

Interview granted by Professor Anastase Gasana to Bamwanga, a journalist at Radio Rwanda (Kigali, 21 October 1990)

Q: Prof Gasana, you are also technical adviser to the MRND leadership, can you tell us as an intellectual about this attack that the enemy of Rwanda launched in Mutara; can you describe the attack for us?

A: In order to justify the attack they launched in Mutara, the enemies of Rwanda are in the habit of dramatizing the refugees' living conditions abroad. The actual reasons for the attack are not, however, the living conditions of the refugees outside. The actual reasons are rather political, based on monarchic and feudal regime that certain Rwanda refugees want to have restored in Rwanda whereas the majority of the people have objected to that regime through the referendum held on 25 September 1961 under the auspices of the United Nations. If this was an issue of the living conditions of Rwandans, those who emigrated in search of paid employment and fortune in Uganda at that time had a good economic situation comparable to England, joined hands with those who attacked Rwanda in order to create disorder and upheaval. That they did not associate with it even though there were many of them in Uganda and in Zaire such as in Katanga in Shaba region, proves that the war in Mutara has its roots in the politics of people who are nostalgic of the feudal regime and of those who want to take their revenge on the 1959 revolution. The issue is therefore not that they do not have food, work, access to education or living space, the issue is that they want power, that is all.

Q: Prof Gasana, you have just told us that the issue is related to certain politics. Can you tell us what politics it is?

A: The first reason for this attack, as I stated a while ago, is that the Rwandan refugees never acknowledge the 1959 revolution, the democracy installed on 28 January 1961 and the referendum held on 25 September 1961. As proof, the Rwandan Government has established since 1960 a ministry in charge of refugees; it has urged them to return, but they have of their own volition chosen to betray Rwanda and attack it since that year up until 1967. Their objective at that time was to take revenge on the 1959 revolution by restoring the monarchic regime and its paraphernalia in Rwanda. I think that is however a waste of time because the Rwandans have publicly expressed their objection to that in the UN-monitored elections. I am of the opinion that neither the population nor the United Nations can go back on their decision. It does not matter whether you are *Inkotanyi* or armed with swords, rifles or ammunition, it does not matter the quantity of weapons at your disposal, you cannot restore in the country a monarchic and feudal regime to which 80% of the population has expressed their objection through a UN-monitored referendum.

For an informed observer, the second reason for this attack is related to Uganda's domestic problems and the Ugandan President's personal problems. The President allegedly made a very delicate commitment that he would like to discharge but by exporting his problems to Rwanda so that no one knows the debts he owes the Rwandan refugees who helped him to take over power in Uganda. Thus, no one else apart from him and those concerned will know that he had paid

that debt. If we do a critical analysis, we will realize that the Ugandan President probably has problems with the Baganda tribe, where Obote hails from, and other northern tribes, where General Okelo and Amani Dada [*sic*] hail from. Those tribes hardly appreciate that their army be mostly composed of and led by Rwandan refugees. You know that joining a national army entitles you to remuneration and that it is a career that provides livelihood for people and their families. It is therefore understandable that the Rwandans' domination among men and officers of the Ugandan army hardly pleases the natives who would like to earn a living for themselves and their families by doing that work. Such a reaction from a native is absolutely normal.

If the Ugandan President has problems right inside his country, let him find solutions there with the population, or let him acknowledge publicly that he has problems and ask the international community and friendly countries to assist him rather than masking the state of affairs by trying to export his problems insidiously to Rwanda, hoping that the international community will not be informed about it.

If we go deeply into these issues, we will realize that Rwanda was attacked in reality by Uganda because the enemies who attacked it are members of the Ugandan army who receive their monthly salary from the Ugandan Government, wear Ugandan army uniform, use Uganda's equipment like weapons, vehicles and others, and are supplied weapons and provisions by the same country. A chief of staff like Museveni cannot say that 10,000 of his men have defected. That is impossible. Even if it is only one man, his defection will not go unnoticed. Then, no disciplinary measure is taken to demote those who are at fault on the grounds of insubordination or to arraign them before military tribunals. Many questions may be asked about those who attacked Rwanda. Considering the fact that they belong to the Ugandan army, we may wonder if they are Rwandans. We know that you first have to be a citizen of a country before you can join the army; I wonder, therefore, if those people who constitute, within the Ugandan national army, the group called *Inkotanyi* are still Rwandans if they belong to the Ugandan army. That is why I insist that the attack on Rwanda was committed by a part of the Ugandan army under the command of the Ugandan national army officers.

If it is thus necessary for the Rwandan Government to start negotiations in a bid to restore the climate of peace and trust along the borders of both countries, the Rwandan Government would undertake those negotiations with the Ugandan Government, but such negotiations would be subject to Uganda's withdrawal of all its troops from Mutara, in the northern part of Rwanda. I think that Uganda must sort this issue out with the United Nations and promptly withdraw its men it unleashed on Mutara in northern Rwanda as I have just stated. I heard that one or several military contingents from the European Union countries would come to interpose between the warring parties, but that would be for separating who and who? If it became necessary to deploy a multinational force between the warring parties, that force would be deployed between Rwanda and Uganda, that is, along the border between both countries so that the Ugandan national army troops who that country will have withdrawn do not come back to invade the Rwandan territory in Mutara, so that those troops do not slip out of Museveni's watch once again.

Q: What are the objectives of this contingent called *Inkotanyi* in the Ugandan national army who launched the attack on Rwanda?

