

# The Bilderberg's "Cashless Society" Proposal and Rwanda's US Supported Cashless Payment System

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*One of the main topics at the Bilderberg Group meeting held last week in Telfs-Buchen, Austria was the idea of promoting a cashless society. It seems like governments in Africa think that a cashless society is a good idea, which is good news for the Bilderberg elite, but really bad news for the rest of us. The Independent, based in Uganda reported that John Karamuka, the head of payment systems at the National Bank of Rwanda is optimistic in creating a "cashless payment system" for ordinary Rwandan citizens. According to the report, Mr. Karamuka announced during the introduction of Airtel's cashless payment system that "a lot of work remains to be done to build a solid cashless payment system in the country" he continued "Progress made towards creating a cashless economy is good, but is still far from the country's vision".*

The National Bank of Rwanda has partnered with *Airtel Rwanda*, an affiliate owned by Bharti Airtel, a global telecommunications company with operations across Africa and Asia that would allow subscribers to pay bills from their mobile phones. Airtel Rwanda officials said that subscribers will be allowed to "pay electricity bills, television subscription and school fees through their mobile phones. The service will be expanded to include tax payment and water bills before the end of the year".

Karamuka stated that "We need to move from simple money transfer to other financial services where one can pay for water through electronic channels; pay school fees, taxes and even [groceries] through merchant payment. This is when the country will be able to say it is moving towards a cashless payment society." On October 29, 2014 the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) published an article praising Rwanda's leadership for their transition to a cashless society:

Today the Government of Rwanda has moved to accelerate its plans to transform Rwanda into a cashless economy and achieve 80 percent financial inclusion by 2017

UNCDF has partnered with the 'Better Than Cash Alliance' which is funded by (no surprise) the *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*, the *Ford Foundation*, *MasterCard*, *Visa*, and the *United States Agency for International Development (USAID)* among others. The article stated Rwanda's main objective is when it comes to the use of electronic payments by the private sector including its citizens:

Rwanda's commitment to using information and communications technology (ICT) for financial services was made as it officially joined the Better Than Cash

Alliance, an initiative that works with governments, the development community, and the private sector to adopt the use of electronic payments

What is interesting about the UNCDF is that they claim cash prevents people from building assets, opening bank accounts or saving money for the future:

These efforts aim to help people who do not have access to formal financial services and frequently have no option but to subsist almost entirely in an informal, cash-only economy. Living in a cash economy makes it extremely difficult to access financial services like bank accounts, save for the future, build assets, or get credit

Claver Gatete, Rwanda's Minister of Finance and Economic Planning said *"We believe that partnering with the Better Than Cash Alliance will further our ambition to transform Rwanda into a cashless economy and ensure that every Rwandan is financially included."* Dr. Ruth Goodwin-Groen, the Managing Director of the *Better than Cash Alliance* said that *"We welcome Rwanda as the newest member of the Better Than Cash Alliance and commend the Government's leadership and commitment to continue transitioning away from cash"*. Teddy Bhullar, Airtel Rwanda chief executive officer declared that *"We are optimistic that we will create a new wave of accepting payments using mobile phone technology, thus bridging the gap between the traditional brick-and-mortar modes of payment"*. In other words, using traditional methods such as cash is considered a primitive way of doing business. How times are rapidly changing. In 2013, CNBC published an interesting commentary by Scott A. Shay, Chairman of Signature Bank titled *'Cashless society: A huge threat to our freedom'* and said the following:

There are certainly positive outcomes that can be obtained by going cashless. For example, banning sale transactions of cigarettes or sugary drinks or stopping cardholders from overeating, gambling, or whatever other vice is targeted, could lead to a decrease in these vices and their associated problems. A decrease in those problems could positively impact other areas, like, for example, our nation's health-care system. A cashless society would probably also mean less street crime. Yet in return for these benefits, there is an incalculable cost to our humanity. We would lose our freedom to make decisions. It is easy to imagine a totalitarian regime using these tools to great harm. Given current U.S. government policies, it is also very easy to imagine even a liberal government such as our own, being sorely tempted to use the confluence of these technologies. And once used, because they are so very, very powerful, even liberal governments will be enticed into using them until there is pretty complete monitoring and control of every transaction

When a banker admits that a "cashless society" poses a danger to the human race, you know something is terribly wrong!

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