



Rwanda: Interpol Seeks Arrests of 130 Genocide Fugitives

BY EDWIN MUSONI, 24 NOVEMBER 2012

International experts on Genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity who are meeting at Interpol's general Secretariat in France, have expressed urgency to arrest over 130 genocide fugitives that have been indicted by Rwanda.

Several Genocide fugitives are still in hiding either in Africa or Europe and have eluded justice for more that sixteen years.

The experts expressed concern during the 5th International Expert Meeting on Genocide, War Crimes, and Crimes against Humanity, organised by Interpol General Secretariat.

Over 150 law enforcement and judicial experts from 44 countries are attending the meeting.

Speaking at the event, John Bosco Siboyintore, the head of Rwanda's Genocide Fugitive Tracking Unit, bluntly told the large gathering that the world was moving at a snail's pace in apprehending and prosecuting genocide suspects who live openly and in large numbers in their midst.

In an email sent to The Sunday Times, Siboyintore said, "My call to the international community was to narrow the impunity gap. Say no to safe havens for genocide perpetrators living in their respective jurisdictions. Although the 1994 genocide was committed against Tutsis, it was also committed to the whole world."

He hastened to add that his office had issued 156 indictments and international arrest warrants to 27 countries, both in Africa, Europe and North America, but very few suspects have been apprehended or tried, leaving a large number enjoying impunity in their host countries.

"I urged Interpol to put in place stringent measures to curtail their movements by placing the indicted fugitives on red notices to disable them from moving from one place to another," said Siboyintore.

At the event, Interpol's director of operational police services, Mick O'Connell, said: "Interpol has assisted and supported international criminal tribunals and courts and national authorities in achieving extremely important results in their investigations on genocide, crimes against humanity and war crime.

"International investigations are being enhanced and prominent war criminals and mass atrocities perpetrators have been identified, located and brought to justice. Yet plenty of work remains, with nine fugitives, for example, still wanted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and more than 130 red notices issued at the request of NCB Kigali still outstanding," he said.

However, Interpol's Secretary General, Ronald K. Noble: "Investigations into war crimes are extremely complex. Bringing together international experts to share their knowledge is part of Interpol's ongoing commitment to support the efforts of its 190 member countries to protect their citizens through the location and arrest of suspected war criminals so that they are brought to justice".

In this respect, the conference heard that Védaste Banguwiha, who is wanted by Interpol's National Central Bureau (NCB) in Kigali for alleged complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity, was detained in October by authorities in the Democratic Republic of Congo, after he was identified from a single hit when immigration records were cross-checked against Interpol's global wanted persons database.

This is not the first time such a concern is being expressed publicly. When the Association of African Prosecutors (APA) met in Kigali in August 2011, a similar call was made.

Although the call goes to the whole world, in Africa many Genocide fugitives live in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Congo Brazzaville, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

In Europe, a big number has been identified in France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Other European countries where fugitives have been identified are United Kingdom, Norway, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, Italy, and Finland. There are also those that have been identified in New Zealand, Canada and the U.S.

The most wanted genocide suspects, Felicien Kabuga, the chief financier of the genocide, and Protais Mpiranya who was the commander of the Presidential Guard Battalion during the genocide, are still at large despite the bounty placed on their heads by the United States.

Kabuga and Mpiranyi are believed to be residing in Kenya and Zimbabwe respectively, where they are believed to be under tight protection and running big businesses.



Photo: <http://www.irinnews.org>

Skulls of genocide victims lying at the Murambi Genocide Memorial site (file photo).

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