent whose native language is Kinyarwanda. They inhabit the Kivu region of the DRC and have frequently been persecuted by successive regimes in the Congo, including being denied their citizenship rights. Since the 1990s, some of them have Fought on the side of the Rwandese Patriotic Army/Rwanda Defence Forces in the conflict between Rwanda and the DRC.

¹⁴ Because of the cultural and ancestral similarity between the Hima of Uganda and the Tutsi of Rwanda, "Hima Empire" is also taken to mean "Tutsi Empire."

¹⁵ Bizima Karaha is a Rwandophone Congolese from Kivu province. He was one the founders of AFDL which fought to oust Mobutu. In the early days of the movement, he became well known at home and abroad for frequently speaking on behalf of the movement.

¹⁶ For the Tanzanian politico-bureaucratic elite, which had been warning against imminent "Hima Empire" encroachment, the take over of Kigali by the RPF was an opportunity to prove to the public that the empire building conspiracy was real and dangerous. The RPF was then falsely characterised as an exclusively Diaspora Tutsi movement.

¹⁷ At the height of its confusion, the "Hima Empire" pseudo-thesis inconsistently lumps together all Rwandans as a power hungry, empire seeking species, regardless of whether or not they are actually Tutsi/Hima.

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

This xenophobic politico-ideological construct dominated the political discourse at some point and became a tool for those who attempted to explain the root cause of conflict in the Great Lakes Region. For the self-proclaimed "political analysts" in Tanzania, the "Hima Empire" building dynamic was directly or indirectly associated with conflicts in the Region. In practical terms, the nascent xenophobia manifested itself in many subtle ways. For example, senior Tanzanian public servants profiled as Tutsi descendants were subjected to close scrutiny and were in some cases called in for special vetting. Those among them who refuted the commonplace assertion that the seizure of power by the Rwandese Patriotic Front in 1994 was proof of the "Hima Empire" building project had their Tanzanian nationalism questioned and were looked at with suspicion by the proponents of the pseudo-thesis.

Another manifestation was false labelling of political opponents as Hima/Tutsi. One extreme example was the bizarre labelling of Tanzania's first President, Julius Nyerere as a non-Tanzanian of Hima/Tutsi origin by Reverend Mtikila, President of the opposition Democratic Party (DP). Such trends have had something to do with the round up operations and expulsions of Rwandans in Tanzania.

It would however be an oversimplification to attribute the xenophobic tendencies among some Tanzanians solely to belief in the "Hima Empire" pseudo-thesis. Indeed, there are other factors that fuelled the drive to expel Rwandans during the period 2000-2006. Some laws and policies that have recently been passed in Tanzania inculcated among Tanzanians new ways of thinking about aliens, in general, in the course of responding to new needs and priorities. For example:

1. The Land Act, 1999, and the Village Land Act, 1999, both heightened people's consciousness and hunger for land. The newly perceived value of land and the enormous legal powers conferred to villages in terms of land control, planning, and disposition put "foreigners" in a vulnerable land tenure position.
2. The Agricultural and Livestock Policy, 1997, which emphasizes environmental conservation in rural areas and the National Wildlife Policy, 1998, were both bound to bring Rwandan pastoralists living in Tanzania and their grazing practices (including those in game reserves) under close scrutiny.
3. Other factors such as the economic malaise prevailing in Tanzania during the period under discussion (e.g., rising costs of living, food shortages, droughts, a crisis in the labor market, etc.) may have fuelled intolerance of Rwandans perceived as illegal aliens. It is commonly acknowledged

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

that "periods of economic hardship tend to coincide with a marked increase in xenophobic attitudes and even extreme measures such as violence and expulsion."¹⁸

8. Diplomatic Handling of the Expulsions Problem

Both Rwanda and Tanzania handled the aforementioned problems quietly (e.g., no public condemnations, no formal exchange of protest notes, no sanctions, no recall of ambassadors, etc.). Both countries, because of any and/or all of the following considerations, may have preferred such an approach. This may have to do, for example, with any of the following:

1. Mutual fear of engaging in hostile diplomacy that might escalate in a senseless conflicts/war;
2. Tanzania's knowledge that the presence of Rwandan illegal migrants on its soil was not the Rwanda Government's fault;
3. Tanzania's knowledge of Rwanda's clear policy to welcome back all its people;
4. Rwanda's recognition of Tanzania's sovereign right to expel illegal immigrants;
5. Rwanda's restraint in the face of still unverified allegations made by its returnees; and
6. Rwanda's then high stakes in wishing to join the East African Community.

A multi-track diplomacy approach was developed and applied as follows:

- a. Lines of communication seem to have been kept open between the Heads of State (mutual state visits, use of special envoys, etc.). These Heads of State kept themselves apprised of the matter in other ways, too. Both countries put in place the Joint Technical Teams for the Repatriation and Reintegration of the Rwandan Refugees working together and reporting to their respective Countries on progress made.
- b. Good Neighbourliness meetings were frequently held between the Governors of the then Kibungo Province and Kagera Region with the occasional participation of the Governor of Umutara Province. The problem of repatriation was often negotiated at these meetings.

