

CHAPTER V CONCLUSION

The foreign policy shift of Rwanda as the part of *La Francophonie* pivot to the Commonwealth was led by historical background of this country which made up with indigenous ethnic groups in which the two of them had been conflicting since the colonization era. The Hutu were the labor who did every rough works and the Tutsi were the ruler whose work was to supervise the Hutu.

Rwanda had been colonized by Germany until the end of the World War I in which Germany lost and had to give up any claims over its colonies. Under the mandate of League of Nations Charter, Belgium then took over Rwanda as one of its colonies until it got liberated in July 2 1962. Earlier before its independence, a political turmoil occurred in the late 1950s which resulted in the exile of the Tutsi who were the ruler of Rwandan monarchy regime at that time. The political power then taken by the Hutu who were the majority in Rwanda but in the social strata they were just labors.

In its independence, the new government of Rwanda under Hutu decided to maintain French—the language used by the Belgian administration during the colonization era—to be Rwanda's official language beside Kinyarwanda. Since 1962 to 1996, French had been broadly used as the language of higher education, administration, public services, and official documentation, complementing Kinyarwanda as the national language. Since that time on, Rwanda had been dominated by the Hutu-Francophone people.

Tutsi refugees who had been living in the exile (Uganda and Tanzania) for decades established Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) to return to Rwanda but got banned by the President Habyarimana. They had attempted to enter Rwanda several times but in vain and ended up in a conflict. The conflict then culminated in genocide in 1994 a day after President Habyarimana of Rwanda was assassinated. Approximately 800,000 Tutsi had been killed in that genocide. The Tutsi then took over the regime and started to reconstruct their nations. After the political transition from the Hutu domination to the Tutsi domination, the political direction of Rwanda was also transiting and shifting. Rwanda was once the very close ally of France under the regime of Habyarimana. Otherwise, under the regime of Paul Kagame, Rwanda tended to leave and decimate the French influences as its grip had been too strong in Rwanda. Kagame tend to have an inclination to the United Kingdom as they had been living in Anglo-Saxon countries for decades.

Under the Hutu-Francophone official, Rwanda had been the member of *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF), an organization made up with French speaking countries all over the world, since the first time this organization was established. The establishment of this organization was indeed a form of France's strategy to stay hegemonic in its former colonies. However, as Kagame took the power, English was introduced to its people due to the huge number of Tutsi refugees returned to Rwanda.

In 1996, Rwanda applied for membership on the Commonwealth, an association of 53 sovereign member states of which territories used to belong to the British Empire. The idea of Commonwealth is quite similar to *La*

Francophonie as both associations aim at maintaining the global unity through shared language, history, and culture within its former colonies. However, Rwanda's very first application to Commonwealth was rejected since it did not meet any of Commonwealth membership criteria. Then in 2008, Rwanda established English as the official language, resent its application on Commonwealth membership in 2009 and officially become the member of the Commonwealth even though Rwanda never had a historical connection with British imperialism.

The foreign policy shift of Rwanda under Kagame is analyzed with the foreign policy decision-making process by Coplin. This theory requires three main factors and one actor that is interconnected one another; domestic politics, economy-military condition, and international context as well as the decision maker as the actor. In determining foreign policy, the decision maker is influenced by another actor which exclude from Coplin scheme. In the assessment of Rwanda's foreign policy shift, the decision maker is influenced by their own personal background in the decision making process.

On the assessment of domestic politics, the foreign policy shift happens due to the political transition from Hutu-Francophone to the Tutsi-Anglophone who has their own inclination and interest. During its state-building post-genocide, the United Kingdom had a huge contribution to Rwanda by providing aid. In addition, the inclination of Tutsi-Anglophone to the British influence is due to the background of Rwandan President, Paul Kagame who was raised in exile with English as the language of instructions. Also, Kagame alleged France for being involved in the genocide assisting the Hutu Rwandans.

Economically, since the genocide had brought lots of physical and psychological damages to Rwanda, it needed to rebuild its nation. This country had been a poor country before the genocide tragedy and the genocide impoverished Rwanda worse as it was lacking of natural resources. This kind of situation pushed Rwanda to survive even though it made this country dependent to the international trade. One of its strategies to survive was to integrate with other countries in the region by joining the East Africa Community and apply to the Commonwealth. Rwanda's application to Commonwealth would facilitate the country to get into the global trade and bring abundant economic benefits since the Commonwealth member states annually handled \$2.8 trillion worth trade along with foreign direct investment outflows of \$100 billion, which equal to over 20% of international trade investment.

Based on its international context, the geographic location of Rwanda—a landlocked country situated in the center and surrounded by both Anglophone and Francophone countries—has urged Rwanda to create a closer link with its neighboring countries in order to actively participate in preserving and maintaining peace in the region. 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.

Rwanda's application to the Commonwealth was intended to get into another platform as it was in *La Francophonie*. If Rwanda was the part of the

Commonwealth it would easily build cooperation with more countries in its region and from different continents as this organization was formed with common values that member countries are carrying. The shared common values would determine the behavior of each state in viewing other states that the other states were harmless and tend to be cooperative .Along with the common values of democracy, human rights, and peacekeeping, the member states of Commonwealth could prevent any kind of conflict and tend to be cooperative in maintaining international peace and stability.