

Opinions

Why Rwanda kicked out quack surgeons from Belgium

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Christopher Trott, the former UK Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan during a tour of Kigali Genocide Memorial. Photo by Sam Ngendahimana

Faced with this persistent persecution, Rwanda made the only rational choice: it cut Belgium off. The decision to sever diplomatic ties with the Kingdom was not an act of aggression; it was an act of self-preservation.

This was not an impulsive act but a necessary rejection of a toxic relationship.

Belgium's reaction was predictably theatrical—shocked outrage, wounded innocence, the usual hand-wringing about Rwanda's "hostility." But the truth is

simple: Rwanda does not owe Belgium anything. Not gratitude, not obedience, not silence.

How can Rwanda continue engaging with a country that harbors genocide fugitives, platforms genocide denialists, and constantly undermines Rwanda's sovereignty? No nation would tolerate that.

Let us imagine, for a moment, that Rwanda had done to Belgium what Belgium did to Rwanda. Imagine a Rwandan colonial administration arriving in Brussels in 1920 and deciding that Belgians needed to be divided into superior and inferior races.

Imagine too, Rwandan bureaucrats measuring Belgian skulls, deciding that Walloons were "closer to Africans" and thus fit for rule, while Flemings were "primitive laborers" who should be suppressed.

Imagine that, after decades of encouraging this racial hierarchy, Rwanda suddenly reversed its policy, incited Flemings to massacre Walloons, and then withdrew, leaving a bloodbath in its wake.

Now, imagine that, 70 years later, Rwanda had the audacity to lecture Belgium

about democracy, human rights, and good governance—while simultaneously refusing to acknowledge its own crimes.

Would Belgium accept such hypocrisy? Would Filip Reyntjens find this an amusing intellectual exercise? Of course not. The Belgian mind recoils at such an idea. Because Belgium sticks to the myth of moral superiority, even when history proves otherwise.

Let us go back to real times. Imagine a hospital unlike any other—a place where the doctors and nurses are not there to heal the patient, but to ensure the disease flourishes, the wounds fester, and the body slowly decays while smiling visitors applaud their bedside manner.

In this particular ward, the patient is Rwanda—once a robust organism with ancient vitality and cohesion, now wheeled in bruised and barely breathing after enduring the prolonged torment of colonial surgery, ideological infection, and post-genocide malpractice.

Hovering over this patient, in white coats and armed with clipboards of righteousness, are none other than the heirs of King Leopold's hospital administration: The Belgians.

It is important to remember that Rwanda before colonialism was not always in this ward. It was once a remarkably well-organized society with a complex and advanced governance system.

Long before the European filthy scalpel sliced it open, Rwanda had a centralized monarchy, a structured legal system, and a powerful sense of unity.

But when the Belgian colonial government

arrived—having already perfected its doctrine of cruelty and control in the Congo—it did not come with the tools of healing.

It came with a prescription pad already filled out with racist anthropology, ecclesiastical arrogance, and a thirst for total domination. The disease to be diagnosed? Tutsi identity. The cure? Divide and rule.

Belgium inherited Rwanda from Germany after World War I, and it wasted no time in opening the body of the nation for some rather unethical surgery.

The Kingdom went to work with scalpels and syringes, eager to reshape Rwandan society in its own racist image. It injected into Rwanda the most lethal pathogen of all: the ideology of racial superiority.

Before Belgium's meddling, Rwandan identity was fluid. Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa were social and economic classifications, not rigid racial categories.

But Belgium—armed with its European racial theories and its pathological need to control—declared that Rwandans needed "scientific" sorting.

It measured skulls, examined noses, and declared that Tutsis were "tall, aristocratic, and closer to the European ideal," while Hutus were "short, stocky, and better suited for manual labor." The Twa? An afterthought.

This absurd racial classification was not an observation but an injection—of an imported pathogen designed to inflame divisions where none had existed before.

To formalize this insanity, Belgium issued identity cards in 1935 that froze these social distinctions into rigid racial categories.

The consequences were immediate and disastrous. The Belgian colonial regime elevated Tutsis as the ruling elite while systematically oppressing Hutus, creating the perfect conditions for resentment, discord, and eventual catastrophe.

Then, like an unethical doctor growing bored of his own experiment, Belgium changed course in the 1950s and began stirring Hutu resentment against Tutsis, encouraging violence and orchestrating the first massacres of Tutsis in 1959.

Here is the surgeon, scalpel still in hand, now feigning horror at the bleeding patient.

