

ABSTRACT

The historical background of Rwanda tracked from the colonization era has played a prominent role in determining Rwanda's foreign policy. The set of distinction between two indigenous groups—Hutu and Tutsi—in Rwanda had led them into a conflict and political turmoil as well as designated the inclination of each group on allies. The Hutu-Francophone had been the close ally of France since its independence and automatically became the part of Organisation Internationale de La Francophonie (OIF) as it established French as its official language. In contrast, the Tutsi started having an inclination with the United Kingdom during their exile in African Anglo-Saxon countries. Once the Tutsi seized in power, Rwanda's political direction was gradually shifting. Rwanda became the member of the Commonwealth in 2009 despite Rwanda never had a historical connection with British imperialism. This research aims at investigating the foreign policy shift of Rwanda as the part of La Francophonie pivot to the Commonwealth in 2009. The method used in this research is qualitative method by using secondary data such as books, articles, journals, official documents, reports and other literary sources. It is found that the shift of Rwanda's foreign policy was influenced by the political transition in Rwanda's domestic politics, its economy condition post-genocide, and the international context which included Rwanda's geography as well as the role of the United Kingdom in aiding Rwanda's state-building post-genocide.

Keywords: *Rwanda, Foreign policy shift, La Francophonie, Commonwealth*