

Augustin Bizimana, one of the major fugitives alleged to have been a senior leader of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi has been confirmed dead. This comes twenty years after his passing in the Republic of the Congo.

The Minister of Defence in the Interim Government during the genocide, Bizimana was confirmed dead by the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT) which took over cases from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) when it closed down in 2015.

The Mechanism Office of the Prosecutor released a statement on Friday saying that the confirmation is based on the conclusive identification of Bizimana's remains in a grave site in Pointe Noire, the Republic of the Congo.

Bizimana was indicted by ICTR in 1998 for thirteen counts of genocide, complicity in genocide, extermination, murder, rape, torture, other inhumane acts, persecution, cruel treatment and outrages upon personal dignity, all in relation to crimes committed during the 1994 genocide.

Among the crimes charged, Bizimana was alleged to be responsible for the murders of former Prime Minister Agathe Uwilingiyimana and ten Belgian United Nations peacekeepers, and for the murder of Tutsi civilians throughout Gisenyi, Ruhengeri, Butare, Kibuye and Cyangugu prefectures.

According to the MICT Prosecutor, an exhaustive investigation combining advanced technology with extensive field operations was conducted which also involved exceptional cooperation with partner authorities in Rwanda, the Republic of the Congo, the Netherlands and the United States. Late last year, the Office conducted DNA analysis on previously-obtained samples of human remains from a grave site in Pointe Noire, the Republic of the Congo. Subsequent investigations and comparative DNA analysis by the Office over the last several months ruled out that the remains were those of any other person. The Office further verified additional evidence concerning the circumstances of Bizimana's death. Accordingly, the Office confirms today that Augustin Bizimana is deceased. It is believed that he died in August 2000 in Pointe Noire.

With the arrest of Félicien Kabuga last Saturday and confirmed death of Bizimana, the Office of the Prosecutor has now accounted for two of the three major fugitives indicted by ICTR. The remaining major fugitive is Protais Mpiranya, former commander of the Presidential Guard of the Rwandan Armed Forces, and the five

other fugitives indicted by the ICTR, Fulgence Kayishema, Phénéas Munyarugarama, Aloys Ndimbati, Ryandikayo and Charles Sikubwabo.