King Leopold's Congo was the training ground for this toxic medicine. There, the doctor's oath was rewritten to serve profit over life.

Hands were cut off not to save lives but to remind the enslaved that even labor without limbs was expected. What the Congo experienced in chains, Rwanda would suffer in ideology.

The Belgian colonizers—together with their clerical assistants—approached Rwanda not as caretakers of human dignity but as taxonomists of tribal biology.

They arrived with phrenological tape measures, skull calipers, and notebooks that declared the Tutsi as more "noble" and the Hutu as more "earthbound," based on outlandish racial theories imported from Europe.

But this diagnosis was never about the truth. It was about engineering permanent fracture lines—freezing people into rigid tribal categories. Rwanda was condemned to a slow-bleeding pathology of division.

Belgium did not merely colonize Rwanda;

it infected it. It played the role of a mad scientist, injecting its own perverse racial theories into the bloodstream of Rwandan society.

The pseudo-scientific classifications that Belgium imposed—distinguishing Hutu and Tutsi along fabricated racial lines—were not just administrative quirks. They were a death sentence; a time bomb with a delayed detonation.

As early as the 1930s, Belgian administrators, with the enthusiastic backing of Catholic missionaries, undertook a campaign of ethnic engineering.

They stripped Tutsi of their indigenous identity and recast them as a distant race—an alien aristocracy that had supposedly subjugated the "indigenous" Hutu.

The absurdity of this narrative was irrelevant; what mattered was its utility. It gave Belgium a lever to divide and rule, a mechanism to fracture Rwandan society into irreconcilable camps.

The infamous identity cards were not mere documents; they were contaminated surgical incisions, carving Rwandans into rigid racial categories.

With the stroke of a pen, Belgium institutionalized division, ensuring that Rwandans would no longer see themselves as one people.

These documents would later serve as execution lists during the 1994 Genocide Against the Tutsi, when killers would demand identification before deciding who lived and who died.

The Belgians—the same empire that had operated a human zoo in Brussels—had succeeded in injecting Rwanda with a foreign dis-

ease: racism as state policy.

And then, in an act of cynical detachment familiar to all bad doctors, Belgium simply walked away.

When they left Rwanda in the early 1960s, they did not discharge the patient with care instructions. They handed the scalpel to those already trained in dissection.

In place of a sovereign people, they left behind a fractured society, weakened by ideology and manipulated by fear.

They empowered extremist factions who had internalized the racial hierarchy, handed them instruments of repression, and then documented the resulting pogroms as if they were unrelated symptoms of "African tribalism."

If colonialism had a hospital wing, Rwanda would have been its most tragic patient. The colonial doctor was never alone in his malpractice. He had nurses—faithful ones—wearing cassocks and crossing themselves as they whispered blessings over poison.

Belgium would be the lead doctor, clipboard in hand, with a nurse named the Catholic Church adjusting the intravenous kit of ideology and sedation. The Catholic Church was not a passive bystander in Rwanda's colonial pathology. It was, in many cases, the operating hand.

Even after the genocide, many of these ecclesiastical "nurses" refused to confess. Some fled to Europe—particularly to Belgium and France—where they were protected or ignored, despite being accused of complicity in crimes against humanity. Others stayed, cloaked in sacraments, speaking of forgiveness while refusing accountability.

Together, they charted a course of treatment that had nothing to do with healing and everything to do with deforming the soul of a nation. They didn't want Rwanda cured.

They wanted it dependent, subdued, and terminally broken. And now, as Rwanda begins—against all odds—to stitch its wounds, the very hands that once tightened the bandage on its lifeblood have returned, not with apology, but with disrespect for the surgeon pretending to save the patient.

The Genocide Against the Tutsi in 1994 was not a sudden fever but the catastrophic failure of a long and deliberate poisoning.

Belgium, with the arrogance of a physician whose malpractice is protected by distance and skin tone, had weaponized ethnic classifications like scalpels, carving up a society it claimed to diagnose.

It manufactured Hutu and Tutsi as immutable categories and injected Rwanda with hatred, division, and spiritual distortion. When the body finally convulsed in genocidal agony, the doctor shrugged, packed up, and left the hospital.

This is the tragedy of Rwanda: its genocide did not begin in 1994. It was simply the climax of a long, untreated disease deliberately mismanaged by colonial and postcolonial actors. And Belgium, the colonial physician who sowed the cancer, now sits in international forums lecturing on "human rights" and "democracy" as though it were an authority on healing.