¹⁸ Kamanga, Khoti, "Durable Solutions: The Option of Local Integration", Project Report, The United Republic of Tanzania and The Delegation of the European Union, Dar es Salaam, 2001, p.13

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

- c. Practical matters relating to resolving the problem were negotiated and implemented by task forces created by both sides (Technical Working Committee; Tripartite Commission for the Voluntary Repatriation of Rwandan Refugees from Tanzania, Joint Technical Team). The work of these technical teams has helped to grease the wheel of diplomacy by performing tasks such as: sensitising Rwandans to repatriate; registering and compiling of data relating to statistics of both persons and their properties; investigating allegations of confiscated property and other abuses; designing and implementing workable logistics for the repatriation exercises, etc. The Teams' negotiating ability also led to innovative forms of bilateral cooperation in the repatriation operation (e.g. in principle although not in total practice), a cost sharing formula whereby Rwanda would pay the costs of buses to transport returnees and vaccines for livestock. Tanzania was to pay the costs of Lorries to transport movable properties and provide vaccinators, escorts and free cattle movement permits. Tanzania though did not fully deliver on its commitment.
- d. Diplomacy also found expression in the area of security cooperation. Issues that required mutual understanding, particularly when there were still Rwandan refugees in Tanzania, included:
 - 1. Creation of protected areas in border areas;
 - 2. Exchange of information on events and cross-border criminals on both sides;
 - 3. Sensitisation of the populations on both sides about protected areas and approved border crossing points;
 - 4. Sensitisation of guards at protected areas not to use disproportionate force;
 - 5. Simultaneous searches for armed criminals;
 - 6. Identification and punishment of intimidators in refugee camps;
 - 7. Creation of several legal entry points to facilitate the smooth movement of people on both sides; and,
 - 8. Prevention to turn refugee camps into recruiting grounds for combatants, etc.

9. The Role of Sub-National Authorities in the Expulsions Exercise

Although authorities of the Central Government in Tanzania clearly sanctioned the frequent round up operations and expulsions of Rwandans, it appears that sub-national authorities bear much of the blame for the alleged abuses against Rwandans in Kagera region. Many of the abuses seem to have been a result of collusion involving the huge powers of Regional and District Commissioners, the tremendous powers of police and

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

immigration officers, the great clout of defence and security committees at all levels, and the tremendous influence of local authorities and local politicians.

These sub-national players seem to have zealously conspired to successfully pull off dangerous operations of extremely dubious legal credibility against the Rwandans. Their anti-Rwandan sentiments were driven by a combination of factors: belief in the "Hima Empire" argument, the prevalent xenophobic feeling and hospitality fatigue in the country, and varying personal interests. In order to circumvent central government oversight in the round up operations and expulsions, the said sub-national actors seem to have carefully doctored the information they transmitted to national-level government authorities to suit their perceived and, at times, shifting interests. Such lack of central government oversight on the part of Tanzania almost threatened relations between the two countries.

Therefore, notwithstanding the merits of decentralization and devolution of powers, a keen central government oversight over local and regional authorities is of paramount importance to the national interest. Lack of such oversight, be it in Rwanda or in Tanzania, or anywhere else for that matter, may encourage the decentralized authorities to act as if they were small states within a state. Such a situation must always be avoided. As the rounding up and expulsions of Rwandans from Tanzania neared completion, a new problem surfaced in Kagera region. In a rather surprising change of mind, the same local leaders who were expelling Rwandans turned to campaigns against their repatriation. This was indeed surprising but there was a definite logic to the move. As the Rwandans left, the local leaders realized that:

1. The departure of poor illegal immigrants meant loss of cheap labor;
2. The departure of rich pastoralists meant loss of handsome financial contributions to local development projects, cheap milk and meat, etc.; and,
3. The departure of both of these categories meant loss of bribes income to corrupt local and other levels of leadership.

Conclusion

Several months since the March 2006 round ups and expulsions of Rwandans from Tanzania, relations between the two countries seem to have stabilized, partly due to the good work done by the Joint Technical Team that has helped both countries to find practical solutions to the unfolding expulsions drama. The anxiety that some Rwandans had regarding suspected Tanzania's silent opposition to Rwanda's admission to the East African Community (EAC) has died down since July 1st 2007 when Rwanda

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

formally joined the EAC. On the Rwandan side, reception and resettlement of tens of thousands expellees has proceeded rather successfully both in temporary transit camps, villages of origin and new resettlement sites.

Despite the improved political climate, there are lingering suspicions between the political elites of Dar es Salaam and Kigali over a number of issues. On the Tanzanian side, the propagators of the "Hima Empire" scare have not relented. On the Rwandan side, some elements of the political elite believe that some among the political elite in Dar es Salaam have a hidden bias against Rwanda, particularly in matters related to the Great Lakes regional politics. They believe that this attitude has something to do with the Hima/Tutsi Empire expansionism myth, an agenda that has never existed. Another point of concern in Rwanda is about delays/denials in granting justice to Rwandan expellees who were allegedly subjected to abuse by authorities in the respective districts of Kagera Region. This matter still requires resolution, in order to make sure that such actions are not repeated.

Journal of African Conflicts and Peace Studies

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