

Rwanda won't accept victimization over DRC
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President Paul Kagame has said Rwanda will not be victimized over the DR Congo crisis, which it neither created, nor compounds.

Speaking at the leadership retreat at Gabiro School of Infantry in Rwanda on Thursday, Kagame said last year's high-level UN meeting on the DR Congo crisis on September 27, in New York, was convened to "hang" Rwanda.

The three-day leadership retreat on the development programme code-named Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS2), was under the theme, "Working Together to Deliver EDPRS2."

The 300 leaders from the central and local governments are examining strategies to accelerate growth and achieve the targets set out in the country's economic blueprint.

Kagame said Rwandans should not cower in the face of victimisation because of "other people's actions." He said Rwandans never played a role in making some ethnic Rwandan citizens of the DR Congo. "Regarding the Rwandaphones living in the Congo, the question is who took them there?" he said. Kinyarwanda-speaking communities in the DR Congo have, for decades, been the centre of bloody tension with politicians in Kinshasa, sometimes questioning the former's legitimacy as Congolese citizens.

The alleged exclusion and persecution of Rwandaphones in the Congo forms part of the grievances of the M23 rebels, who took up arms against President Joseph Kabila's government a year ago. They accused Kinshasa of renegeing on a peace deal under which fighters in an earlier rebellion had been absorbed in the national army.

Kagame said: "Assuming Rwanda contributed to DR Congo's problems, say 10% of those problems, should we take responsibility for all their problems? Why hang Rwanda? Why not hang the Congolese?"

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