

Govt mourns Dafroza Gauthier, lauds her justice campaign

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Dafroza Gauthier

The Government of Rwanda has mourned the death of Dafroza Mukarumongi Gauthier, a France-based campaigner who spent decades helping pursue suspects of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi.

She died on Saturday, October 3, at the age of 72, following an illness.

Together with her husband, Alain Gauthier, she co-founded the Collectif des parties civiles pour le Rwanda (CPCR) in France in 2001, through which they helped gather testimonies and evidence for cases against Genocide suspects.

In a statement issued on Saturday, the

government described her work that earned her Igihango National Order of Outstanding Friendship in 2017 as “tireless”.

“Madame Dafroza Gauthier’s courage and unwavering commitment to memory, truth and justice leave an enduring legacy,” the statement read.

The government extended condolences to the husband, her family and friends, as well as “all whose lives she touched.”

Daphroza and Alain began their justice campaign in 1996, travelling to Rwanda to meet survivors, gather testimonies and trace information about people suspected of involvement in the Genocide who had settled in France.

They used the information to prepare case files for French authorities and were behind almost all of the 30 complaints filed in France against Rwandans suspected of participating in the Genocide against the Tutsi.

Their work contributed to prosecutions, including that of doctor Eugène Rwamucyo, who was sentenced in 2024 to 27 years in prison for complicity in genocide and crimes against humanity.

Daphroza's knowledge of Kinyarwanda and Rwanda's history also enabled her to translate and interpret documents used in court proceedings.

Beyond legal proceedings, the couple also visited schools and universities to share the history of the Genocide and challenge its denial.

Their contribution was recognised in

November 2017 when President Paul Kagame awarded them the Igihango National Order of Outstanding Friendship.

Their work was later chronicled in the 2023 book '*Rwanda, à la poursuite des génocidaires*', written by journalist Thomas Zribi with illustrator Damien Roudeau and a foreword by writer and artist Gaël Faye.