Félicien Kabuga was transferred today from France to the custody of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (Mechanism) in The Hague, after having been at large for more than 22 years. His initial appearance will be held in due course before a Judge of the Trial Chamber assigned to his case.

Kabuga is charged with genocide, complicity in genocide, direct and public incitement to commit genocide, attempt to commit genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, and extermination and persecution as crimes against humanity, in respect of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda.

Kabuga was first indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda on 26 November 1997, and was arrested near Paris on 16 May 2020, pursuant to a warrant of arrest and an order for transfer issued by the Mechanism.

After his arrest, Kabuga contested his extradition before the French courts, and on 30 September 2020, the French Cour de cassation rejected his appeal and authorised his transfer into the Mechanism’s custody.

Following that decision, Kabuga filed an urgent motion on 5 October 2020 requesting, inter alia, that his arrest warrant and order for transfer be amended to provide for his transfer to the Hague branch of the Mechanism rather than the Arusha branch, citing in particular his medical conditions and the health risks associated with travel.

Both the Office of the Prosecutor and the Registrar of the Mechanism supported the request for Kabuga to be temporarily transferred to The Hague.

On 21 October 2020, Judge Iain Bonomy amended the arrest warrant and order for transfer to allow for Kabuga’s temporary transfer to the United Nations Detention Unit at the Hague branch of the Mechanism.

Kabuga’s case will be heard before a Trial Chamber composed of Judge Iain Bonomy, Presiding, Judge Graciela Susana Gatti Santana, and Judge Elizabeth Ibanda-Nahamya.