

# Rwanda pursues 40 Genocide fugitives believed to be in Belgium

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The New Times, October 15, 2020

Even as Rwanda is waiting to see what courts in Belgium decide after the recent arrest of three Rwandan Genocide fugitives there, an official has told The New Times that at least 40 suspected mass murderers are known to be hiding in the European country.

According to the National Public Prosecution Authority (NPPA) spokesperson, Faustin Nkusi, Kigali has so sent 40 extradition requests to Brussels over the past two decades.

The 40 are extradition requests, Nkusi noted, are “of those whom we are sure they live in Belgium.”

Nkusi added : “These are extradition requests we sent in different periods. And we continue to collaborate with Belgian judicial authorities who have travelled to Rwanda to conduct investigations on such cases.”

He however declined to divulge further details - such as names and locations - concerning the 40, saying

that this could jeopardise the investigations that still being done.

Belgium, like a dozen other European countries is home to a big number of genocidaires who fled Rwanda and are wanted for Genocide, and extermination after their involvement in the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

Last December, a Belgium court sentenced Genocide suspect Fabien Neretse, 71, to 25 years in jail after being found guilty of Genocide, murder, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

This was not the first Genocide trial in Belgium but it was the first time that a criminal prosecution and conviction was based on a law punishing genocide, introduced there in 2017.

Last week, Jean Pierre Dusingizemungu, president of the Genocide survivors’ umbrella body, Ibuka, told The New Times that as has happened with similar cases in Belgium, in

the past, he expects no extradition. Dusingizemungu noted that the behaviour by European countries “of dragging their feet and delaying justice” is delaying the process of psycho-social reconstruction for genocide survivors.

“Delaying justice by protecting the mass killers in this manner is delaying survivors’ reconstruction. It doesn’t help because a survivor’s psycho-social reconstruction journey involves justice,” he said.

Previous trials in Belgium including that of two catholic nuns, found guilty, in 2001, of participating in the massacre of more than 7,600 people at the Sovu convent in Butare, were based on a universal jurisdiction punishing people for war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Initially, three trials; the one of Neretse, Emmanuel Nkunduwiye and Ernest Gakwaya were to happen at the same time.

However, last year, a court deci-

ded to first hear Neretse’s case separately. Arrested in 2011 in Brussels - Nkunduwiye and Gakwaya are, among others, suspected of having been active members of the Inter-ahamwe militia, something they deny.

Other trials in the past

1. Higaniro Alphonse 20 years in 2001
2. Mukangango Consolate 15 years in 2001
3. Mukabutera Julienne 12 years in 2001
4. Ntezimana Vincent 12 years in 2001
5. Nzabonimana Etienne 22 years in 2005
6. Ndashyikirwa Samuel 10 years in 2005
7. Ntuyahaga Bernard 20 years in 2007
8. Nkezabera Ephraim, died after he had appealed against an imprisonment sentence of 30 years.

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