

CHAPTER IV

FROM *LA FRANCOPHONIE* PIVOT TO THE COMMONWEALTH

In this chapter the author attempts to implement the decision-making process theory and model of William D. Coplin as determined on the theoretical framework. The author uses this theory and model in order to analyze the shift of Rwanda's foreign policy which has been the part of *La Francophonie* pivot to join the Commonwealth in the assessment of its domestic politics, economy condition, and international context.

A. The Domestic Politics

The foreign policy of one country is made when there is a demand from the domestic politics which commonly represented by the political elites either executive or legislative. In making the foreign policy, the decision maker might be influenced by four types of influencers; bureaucrat influencer, partisan influencer, interest influencers, and mass influencer. This thesis analyzes the background and the role of President Paul Kagame of Rwanda as the decision maker as well as the bureaucratic influencer in the decision-making process of Rwanda's foreign policy.

1. Paul Kagame's Background

Paul Kagame has been the President of Rwanda since the resignation of President

Bizimungu in 2000. He was born in Tambwe, a village located in the Southern Rwanda on 23rd October 1957 (Office of the President, 2011). He came from a Tutsi family with royal ties derived from the early eighteenth century as his father was related to King Mutara III of Tutsi monarchy and his mother was a descendant of the last Tutsi monarch Queen, Rosalie Gicanda (Chrétien, 2003). When Kagame was born, Rwanda was one of Belgian's protectorates with the United Nations mandate yet running under the reign of Tutsi rulers (Waugh, 2013).

In the late 1950s and the early 1960s a political turmoil happened in Rwanda, resulted in the overthrown of Tutsi monarchy and led the Tutsi groups to flee to neighboring countries. The family of Paul Kagame fled to Uganda and he was raised in exile with the other Tutsi kids. Kagame and his fellow refugee kids attended an outdoor school near their refugee camp organized by the elderly to get primary education. In that outdoor school, they learned English and started to adjust with the Ugandan cultures (Waugh, 2013). Kagame was a very passionate kid in the school that he accomplished the equivalent third grade and was able to go to a well-regarded Rwengoro Primary School at the age of nine. Then he continued to attend one of the best schools in Uganda, Ntare School for his secondary education. This school was also attended by Yoweri Museveni, Ugandan rebel who recruited Kagame to his guerilla army to ta

his guerilla army to take over Ugandan regime (Kinzer, 2008).

In the early 1970s, the brilliant fifteen year-old Kagame was declining in academic performance as his father passed away and his best friend, Fred Rwigyema got departed for being involved in a clandestine mission to overthrow Ugandan President, Idi Amin. Losing two important people in his life had led him to be rebellious and tend to fight those in school who underestimate Rwandan people. He finally got suspended from Ntare School and moved to Old Kampala Secondary School (Kinzer, 2008).

At the age of twenty, Kagame unintentionally reunited with Fred Rwigyema, his childhood friend. Rwigyema at that time had become a soldier under Museveni's commands. By his military training and experiences, Kagame and the other Rwandan exiles began having military training and preparations. They also joined the rebel army of Museveni and successfully toppled down Idi Amin's tyranny regime in 1979. In 1981, Museveni established National Resistance Army (NRA) aimed at overthrowing President Milton Obote's regime and succeeded in 1986 (The State House of Uganda, 2012).

2. Political Transition

After successfully overthrown Obote's regime, the Rwandan refugees of National Resistance Army (NRA) with the dream to bring their people back home left the NRA and established their own revolutionary movement, Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF). Subsequently, the RPF planned an invasion to Rwanda in 1990. Since that year, Rwanda started having a political transition. In 1993, RPF had already controlled several Rwanda's territories until 1994 when the conflict culminated in RPF finally gained victory. The triumph of RPF had been leading them to seize power and the manifestation of political transition which was dominated by the Hutu-Francophone then replaced by the Tutsi-Anglophone.

a. Rwanda under the Hutu-Francophone Leader

Rwandan government under Habyarimana had been dominated by the Hutu-Francophone people since the first time they got liberated from Belgium and decided to maintain French as their official language. The relations between Rwanda and France had been very close under Habyarimana both in personal life and political stage. As discussed in the chapter II of this thesis, the influence of French had been very strong in every aspect of Rwanda; in economy, politics, and security.

