

World

British police arrest Rwandan spy chief

23 Jun 2015 08:37 [Staff reporter and Reuters](#)

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British police have arrested Rwandan Intelligence chief Karenzi Karake at the request of Spain, where he is wanted in connection with war crimes.



The director general of Rwanda's National Intelligence and Security Services, Karenzi Karake, was arrested at London Heathrow Airport on Saturday for crimes related to the Rwandan genocide.

"Karenzi Karake, 54, a Rwandan national appeared before Westminster Magistrates' Court ... after being arrested on a European arrest warrant on behalf of the authorities in Spain, where he is wanted in connection with war crimes against civilians," British police said on Monday in an emailed statement.

Karake was remanded in custody to re-appear at the court on Thursday. It was not immediately possible to contact Karake's family or his lawyers outside of normal business hours in London. There was no response from the Rwandan Embassy in London.

In 2008 a Spanish High Court judge, Fernando Andreu, accused 40 Rwandan military and political leaders, including Karake, of engaging in reprisal killings after the country's 1994 genocide. The judge indicted the officials for genocide, crimes against humanity and terrorism which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of civilians, including Spaniards.

Jordi Palou-Loverdos, a Spanish lawyer representing victims in a case of universal jurisdiction, told [Digital Journal](#) on Monday that Emmanuel Karenzi Karake entered the UK more than a week ago. He said that confirmation of the London arrest came from the Spanish court and Judge Fernando Andreu Merelles early Monday.

"Interpol UK has requested Interpol Spain confirm that the European Arrest Warrant is still alive and pending.

That was done by the Spanish judge. Now all documents required by the UK are being translated officially into English,” he added.

Scotland Yard and Britain’s National Crime Agency were unable to immediately confirm the report, however. Karake is currently director general of Rwanda’s National Intelligence and Security Services (NISS), an umbrella spy agency that oversees intelligence gathering in civilian and military spheres.

Loyal to President Kagame

In February 2008 Andreu Merelles issued an indictment against 40 commanders loyal to Rwandan President Paul Kagame on charges of genocide, crimes against humanity and other offenses committed in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The charges against Karake stem from his tenure as head of military intelligence after the 1994 genocide. The Spanish court has accused the lieutenant general of ordering large scale, organized massacres of Rwandan civilians throughout a number of Rwandan areas.

The indictment also alleges that Karake ordered the killing of three Spanish nationals working for the NGO Medicos del Mundo and was ultimately responsible for the murder of Canadian priest Guy Pinard in 1997.

Palou-Loverdos hailed the arrest, which is the first to occur among the 40 Rwandan commanders indicted. “This means that Rwandan, Spanish and Congolese victims killed in Rwanda and in the Democratic Republic of Congo from 1994 to 2000 are officially recognized,” he said.

The arrest signals progress for ‘truth, justice and memory of those who have disappeared violently.’ “It means this hidden truth is somehow revealed and that there is hope for justice after all these obstacles,” he declared, referring to struggles the Spanish court has faced in its attempt to persuade governments to agree to extradite Rwandan suspects close to Kagame.

In the indictment, defectors of Kagame’s Tutsi-led army have given sworn testimony that under Karake’s orders, thousands of Hutu civilians were killed in an area called Masaka, just outside the capital. The intelligence chief is also accused by his ex-colleagues of having ordered the systematic massacre of civilians in Ndera, Gabiro, Rwinkwavu, Nasho, Kidaho, Nkumba and Ruhengeri, including the “mass incineration” of bodies in Akagera Park, which was off limits to NGOs and UN personnel in the aftermath of the genocide.



*The director general of Rwanda’s National Intelligence and Security Services, Karenzi Karake (Left).
(Wazaonline.com)*

Confidential documents from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda – accessed by [Digital Journal](#) – confirm that from July 1994 until early 1997 when Karake was chief of Rwanda’s Directorate of Military

Intelligence (DMI), special units systematically rounded up and killed Hutus throughout the country, and lured male Hutu recruits into the Rwandan Patriotic Army in schemes that led to their murder in Akagera Park near the eastern border.

Karake and another high profile Rwandan general named Charles Kayonga have visited Britain before and been able to roam freely, despite condemnation from human rights activists and victims' families. Britain has long been one of Kagame's staunchest allies since the 1994 genocide. The Spanish court said it had enough evidence to implicate Kagame in mass murder and reprisal atrocities but it could not indict the president because as head of state he has immunity.

Read more: <http://www.digitaljournal.com/news/crime/britain-arrests-kagame-s-spy-chief-on-genocide-charges-lawyer-breaking-news/article/436485>

This article has been edited to add background information

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