Rwanda's recovery

Rwanda—bruised but not broken—has begun its own recovery. Against all odds, it has managed to stitch itself together through truth-telling, reconciliation, economic reform, and regional diplomacy. It has established accountability mechanisms, rebuilt institutions, and refused to accept victimhood as identity.

Yet the former doctors and nurses are not pleased. They frown at the patient's willpower. They scold Rwanda for asserting itself, for pursuing justice, for refusing to be gaslighted. They whisper that Rwanda is "authoritarian," that it suppresses "opposition," as if the alternative is a return to the diseased pluralism that led to genocide.

Meanwhile, the same Belgium that hosts genocide deniers also tolerates the sale of hate-promoting literature, gives a pass to fugitive priests, and platforms "experts" who claim that the genocide was not really a genocide—just a civil war with unfortunate excesses.

Some of these "experts" even go as far as to claim that the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), which stopped the genocide, was simply "seizing power." It is like accusing the surgeon who stops a hemorrhage of trying to monopolize the operating room.

And so we must ask: what does the doctor want? What does the nurse pray for? It becomes disturbingly clear that healing is not the goal. A healthy Rwanda exposes their own complicity. A thriving, self-assured Rwanda contradicts the narrative that Africa must be managed, lectured, or saved by its

former colonizers.

Rwanda's refusal to kneel is perceived not as recovery but as defiance. And defiance, to those who believed they authored Africa's history, is the ultimate betrayal.

In this drama, the DRC plays the role of a neighboring ward in the same hospital. But here, the disease has been allowed to metastasize. The Congolese state, under successive leaders, has permitted genocidal ideologies to flourish, particularly against Congolese Tutsis.

Militia groups like the FDLR, composed of remnants of Rwanda's *génocidaires*, roam freely and are even integrated into the Congolese army. Hate speech is broadcast, Tutsi communities are attacked, and the international community turns its face to the wall.

And Belgium? It issues carefully balanced statements, urging "both sides" to show restraint, as if Rwanda is equally responsible for its own trauma being reawakened in a neighboring country.

The same Belgium that cannot bring itself to arrest known genocide suspects within its borders lectures Rwanda on military discipline and regional peace. This is not diplomacy. This is spiritual malpractice.

In a truly just hospital, the doctor would apologize, and the nurse would confess. They would support the patient's healing without arrogance or sabotage. But in the hospital of international relations, Rwanda is often treated not as a survivor but as a problematic subject—one that insists on self-determination, accountability, and memory.

Yet Rwanda persists. It has become its own doctor. It has written new

prescriptions—ones that emphasize unity over division, competence over dependency, and truth over narrative convenience. And it has warned the world: never again is not a slogan. It is a commitment.

Still, the old doctors won't leave the room. They hover at the foot of the bed, whispering diagnoses that serve their reputations, not the patient. But Rwanda no longer listens. It is recovering. Not because of them, but in spite of them.

And that is the real scandal. But the tragedy, for them, is that the patient did not die.

Under the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), the new caretakers refused to let the body rot. They did not follow the prescriptions of decay. Instead, they scrubbed the wounds, cauterized the sources of infection, and demanded accountability from those who had turned scalpels into machetes. For the unethical doctors, this was heresy.

You see, if the patient heals without them, if the body regains strength without their guidance, then their entire career—their entire mythos—collapses. They become the villain, not the savior. That's what Belgium cannot stomach.

This explains the obsessive need to undermine Rwanda's recovery. Western media, fueled by "concern" and colonial nostalgia, diagnoses authoritarianism where there is discipline, repression where there is justice, and silence where there is dignified healing.

Belgium, in particular, has mastered the language of post-genocide paternalism. They no longer shout; they whisper concerns in conferences, draft resolutions, and nod ap-

provingly at revisionists and deniers dressed up as opposition.

They amplify pestilential voices like Victoire Ingabire, a convicted promoter of genocidal ideology, not because they believe in freedom of speech, but because her every word reopens a scar.

They uplift groups like Jambo Asbl—not despite their links to genocidaires but because of them. Jambo Asbl—is a group that whitewashes mass murder with academic flair and youthful charm.

This is not negligence. It is a continuation of malpractice. The nurse now pretends to be a whistleblower, accusing the RPF of mistreating the patient, while quietly passing poison under the table.

And where does this poison circulate? In the international discourse, Rwanda is scolded for "involvement" in the DRC while the FDLR—descendants of genocidaires—operate freely under a global blindfold.