Habyarimana had been in the office since the previous president, Kayibanda was ousted from his presidency in 1973 until the time he got assassinated in 1994. Rwanda under his regime was a totalitarian country as Habyarimana created *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement* (MNRD) as the only party in Rwandan political system which drove people to follow the party's interest under Habyarimana. He had taken office for three terms of years in a row in which had become a single candidate in 1983 and 1988 presidential election with 99.97% and 99.98% of votes respectively (Gourevitch & Hoffman, 1999).

Since there had been very high tension and huge gap between Hutu and Tutsi ethnicities from the colonial era in Rwanda, and Habyarima was a Hutu, under his administration the policies of Rwanda tended to advantage the interest of small group of his Hutu supporters and disadvantage the Tutsi. Rwandan government intentionally set quota for universities and government services. His policies led the formation of Hutu extremist which cooperated with the Tutsi in order to oust him (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, 1998).

However, in the early 1990 Rwanda became less totalitarian. Due to the high pressure from France, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank, as well as from the demand of Rwandan people, Habyarimana finally allowed the establishment of other political parties;

Republican Democratic Movement, Social Democratic Party, Liberal Party, and the Christian Democratic Party (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, 1998).

b. The Rising of Tutsi-Anglophone

Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), a revolutionary movement of Tutsi refugees in Uganda—rebel group to Rwanda Hutu government—invaded Rwanda in 1990 but in vain as Rwanda got the military assistance from France. In 1994, Habyarimana was assassinated—his air plane was shot down when it was about to land. His death led both indigenous group of Rwanda to get into a conflict which culminated in genocide and the RPF finally took the vacuum of power in Rwanda.

When the RPF got in power in 19th July 1994, they committed to the ideas of Arusha Accord which affirmed the power sharing plan. Any political parties except *Mouvement Révolutionnaire National pour le Développement* (MNRD) and *Coalition pour la defense de la Republique* (CDR), involved in the leading of genocide were banned from taking seats in the government or parliament. Despite RPF referred to the Arusha Accord, they had unilaterally amended some points of the Arusha Accord itself to the Basic Constitution. The RPF amended the political regime to affirm the strict role of executive presidency, assert the dominance of

RPF in government, and determine the configuration of parliament (Reyntjens, 1996).

In contrast with the Hutu-Francophone regime under Habyarimana, the RPF tended to have inclination with the Anglo-Saxon countries as the Tutsi refugees had been living in Uganda—which was under British influence—for decades since the first time they were casted out of Rwanda and involved in the society where higher education, government as well as the other institutions were conducted in English. The government attempted to escape from the grip of French which had been very strong in Rwanda since its independence and realign to the British (Steflja, 2012).

Rwanda under RPF started pivoting their political direction to the United Kingdom instead of France as the United Kingdom had been providing Rwanda aid in order to rebuild its nation after the horrifying genocide tragedy. The United Kingdom had been playing prominent role by providing support since Museveni was organizing a coup with the National Resistance Army (NRA) which recruited many Rwandan refugees in Uganda. Also, the UK had been the donor for Rwanda as it donated a large amount of funding each year in budget support (Smith, 2012).

