

France: 36 Genocide suspects under active investigation

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The New Times, April 25, 2026



Rwanda's Prosecutor General Angélique Habyarimana meets with Olivier Christen, France's National Anti-Terrorism Prosecutor, in Kigali on Wednesday, April 22. (Courtesy)

France has increased efforts to prosecute suspects linked to the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, with 36 people currently under investigation and four genocide-related trials confirmed between 2026 and 2028.

The update was provided by Olivier Christen, France's National Anti-Terrorism Prosecutor, who said the French justice system has, for many years, remained committed to investigating and bringing before the Assize Court those accused of participating in the Genocide and later settling in France.

Christen said France established a specialised system of magistrates and gendarmes dedicated to fighting impunity and handling genocide-related cases. He noted that this specialised framework was created specifically to investigate and prosecute those suspected of involvement in the atrocities committed in Rwanda in 1994.

He said the system has yielded results, with 12 trials already conducted in France concerning Genocide suspects. Those proceedings resulted in the conviction of eight people, including cases heard on appeal.

According to Christen, more trials are expected in the coming years. In June and July 2026, the Paris Assize Court will hear an appeal trial, while another first-instance trial is expected in November and December 2026.

He added that at least two additional cases are set to be tried between 2027 and 2028.

Christen stressed that France remains firmly committed to pursuing justice, in line with repeated pledges made by the country's president.

Beyond the upcoming trials, he said 36 investigations are still ongoing in France involving other people accused or implicated in

crimes committed during the 100 days of the Genocide.

He acknowledged that the passage of time presents growing challenges to prosecutions, including the advanced age of suspects and survivors, as well as the difficulty of obtaining detailed testimonies and reliable evidence decades later.

To address these challenges, Christen said the anti-terrorism prosecutor's office works closely with the French gendarmerie and Rwandan institutions, including the Office of the Prosecutor General and the Rwanda Investigation Bureau.

He further added that French magistrates and investigators undertake around two missions to Rwanda each year to gather testi-

monies, identify victims, and strengthen case files for proceedings in France.

According to Rwanda's National Public Prosecution Authority, 49 indictments have so far been sent to France.

So far, France has tried and convicted eight genocide perpetrators. These include Pascal Simbikangwa, Octavien Ngenzi, Tito Barahira, Claude Muhayimana, Laurent Bucyibaruta, Philippe Hategekimana, Dr Sosthène Munyemana, and Dr Eugène Rwamucyo.

Rwamucyo's appeal trial is scheduled for June 2026, while French courts are expected to begin the trial of Safari Majariwa in November on genocide-related charges.

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