

Macron begins visit to Africa in attempt to whitewash France's brutal colonial past



Macron begins visit to Africa in attempt to dull France's brutal colonial past??

Algiers, July 27 (HRC)-- French President Emmanuel Macron has gone on a charm offensive in Africa, amid new questions about France's involvement in the so-called "war on terror" and its brutal colonial past in the continent.

Macron, who arrived in Cameroon earlier this week, held talks at the presidential palace on Tuesday morning with his Cameroonian counterpart, Paul Biya, who has ruled Cameroon with an iron fist for nearly four decades.

Cameroon has also been riven by an insurgency by anglophone separatists who have been fighting for independence for two English-speaking provinces since 2017. The northern part of the country has also seen attacks by the Takfiri Boko Haram terrorist group.

On Wednesday, Macron travels to Benin, which has faced deadly raids by militants and whose democracy has steadily eroded under President Patrice Talon over the last half-decade. On Thursday and on the last leg of his tour, Macron will visit Guinea-Bissau, which is beset by political crises. All three countries have been strongly criticized by activists over their human rights records.

The visit comes at a time when former colonial power France has seen its influence in Africa decline compared to China and some other emerging nations. In recent years, several African nations have criticized the colonial and paternalistic attitude of France in Africa. Mali's junta recently cut off its military cooperation with the French government. The development came after Malian troops discovered a mass grave close to a former French military base.

An official France-Africa summit was organized by French president Macron in the southern French city Montpellier. He had invited state linked members of the civil society and entrepreneurs. But even there, official participants criticized the colonial and paternalistic attitude of France in Africa.

The French troop withdrawal from the country in February also prompted celebrations by the anti-French population. Mali's government earlier also expelled France's ambassador, a sign of mounting tensions between the West African country and its former colonizer.

In April 2019, Rwandans held a solemn commemoration of a genocide that killed some 800,000 Tutsis 25 years ago, amid new questions about France's role in the extermination.

These massive anti-France demonstrations in Mali, Chad, and Burkina Faso mark the beginning of what might be called a second wave of the battle to get rid of Western colonialism in Africa.

Africans realize that this colonialism is not only military but also economic, financial, and cultural, and they seek to uproot it, to stop the French looting of their wealth, the erosion of their culture, and to control their political will via politicians and putschists loyal to it.

After colonialism, France sought to link the economies of its colonies with its economy by means of a currency called the French Franc (African Franc), which bases dependency on colonialism.

The French treasury asked African banks to deposit half of their cash reserves with them and to transfer capital from the franc zone to France and not the other way around, which led to mortgaging the monetary policy of these African countries and kept them subject to economic colonialism.

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