

Rwanda renews global call to extradite Genocide fugitives

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Rwanda has called on countries to extradite people who played a role in the Genocide against the Tutsi, as the world commemorates the 71st anniversary of the International Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide.

Adopted by the UN General Assembly in its resolution of December 9, 1948 and came into force on January 12, 1951, the Genocide convention is an instrument of international law that codified for the first time the crime of genocide.

The UN General Assembly in 1947 adopted that “genocide” is an international crime that should be prosecuted at both national and international levels, albeit typically being carried out by individuals or States.

The Genocide Convention was the first human rights treaty adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations and signified the international community’s commitment to ‘never again’ after the atrocities committed during the Second World War.

Its adoption marked a crucial step towards the development of international human rights and international criminal law as it is known today.

As the world commemorates, the National Commission for the fight

against the Genocide (CNLG) reminds countries that host criminals who participated in the Genocide against the Tutsi to “abide by international laws and prosecute or extradite them accordingly.”

Over 1100 indictments

Up to date, Rwanda, through the National Public Prosecution Authority (NPPA) has sent 1,144 arrest warrants against suspected genocide perpetrators around the world.

However besides, those that were indicted by NPPA, there are eight others indicted by the UN International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). There are Félicien Kabuga, Protais Mpiranya Augustin, Bizimana, Fulgence Kayishema, Phéneas Munyarugarama, Aloys Ndimbati, Charles Sikubwabo and Charles Ryandikayo, are still at large.

In a statement, CNLG also reminded all countries that give space to genocide deniers, that they must respect the UN Resolution N°2150 and punish those individuals accordingly.

CNLG also called upon all Rwandans, especially the youth, to play active role in the fight against genocide

ideology and related crimes.

“Citizens can do this by participating in activities to commemorate the Genocide against the Tutsi, by denouncing those who would deny or minimise the genocide, and by recording and preserving the history of the Genocide against the Tutsi in their studies and research,” the statement read.

Rwanda ratified the convention on April 16, 1975 within its second republic, but then later refused to ratify its 9th article which stated that a country may be sued by the International Court of the United Nations in the case that it is found not abiding to the provisions of this Convention or if genocide and related crimes are observed within this country.

According to CNLG, this refusal of article 9 indicated that the then Rwandan leadership was aware that they could be held accountable for crimes committed against the Tutsi beginning in 1959, which could be considered as genocide.

“Additionally, it verifies that Rwanda did not want to shun its policies of discrimination and segregation.

These incendiary policies are what culminated into the 1994 Genocide perpetrated against the Tutsi, which claimed more than one million lives,” read a statement from CNLG.

The Genocide against the Tutsi is an international crime recognized by the United Nations, which led to the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) that closed on 31st December 2015 after trying 75 genocide fugitives who had sought refuge abroad.

On April 16, 2014, The UN Security Council adopted the Resolution N0 2150(2014) which implores all countries to set measures to prosecute and punish perpetrators of the genocide in Rwanda who are situated abroad.

On January 28, 2018, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution to correct the appellation of the massacres committed in Rwanda and called them “the Genocide against the Tutsi” and dedicated the 7th of April as the International Day of Reflection on the Genocide against Tutsi in Rwanda.

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