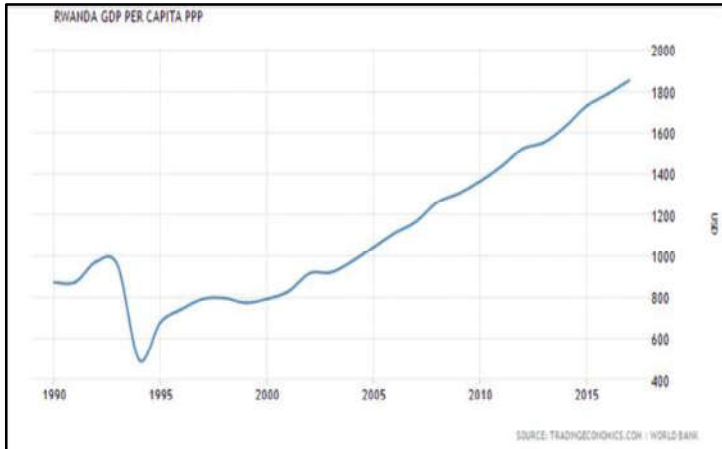
Paul Kagame was rather against the French influences as he alleged French government for assisting the Rwandan Hutu by training and

arming them as well as participating through Operation Turquoise, the entrance of French military forces to Rwanda to fight against the RPF Tutsi who were trying to stop the genocide (Steflja, 2012). The shift of Rwanda inclination to leave French influence implied Kagame's strategy on post-genocide identity project. Rwanda needed to diminish the past colonial ties with Belgium and France which had created distinction between Hutu and Tutsi. It required the government to change the perception of Rwandan identity in order to eradicate the genocide ideology which had been developing in Rwanda's society. The execution of the identity project was to remove the ethnicity column on citizens' identity card and replaced with a single nation identity (Samuelson, 2010).

B. Economy Condition

The economy condition of a country is an essential aspect in foreign policy decision-making process as economy determines whether a country could survive or not. The economy condition or economy capacity must be taken into considerations in order to secure the country and achieve the national interest (Coplin, 1983). Rwanda in making its foreign policy to pivot to the Commonwealth must have considered its economy condition and must have foreseen that the foreign policy will be strategically beneficial for its economy.

Figure 4.3 Rwanda's Economic Growth from 1990 to 2016



Source: tradingeconomics.com/worldbank

The 1994 genocide tragedy had impoverished Rwanda as it eroded the private and foreign investment. There had also been lots of infrastructures and property destructions with physical and psychological damages (Collier, 2008). As shown on the graphic above, Rwanda's lowest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was in the year of 1994 when the genocide took place yet it gradually improving from time to time under the administration of Kagame until the present time. Rwanda has been one of the fastest growing economies in Central Africa as it has tremendous significant progress in the stabilization and reconstruction of Rwanda's economy. The country increased its GDP growth to eight percent per year between 2001 and 2014 (Ayithey, 2017).

In rebuilding its nation, Rwanda had actively sought for any opportunities for its economy development. It sought a gateway to get into the East Africa Community market cooperation—consist of Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda—as regional integration has been one of Rwanda’s national development strategies (Sodipo & Musiitwa, 2012). Since Rwanda is lacking of natural resources, it depends heavily on trading to survive the country.

It has been very challenging in Africa to get foreign direct investment, specifically in Rwanda. The deterrence factors of it were due to the narrow markets and the uncertainty of policies. Rwanda, as a small developing country with genocidal history which impoverished the country, considered the idea of regional integration as an advanced strategy to attract foreign direct investment. Regional capital market could address finance constraints which is additional to multilateral liberalization. The way the East African Community has created regional capital and securities markets to provide a deeper market for the sale of government securities and enabled governments to finance debt at lower rates (Sodipo & Musiitwa, 2012).

In 2007, Rwanda sent its application to the Commonwealth. Rwanda’s application was followed by its economic interest. It intended to pursue economic benefits as the Commonwealth constituted in the World Trade Organization. It was expected that its membership in Commonwealth, Rwanda could facilitate it to play an influential role in the global trade. The Commonwealth is not a regional organization or association yet Rwanda might harness its membership in Commonwealth to strengthen its relations with other African Commonwealth

member countries which situated in the regions in order to integrate their economic developments. Rwanda's membership in both East African Community and in Commonwealth might double-benefit Rwanda as both organizations would offer different opportunities to participate in the global trade and in the international economic cooperation (Pflanz, 2009).

