

Prosecutor : Zimbabwe now cooperating in apprehending Genocide fugitive Mpiranya

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Prosecutor Brammertz

Zimbabwean authorities have reaffirmed their “unreserved commitment” to provide full cooperation with the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (IRMCT) in matters of investigations into the whereabouts of the Genocide fugitives.

This was said by Serge Brammertz, Prosecutor of IRMCT while addressing the UN Security Council on Monday December 13. It was during a session to update the council on the activities of the UN court.

IRMCT (The Mechanism) took over the work of the now-dissolved International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and that

of former Yugoslavia (ICTY) after the two UN courts closed.

“With respect to Zimbabwe, I undertook an official mission to Harare in early November, where I met with Vice President (Constantine) Chiwenga and other senior officials. We discussed positive results achieved recently in our joint efforts, as well as key outstanding issues,” Brammertz told the council.

“As a result of these discussions, I submitted a set of concrete recommendations on how to further improve our cooperation, and reiterated our pending requests for vital information from Zimbabwean authorities,” he said.

Zimbabwe has for a long time been cited to be hosting genocide fugitives and key of them is Protais Mpiranya, the former commander of the notorious Presidential Guards who spearheaded killings mainly in Kigali during the Genocide against the Tutsi.

Brammertz said that his office remains committed to the search of six Genocide fugitives, one being Mpiranya, who is considered by the UN court as ‘Big Fish’ and whom the Mechanism insists it must try before it winds

up.

The remaining five fugitives – including Flugence Kayishema believed to be in South Africa – were indicted by the ICTR but their files were later handed to Rwanda, meaning that in case of their arrest, they will be tried in Rwandan courts.

He added that if able to obtain the needed intelligence and evidence, they expect further significant advancements in their work, and the key countries in this regard at the moment are Zimbabwe and South Africa.

“While I have not yet received a response, I trust that in the coming period, I will be able to report that Zimbabwe is providing full and effective cooperation,” Brammertz added.

However he called out South Africa for lack of cooperation, adding that South Africa is still failing to adhere to its international obligations.

Addressing the council, Rwanda’s permanent representative at the UN, Valentine Rugwabiza expressed concerns over countries that continue to obstruct international justice by refusing to cooperate in the arrest of the fugitives.

“The Government and people of Rwanda continue to ask ourselves what could possibly be the geostrategic interests of any Member State to side with the perpetrators by assisting them to hide and escape justice for crimes of Genocide they committed in Rwanda,” she said.

Besides the six fugitives indicted by the UN court, there are over 1,100 indictments issued by the Rwandan prosecution to genocide fugitives in over 30 countries where they have

Glorifying genocidaires

Meanwhile, different UN representatives urged the countries harbouring Genocide fugitives to cooperate with the Mechanism and bring them to justice, and condemned the denial of the Genocide against the Tutsi, which is being perpetuated in different UN member states.

“I am compelled to bring to your urgent attention once again the continued denial of crimes, and glorification of génocidaires and war criminals, for instance how can others claim men like Théoneste Bagosora were only defending Rwanda, when his criminal responsibility for the Genocide was proven beyond reasonable doubt?” said Serge Brammertz Prosecutor of IRMCT.

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“Genocide denial is used to prevent reconciliation, to provoke hatred and to destabilize peace and security and condemns present and future generations to bear the burdens of the past” he added.

Diarra Dime-Labille, Legal Advisor to the Representative of France at the UN, urged the different countries to collaborate with the Mechanism and bring the genocidaire to justice as a way of paying respect to the survivors.

“Justice will not be served when the perpetrators have died, even years later these people still need to be persecuted for their crimes and it is a big problem if some countries are not fully collaborating to promote justice,” she added.