

He faked abortion case to humiliate me – Former Rwanda gendarme in genocide trial

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The court of Assize in France

The trial of Philippe Hategekimana naturalised Philippe Manier has proceeded in France with strong testimonies of people who served with him under the Ex force armées Rwandaise(EX-FAR), as a gendarme in Nyanza, Southern Province during the 1994 Genocide against Tutsi.

Today, a female gendarme at that time, now 58 years old is a witness from Rwanda who brought to court new testimonies which intend to show the involvement of her commanders in the plan and execution of the Genocide.

The witness who now resides in the Eastern

Province of Rwanda served with Hategekimana, who was in charge of Camp's Operations. The witness was a junior officer.

The first thing she told the court of Assize in France which is trying Hategekimana on Genocide crimes, this witness brought a case that she said, "*shocked her most during the service.*"

"It was in 1993. Hategekimana ordered me to remove the service clothes and go civilian. He brought a police officer who escorted me to the health centre for check up to see whether I didn't carry abortion. This was a fabricated case that just intended to humiliate me for being Tutsi," she said tears rolling in the eyes.

Meanwhile, the medical tests showed that this witness had never carried abortion.

"Please ask him why he broke my heart," she further said. With strong emotions, the court realised that the witness might not carry on and requested her to relax so as to be able to proceed.

The court asked her whether this act just intended to humiliate her, but the witness said, that this would cost one's job on top of 25-year jail sentence.

“We were always submitted to harsh, humiliating punishments for no reason, just because we were Tutsi. In the force, we lived under fear,” said the witness who was a type writer in the secretary office.

Earlier during the interrogations, Hategekimana argued that the abortion test was conducted in 1994, which the witness refuted.

The suspect also would have wanted the witness not to testify in this trial.

In all this, the prosecution was quick to argue : *“a sentence of 25 years against abortion ?”* and the witness to answer them : *“Just ask him. He is here and can tell why he wished bad to me.”*

Commanders Deviate from the Duty to Protect

During the Genocide, the witness said, she was able to know the true colours of his commanders, including Hategekimana.

Her commanders, apart from Hategekimana, were François Birikunzira and Second Lieutenant Musabe and one Ntawigira.

At first, she said, the commander was not active in the killings, and his assistants were encouraging him to subscribe to the killings.

One day, after the speech of President Sindikubwabo Theodore calling upon the citizens of Butare to kill in late April 1994, the witness saw soldiers of military school joining his camp. They carried a brief meeting and went to town and started firing.

“They killed the Tutsi in town for a whole day. They were led by the intelligence regi-



Philippe Hategekimana Manier (sitted)

ment from my camp,” she said.

One of the colleagues who used to tell the news of killings to this witness, was the driver of the commander.

One other day, she testified having seen Hategekimana entering with the Bourgmester of Ntyazo commune-Nyagasaza (whom the former is accused to have killed) who was Tutsi.

“Things were tense. I hurried in my office fearing to see the worse since I knew the bourgmester was Tutsi,” she said.

“They put him aboard a white pickup, and later on, the driver’s commander told me that he was killed, but I don’t know who was responsible of his death.”

When killings started in the Agronomic Institute-ISAR Songa, Hategekimana also took out A Mortal 60mm from the store and warned : *“I am going to show those goons-loosely translated as ziriya ngengera ngiye kuzereka.”*

However, the witness does not know whether the suspect in this trial is the one who used the mortal.

The mutation to kill, the Rubangura Sister

In the middle of the killings, the witness tells court, her commanders found it wise to send them to Kigali, which intended to kill them.

She said, they were sent to the headquarters in Kacyiru on May 5, 1994, and once there, the three tutsi gendarmes out of ten who were sent were killed.

“One of us refused to go to the front and she was told to handover the clothes and go. They handed him over to Interahamwe who killed him,” she said.

Meanwhile, the witness said that Interahamwe were part of the regular army, to an extent that they used to even come at the camp for lunch.

“Apparently, Kacyiru camp was guided by Interahamwe militia,” she said.

The civil parties asked this witness information that intended to know the truth about the sister of late Vedaste Rubangura, a city mogul in Kigali.

The sister of Rubangura was for a long time jailed at the brigade, and, the witness heard from the commander’s driver, that they went to kill her.

The lady was the manager of Banque Commerciale du Rwanda(BCR) in Nyanza, and, civil parties wished to understand whether intention to kill her was to take the bank’s money. The witness cannot know, she only confirmed that she was tutsi.