The exports of Rwanda have been dominated by agricultural products such as coffee, and tea, as well as minerals like tin while its imports have been mainly food products, construction materials, machineries, technologies, etc. The comprehension on investments and the awareness on the importance of skillful workforce needed to be raised in order to broaden Rwanda's exports base. Rwanda regarded its potential membership in the Commonwealth will enable Rwanda to get access to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation (CFTC) and Commonwealth Africa Investment Fund which promotes the socio-economic development, human and capital development, as well as aids the reduction of poverty (Sodipo & Musiitwa, 2012).

C. International Context

The International context of one country does influence its foreign policy decision-making process. International context is the external factor that may influence the behavior of one country in determining its foreign policy directions. It requires the geography of a country, the diplomatic relations with other countries and the international demands (Coplin, 1983). This undergraduate thesis analyzes the geography location of

by mountains and plateaus of the great watershed between the Nile and Zaire River basins (CIA World Factbook, 2017).

Since Rwanda is a landlocked country and located in the center of Africa, it is surrounded by countries on its every edge. Those countries are Francophone; Burundi, and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Anglophone; Uganda, and Tanzania (Sinclair, 2012). The geography of one country's and the parties in its surrounding would indeed influences its behavior to keep up with its surrounding in terms of both competitive and cooperative strategies; preserve the peace, security and stability in their regions. In this case, the geography of Rwanda as well as the fact that Rwanda's neighboring countries is the member of Commonwealth has urged Rwanda to create a closer link with its surrounding since there is no single country in the world adequately self-sufficient to fulfill its national needs (Kimanuka, 2007). Even a superpower state must cooperate with other countries in order to maintain its existence. Therefore, Rwanda as a small developing country lacking of natural resources needs to cooperate with other countries specifically its neighboring countries in order to survive.

Since Rwanda had been the part of *Organisation Internationale de La Francophonie* (OIF) since 1970s, it has been having access to build relations and cooperate with the other Francophone countries all over the world,

particularly in Africa as this organization is becoming a platform for French-speaking countries to collaborate. The same way OIF has been a platform for Rwanda to cooperate, Commonwealth would provide Rwanda another platform to easily build cooperation and reach other countries around the globe in different continents which Rwanda does not meet in the OIF. Regarding its international context, the application of Rwanda to the Commonwealth is a form of its strategies to get into another active access to participate in the international stage as Rwanda has been close allies with the United Kingdom and the United States which have vigorously been active in promoting the idea of democracy, human rights and peacekeeping (Arieff & Terrell, 2018).

Commonwealth could facilitate Rwanda to participate in preserving the stability and security in the region as the ideas and common values the members states of Commonwealth are carrying would determine the way each country's behave to be more cooperative rather than conflicting in conducting international relations. As a matter of fact, Rwanda has achieved remarkable progress on security and peacemaking and has played prominent role for the stability of the Great Lakes region (The New Times, 2015).

2. United Kingdom Foreign Aid on Rwanda's State-building

The United Kingdom as one of developed superpower countries in the globe has a responsibility to preserve the international stability under the mandate of United Nations peacekeeping mission. Since 1948 there have been sixty-eight United Nations peacekeeping missions until the present time included the current fifteen missions all over the world. One of its missions was in Rwanda during the genocide and post-genocide (Walker, 2014).

