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The troubled course of justice
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Fidèle Uwizeye is one of a small number of civilians transferred from a military detention centre to a civilian prison. An employee of the Ministry of the Interior, who had been *préfet* of Gitarama under the previous government, he was arrested on 1 May 1998 in Kigali and initially detained at the gendarmerie in Remera, in Kigali. A few days later, he was moved to an undisclosed location. His fate remained unknown until he was transferred to the civilian prison of Kimironko on 17 July 1998. It was then revealed that he had been detained incommunicado for more than two months in harsh conditions in a military detention centre of the *Garde présidentielle* (Presidential Guard) at Kimihurura, in Kigali. Throughout his detention there, he was held in isolation but could hear other detainees in a nearby building; sometimes he heard them being beaten. The cell in which he was held was very cold, with an electrified ceiling; he had to sleep on the concrete floor. He was given very little food for the first few days. Whenever he was moved from his cell, including for interrogation, the soldiers put a sack over his head and drove him to an unknown location, at night. During his detention, he did not know where he was being held, or where he was taken for these interrogations.



Fidèle Uwizeye
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His family was not able to see him until he was transferred to Kimironko prison in July 1998. Initially he was in poor physical condition and could hardly walk because of insufficient food and inadequate light during his period in military custody; his health later improved. On 31 January 2000, he was provisionally released, though not as a result of any court hearing or trial; he has been asked to report to the Supreme Court once a week.

Fidèle Uwizeye was not accused of participation in the genocide but of "endangering state security". When he was interrogated in military custody, he was asked repeatedly about armed opposition groups and politicians suspected of collaboration with these groups. He was also criticized for testifying in the trial of Jean-Paul Akayesu by the ICTR in Arusha.¹⁷ After his transfer to Kimironko, one of the individuals who had reportedly been behind the accusations against him was said to have withdrawn his testimony, claiming that it was false and had been extracted by force.

¹⁷ Fidèle Uwizeye had been called upon by Jean-Paul Akayesu, former *bourgmestre* of Taba *commune* in Gitarama, to testify about the role of *bourgmestres* during the genocide. The trial of Jean-Paul Akayesu was one of the first to be concluded by the ICTR in Arusha: in September 1998, he was found guilty of the nine counts for which he was indicted, including genocide and crimes against humanity; he was sentenced to life imprisonment.