

The former Minister of State for Youth and Culture, Edouard Bamporiki was Friday sentenced by Nyarugenge Intermediate Court to four years in prison and a fine of Rwf. 60 million for fraud. The former minister was found guilty of two counts: fraudulent acquisition of the property of others and abuse of power conferred on him by law.

Bamporiki and his lawyers were not present in court during the verdict, nor were the prosecutors. The prosecution had requested a 20-year sentence and a fine of Rwf. 200 million. However, Bamporiki's lawyer, Jean Baptiste Habyarimana, had asked for a suspended sentence on the grounds that his client had pleaded guilty and had been cooperative throughout the trial.

In rendering the judgment, the three judges ruled that Bamporiki "does not deserve a suspended sentence". "It would teach the public no lesson if someone of his status as minister for Culture and defender of values was not punished," they argued.

Under house arrest since his arrest, Bamporiki has 30 days to appeal according to the law. He was suspended from duty in May 2022 and immediately began to be investigated.

During the hearing, the prosecution told the court how Bamporiki had solicited a bribe from businessman Norbert Gatera, promising to help him get the city of Kigali to reopen his factory, which had been closed for failing to meet the requirements.