The Kigali High Court on Monday, February 16, postponed the appeal hearing for renowned fashion designer Moses Turahirwa, who is challenging a one-year prison sentence handed down by the Nyarugenge Intermediate Court in December 2025 over drug-related offences.

Turahirwa was convicted of using narcotic drugs, specifically cannabis, and document forgery. In addition to the prison term, the court imposed a fine of Rwf2 million.

At Monday's hearing, Turahirwa told the court he had appeared with a new lawyer and had not yet had enough time to consult with her. He explained that illness had prevented him from meeting the lawyer earlier, and his previous legal representative, Irene Bayisabe, was unavailable to continue the case.

Both Turahirwa and his new lawyer requested a postponement to allow proper preparation for the appeal. The prosecution did not oppose the request, agreeing that he should have time to discuss his defence with his new legal team.

The court granted the postponement, describing it as Turahirwa's last opportunity to prepare, and rescheduled the hearing for March 16.

During the original trial, Turahirwa faced charges of consuming, transporting, and storing narcotic drugs. The court later acquitted him of transporting and storing drugs, citing insufficient evidence, but found him guilty of consuming cannabis.

In earlier hearings, Turahirwa told the court he had taken steps to address his drug use since February 2025, including seeking medical care and counselling from a doctor in the United States. He consistently denied any involvement in drug trafficking.

Turahirwa's legal troubles date back to April 2025, when the Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB) confirmed his arrest over alleged drug use. Tests by the Rwanda Forensic Institute (RFI) detected illegal substances in his system. At the time, RIB spokesperson Thierry Murangira said investigations were ongoing and that the case was based on forensic evidence.

This was not Turahirwa's first brush with drug-related charges. On April 27, 2023, he was arrested over alleged drug use and forgery. He admitted to using cannabis when he appeared before the Nyarugenge Primary Court in May 2023 and was later

granted bail by the Nyarugenge Intermediate Court on July 15 that year.

The upcoming High Court hearing will determine whether the lower court’s ruling and sentence will be upheld or overturned.