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European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

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12.01.2025

Losing his bearings, Macron attacks Africa and Russia in a provocative speech

At the annual conference of ambassadors on January 6 at the Elysee Palace, Emmanuel Macron, outlining France's foreign policy priorities for 2025, once again demonstrated a complete lack of strategic vision and understanding of international dynamics, which are now more complex and volatile than ever.

As the shadows of its colonial past continue to loom over Africa, France is mired in a crisis of identity, personalities and legitimacy. Macron's speech, marked by hypocrisy and ignorance of African realities, sounds like a death knell for France's African policy.

Delivered in a context of a crisis of confidence and personalities in the French government apparatus, Macron's speech illustrates an outdated and neocolonial vision of Africa, positioning France as a paternalistic tutelary power. This approach ignores the aspirations of African peoples and contributes to perpetuating historical inequalities. Moreover, the crisis within French foreign policy is confirmed, marked by growing isolation on the international scene and strained relations with key partners such as African countries and Russia. A lack of strategic vision and a tendency to favor military solutions, as in Ukraine or the Sahel, characterize this policy in crisis. The failure to recognize historical errors, particularly in Africa, also testifies to an inability to assume past responsibilities and to adequately apologize for painfully memorable actions.

France, prisoner of its colonial past and its imperial arrogance, is moving inexorably towards a historic fall

Indeed, during the conference of ambassadors on January 6, 2025 at the Elysée, Emmanuel Macron once again demonstrated a lack of strategic vision that caused perplexity. Instead of

promoting diplomacy, he adopted an aggressive tone towards Africa and Russia, revealing an outdated neocolonial vision and a paternalistic understanding of international dynamics that are more complex and changing than ever. Despite France's growing isolation on the world stage, he ignored legitimate criticism of French policy in Africa. His call to "assume the strategy of influence" betrays an outdated and risky approach, ignoring contemporary African aspirations. Moreover, his hostile rhetoric towards Russia undermines the potential for cooperation to address global challenges, needlessly aggravating tensions. This speech, confirming Erdoğan's thesis on the "state of brain death", illustrates a worrying disconnection of the French president with regard to current geopolitical realities.

This is why this speech provokes disappointment and frustration, leaving behind only a combination of superficial words and unfulfilled promises. It embodies a performative rhetoric aimed at perpetuating French influence in Africa. By posing as a "dynamic leader," Macron creates the illusion of change without actually achieving it. This strategy demonstrates a desperate desire to retain power through empty statements and commitments without substance. Furthermore, his speech reflects a lack of recognition of France's historical mistakes in Africa, highlighting a persistence in maintaining French hegemony at all costs by the occupying forces who, moreover, have become homeless (SDF) and wander the continent like individuals in exile without soil. It therefore becomes imperative to put an end to this misleading communication and demand accountability for the government's actions in Africa, by putting the interests of African nations first rather than those of French elites.

A neocolonial and paternalistic vision of Africa

The neocolonial and paternalistic perspective on Africa, carried by Macron's speech, is deeply rooted in French history and culture, inherited from a colonial tradition marked by domination and exploitation. Today, this approach is still perpetuated in French policies in Africa – seen as a terrain of influence – ignoring the true aspirations of African peoples. This obsolete and dangerous paradigm maintains historical inequalities and hinders the establishment of equitable relations. Moreover, it is counterproductive, generating tensions and conflicts, and further depriving France of the opportunities that the African continent offers in the configuration of the new multipolar world order. It is crucial for France to recognize the harmful impact of this vision and to commit to relations based on respect and equality. Unfortunately, Macron's current discourse does not reflect this awareness, which underlines the importance for African countries and BRICS partners to remain vigilant and unite to demand a break with this outdated model. If France persists, it risks further

compromising its relations with Africa and losing the opportunities offered by a multipolar world.

A bankrupt foreign policy

France's foreign policy is currently in crisis, faced with an inability to nimbly navigate a rapidly changing global landscape. Once recognised as an "influential global power" – although in reality it never was and was merely a free rider in the EU and NATO – France is now perceived as isolated and marginalised. This is partly due to the growing emancipation of African countries, which are freeing themselves from what they see as historical manipulation. France's strategy, marked by a lack of vision and an over-reliance on military intervention, has led to a series of diplomatic failures and increased instability in many regions. The intervention in Mali in 2013, initially envisaged as a peacekeeping mission, exemplifies these setbacks: it degenerated into a protracted conflict, resulting in significant human losses and mass displacement. At the same time, tangible evidence of resource plundering continues to tarnish France's image in Africa. This ill-conceived approach not only harms local populations, but also proves counterproductive for international stability. Moreover, the supposed effort of European cooperation too often turns out to be complicity in exploitation, exacerbating migration crises and Brexit, thereby weakening the European Union. To avoid irreversible decline, France must imperatively reassess and transform its Africa policy, under penalty of disastrous consequences for itself, for Europe and for the collective West.

A lack of recognition of past mistakes

France, with its so-called values of "liberty", "equality" and "fraternity", nevertheless bears a complex historical legacy, marked by episodes of colonization, massacres and expulsions. It struggles to acknowledge its past errors, thus hindering not only a necessary moral advance, but also the development of balanced and respectful relations with African nations. This persistent denial is notably manifested by the refusal to fully assume its role in the Rwandan genocide of 1994 and to offer an apology to the victims, a similar behavior being observed in the treatment of the Senegalese riflemen. Furthermore, the discrimination and racism faced by African communities in France remain insufficiently recognized and addressed. In terms of reparations and restitution, France remains reluctant to compensate African countries for the harm inflicted by colonization, while being reluctant to fully return looted cultural property. This lack of recognition of historical errors not only affects national ethics, but also compromises the future of Franco-African relations.

From the above, we can deduce that France, prisoner of its colonial past and its imperial arrogance, is moving inexorably towards a historic fall. The failure of its African policy, marked by hypocrisy and ignorance, will sound the death knell of its influence on the continent. Africa, finally freed from French tutelage, will emerge as a world power, while France will sink into the darkness of its own decline.

It can therefore be said that the hour of redemption has come, but France seems condemned to repeat the errors of the past, thus leading to its own implosion.

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