When Rwanda fortifies its borders, it is accused of militarism. When it speaks of justice, it is told to reconcile. When it refuses to die, it is accused of arrogance.

Belgium's displeasure with the RPF is not political—it is psychological. They cannot bear to see their former patient walking. Worse still, they despise that the patient refuses to thank them.

A healed Rwanda, one that stands straight and speaks without trembling, is unbearable to a system that built its ego on African collapse.

Let us not forget King Leopold's Congo, the nightmarish theatre where the same doctrine of extraction and mutilation was per-

fected. The same medical delusion guided that regime—the belief that Africans are raw material, not people.

In Leopold's Congo, limbs were severed for failing quotas; in colonial Rwanda, minds were severed from truth. Today, when Belgium parades its human rights credentials, it does so over the graves it dug and abandoned.

The most damning proof of this hypocrisy lies in their treatment of justice. Belgium hosts, shields, and sometimes platforms known genocide deniers and sympathizers. The Belgian government give space to men like Gaspar Musabyimana, the brain behind RTLM's broadcasts, who repackage the pain of a million dead into conspiracy-laden bile.

The doctor who oversaw the mutilation now questions the methods of the one stitching the wounds.

No, Rwanda is not perfect. No surgeon operates without risk. But it is obscene to pretend that the ones who the country bleed for decades now have the moral authority to critique its recovery.

The RPF has refused to treat Rwanda as a corpse. It has challenged the world's sick obsession with African fragility. It has said: we will not die quietly to make your textbooks tidy.

Rwanda is healing—slowly, painfully, deliberately. And the ones most upset by this are not the victims but the former doctors who thought they had written the final diagnosis.

We must name things as they are. Belgium's resentment toward the RPF is not about democracy, justice, or human rights. It is about control, about a refusal to accept

that Africans can author their own resurrection. The colonial scalpel may have changed hands, but its appetite remains.

Rwanda is not required to die to make Belgium feel less guilty. It is not required to appease European egos with silence or deform its justice system to accommodate killers who wear suits now.

Rwanda's story is one of miraculous resistance. It is the story of a patient who, denied anesthesia, woke up during surgery, took the instruments from the doctors, and began to heal herself. That story is too powerful, too dangerous for those who built their reputations on her death.

Today, Belgium postures as a well-meaning nurse. It frowns solemnly at Rwanda's challenges, shaking its head with concern. But behind the white gloves is a hand that funds, hosts, and protects genocide deniers, fugitive génocidaires, and organizations like Jambo Asbl—a group that whitewashes mass murder with academic flair and youthful charm.

What stings Belgium and its sympathizers most is that Rwanda didn't stay dead. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), rising from the refugee camps of Uganda and the ashes of a genocide the world watched in silence, refused the prognosis.

The RPF stopped the genocide—not the UN, not France, and certainly not Belgium.

It built a healthcare system, lifted millions from poverty, introduced universal education, and created one of the safest societies on the continent. It taught the patient to walk again, speak again, and take pride in her scars.

The doctor's guilt and the nurse's envy

If Rwanda were still bleeding, they would hold summits. If Rwanda were a failed state, they'd dispatch think tanks. If Rwanda remained in chaos, Belgium would still be the senior physician, offering occasional charity while ensuring the patient never threatens the system that made her sick.

But Rwanda today is a mirror—and in it, Belgium sees its own face, twisted by guilt, envy, and moral cowardice.

The patient is not only surviving, but thriving in ways that challenge the doctor's outdated methods. This frightens them. Because if Rwanda can rise, so too can the questions: Why did Belgium lie? Why did the world abandon Rwanda? Why does it still harbor those who murdered her people?

Belgium's anger at Rwanda is not about human rights—it is about the right of the colonized to heal on their own terms.

The reality is, there is a patient, who now writes her own prescription. Today, Rwanda is both patient and physician. She is cautious, aware of the lurking shadows. She builds hospitals, not armies of NGO experts. She speaks softly, but carries the scars of a million voices.

What Rwanda demands is not sainthood, but fairness. Not silence, but truth. It wants the world to understand that healing does not mean forgetting, that resilience does not mean consent to abuse, and that justice does not mean allowing denialism in the name of "debate."

Belgium and its allies can choose to become real partners in healing. But that would require them to admit what they did—and worse, what they still enable.

Until then, Rwanda has every right to guard its recovery, shield its narrative, and reject the medicine of moral hypocrisy.

This patient lives. And she will never be anybody's experiment again.