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## **UN Tribunal for Rwanda to Sentence Self-Confessed Serial Rapist**

KIGALI — On 23 Friday February, the judgment in the case of Joseph Nzabirinda, 50, accused of multiple rapes in Ngoma Commune (now Huye - Southern Province) will be delivered, however, for a crime he pleaded guilty, RNA has established.

Joseph Nzabirinda was a youth organizer in Ngoma commune in 1994.

Nicknamed "Biroto", the former businessman in Butare Prefecture and later investigator with the ICTR [International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda] pleaded guilty to one count of murder as a crime against humanity to which he pleaded guilty on 13 December 2006.

Addressing court then, Mr. Nzabirinda expressed "deep remorse" for his crimes and asked for pardon from the people of Rwanda for what he had done. Judges Arlette Ramaroson (Madagascar, William Sekule (Tanzania) and Solomy Balungi Bossa (Uganda) heard his case.

Prosecutors said Mr. Nzabirinda, participated in meetings in 1994 with the notorious Interahamwe [ethnic Hutu] militia in which the planned execution of Tutsis in his area, Sahera sector, was discussed. He also encouraged attacks on Tutsis who had gathered on a hillside and at roadblocks.

During the hearing prosecutors stated Mr. Nzabirinda was an approving spectator during attacks, while his defence counsel agreed that while he had not personally carried out the killings, he had been an accomplice by omission.

On or about the 22 April 1994, the army and the Interahamwe militia launched a massive attack on the Tutsi refugees on a hillside with firearms and traditional weapons, an act which resulted in thousands of deaths.

During all of the same period Nzabirinda, together with militia, went out searching for Tutsi in their hiding places throughout the region and ordered the Interahamwe to kill those that were subsequently found.

Nzabirinda was also accused of having personally raped three Tutsi women. Following the killings on the hillside, he is said to have picked out a Tutsi girl and forced her to come to a house where he was staying.

Here, the young girl was reported to have been raped on several occasions by Joseph Nzabirinda and his Interahamwe colleagues, and then subsequently killed by Nzabirinda.

Towards the end of April, accompanied by another man, he is again said to have raped two girls—after threatening to kill them—in a ruined house in Sahera.

Joseph Nzabirinda was previously employed by the ICTR (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda) as an investigator for the defence of the former prefect of Butare, Sylvain Nsabimana.

In November 2001, the court's registry office cancelled his employment contract on the grounds that he had provided forged documents.

He was arrested on 21 December 2001 in Belgium and transferred to the Tribunal in Arusha (Tanzania) on 20 March 2002.

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