A: The objectives of the *Inkotanyi* consist only in ruling by the sword in Rwanda, sowing the seed of death and desolation until they take over power. They would then rule by the sword, that is their objective. We may therefore wonder how people who came with the confessed objective of shedding blood in Rwanda can deceive the population by claiming to bring democracy and freedom. How can anyone claim to bring salvation to the Rwandans when he or she entered the country massacring with swords and guns and shedding the blood of Rwandans? That is nothing but a lie. No one has the nerve to claim to bring democracy to the people; that does not happen; it is only imaginable by people who do not think or who think the wrong way like the *Inkotanyi*. The people choose for themselves their form of democracy. Rwandans have thus chosen their democracy at their own initiative on 28 January 1961. They have just spent 30 years in democracy, they have just spent a period of 30 years during which they have chosen themselves their leaders. For instance, they elected the President of the Republic and the members of Parliament in 1968 and in this year 1990, they elected communal *conseillers* and *responsables de cellules*. The 17-year period that Rwandans have just spent in a climate of peace and national unity is certainly not long, but it is not short either. This culture of unity and cooperation between the Rwandans and the fight against divisionism has been confirmed by the 17 years of existence of the Second Republic and the 15 years of existence of MRND, which has sensitized the population to this culture in such a way that it is not easy to try to infiltrate the Rwandan society. Rwandans have proven that point since the enemies from Uganda wanted to sow discord between ethnic groups and regions, and Rwandans have resisted because they know that the enemy has attacked the entire country without targeting one ethnic group or region in particular and sparing another. Rwandans stuck together in democracy and, at their own initiative, stood firmly behind the leaders they chose themselves among members of *cellule* committees, from the *responsables de cellules* up to His Excellency President of the Republic. Nothing can draw them back from this path, neither sword nor gun. The plans of the *Inkotanyi* who attacked Rwanda in a bid to restore a monarchic and feudal regime have been deplored by Rwandans, Hutus, Tutsis and Twas alike. That, indeed, is an outdated ideology that cannot find audience in Rwanda. No one should forget that power belongs to the people and it is the people who delegate that power. That is what democracy is all about. As regards power by the sword, gun or bullet, it no longer has any place in today's Rwanda.

Q: Actually, Professor, some people call those who attacked Rwanda refugees, others enemies of Rwanda, others *Inyenzi*, what is the common denominator to all these terms and what is the difference between them?

A: The term "refugee" comes from the verb "to take refuge"; it refers to someone who leaves his or her area to go and settle elsewhere, or someone who leaves his or her country to go and live in another country. I told you a while ago that the first Rwandans went into exile in 1959, when the majority of the people rose to show that they were tired of the monarchic regime founded on feudality and oppression. At that time, those who supported feudality, vassalage and forced labour in the country turned down democracy and republican regime and preferred to go into exile without [any hope of] returning and thus became refugees in neighbouring and other foreign countries. There also those who went into exile in 1973 during the upheaval that followed the one that took place in

Burundi in 1972, and other people who fled peace and unity in 1990. Those are the people who claim to bring peace and democracy to Rwanda after devastating it.

The term “*Inyenzi*” refers to an organization of refugees that has decided since 1973 to take up arms against Rwanda and destroy its independence and republican regime. The *Inyenzi* of 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966 and 1967 fall into this mould. These are people who hate Rwanda so much and want to do the country every imaginable harm by depriving it of its unity, peace and development achieved in the past 30 years. You asked me to give you a suitable name for this group of people who attacked the country; the most suitable name for their nature and acts is “enemies of Rwanda”, because these people are, as I told you a while ago, members of the Ugandan national army, wear Ugandan army uniform, are fed by that country and receive all logistics consisting of provisions, weapons, monthly pay and media coverage provided by foreign journalists who come to visit them in Mutara and make their propaganda in Europe and elsewhere. Everything is organized from Kampala, the capital of Uganda. The said contingent of the Ugandan army called *Inkotanyi* is composed of Rwandan refugees who are in the Ugandan national army as well as other soldiers who are not Rwandan nationals. When these various components are put together, we realize that they are enemies of Rwanda, enemies of the country, people who not want peace to reign in Rwanda and within the Hutu, Tutsi or Twa population.

Q: In your view, what would be the solution to these problems?

A: As I already said, Rwanda was attacked by a contingent of the Ugandan army. Uganda must sort it out with the Pan-African organization and the United Nations, it must give reasons why it unleashed a part of its troops on the Rwandan soil. It is really regrettable to hear Uganda say that Rwanda violates its airspace, that our fighter plane violated its airspace whereas it is rather they who attacked us. This accusation by Uganda deeply chocked me personally; being attacked by someone and hearing him or her then complaining of being attacked, being invaded whereas he or she is at the roots of everything.

For me, Uganda must immediately pull out its troops it unleashed on the Rwandan soil, in Mutara. Once Uganda pulls its troops out, leaving none of its men behind, troops from member States of the European Economic Community will be deployed to the border between Rwanda and Uganda. Then, negotiations would start between Rwanda, Uganda and all the other countries that hosted Rwandan refugees, i.e. Burundi, Zaire, Kenya and others. Subsequently, there will be, under the supervision of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, a census of those who want to return to Rwanda, those who want to stay in their host countries and take the nationality of those countries, as well as those want to stay in their host countries but with Rwandan nationality.

Once that census is completed, the international community and friendly countries would help Rwanda repatriate those who so desire, find them provisions, build hospitals and health centres and send staff there, build classrooms and send competent teachers there, and put in place other structures that are required to host a large number of people returning at the same time to a country in which they did not usually reside. I therefore have reason to hope that in the same

manner the Rwandans helped in giving media coverage to the *Inkotanyi* problem, they will help Rwanda in repatriating Rwandan refugees who, during the census, will have expressed the desire to be repatriated, and will explain to those who do not want to return voluntarily that they can no longer ever wage a war against the country.

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