The United Kingdom had been playing an essential role in Rwanda's state-building post-genocide. It viewed there was a possibility for Rwanda to be a peaceful country and potentially could create and maintain stability in its region. The UK has been committed to assist Rwanda to build a long-term peace and stability, as well as economic growth and poverty reduction. An effective government institution was built in order to manifest the development of an inclusive Rwanda's society. Through the Department for International Development (DFID), the United Kingdom invested in Rwanda's basic education in order to generate skillful productive youth for Rwanda's future. Since 2005, the United Kingdom has contributed to the decrease the number of poverty in Rwanda until two million people and still aiding the poor people to escape from poverty through nutrition programs and safeguard the young generation to get decent educations

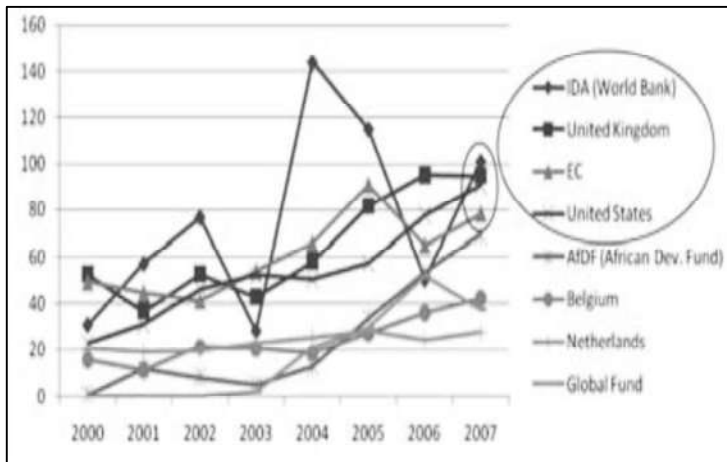
(Department for International Development, 2015).

The interest of United Kingdom is to accomplish its mission which was to preserve the peace by involving other countries and maintain the idea of human rights and democracy. The fact that Rwanda has become the fifth largest contributor to United Nations peacekeeping and has played a big role in the stabilization of Darfur and Central African Republic showed the accomplishment of the UK. It also served the interest of the UK on the humanitarian issues such as extremism and terrorism. However, the aid provided by the United Kingdom was not instantly given to Rwanda; it required Rwanda to commit in running the missions. The government of Rwanda was determined to focus on the reduction of poverty and fight against corruption. The UK financial aid to Rwanda must be utilized efficiently in organizing the programs (Department for International Development, 2015).

The commitment and progress made by Rwanda had made the United Kingdom as one of the donors trust the government in managing the aid efficiently. By 2008, the donors had been funding approximately 50% of the Rwandan government budget. By 2008, donors were funding nearly 50 percent of the government budget through the General Budget Support (GBS). The GBS is an aid which only given to those countries with capability to utilize the aid effectively and

strong commitment on poverty-reduction policy (Zorbas, 2011).

Figure 4.5 Top Donors to Rwanda Post-genocide (2000–2007)



Source: Zorbas, E. (2011). *Aid Dependence and Policy Independence: Explaining the Rwandan Paradox*. In S. Straus, & L. Waldorf, *Remaking Rwanda: State building and human rights after mass violence*. Univ of Wisconsin Press.

The figure above illustrates the participation of ten main donors in Rwanda post-genocide. It shows that Rwanda had been receiving the aid annually from the World Bank, the United Kingdom, European Commission, United States, African Development Fund, Belgium, and Netherlands. The United Kingdom was on the

number one state to provide the biggest donor to Rwanda Government of Rwanda.

The United Kingdom has been the closest bilateral ally of Rwanda since the administration of Kagame either in economic cooperation or in diplomatic relations. For instance, the United Kingdom had publicly supported the application of Rwanda to join the Commonwealth after there had been progressive changes made by Rwanda. In 2004, Rwanda received another aid provided by the UK which was nearly 10% of Rwanda's government budget (Purcell, Dom, & Ahobamute, 2006).

The contribution of the United Kingdom in Rwanda's state-building had been so huge that it influenced the behavior of Rwanda in determining its policy. In order to maintain and strengthen closer partnership with the United Kingdom, Rwanda applied on Commonwealth membership in 2007. Since Rwanda had applied for membership in 1996 and got rejected due to it did not meet the criteria, it gradually improved its nation by referring the Commonwealth criteria as the ideal national orientation (Pflanz, 2007).