

Senior Rwandan official arrested

German police have arrested a senior Rwandan official in connection with the killing of a previous president whose death triggered the 1994 genocide.

Rose Kabuye - the chief of protocol for current Rwandan President Paul Kagame - was detained on arrival at Frankfurt on a warrant issued by a French judge.

She is one of nine senior Rwandan officials wanted over the shooting down of Juvenal Habyarimana's plane.

All are members of the party which ousted the genocidal regime.

Correspondents say Ms Kabuye, a former guerrilla fighter with the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), now Rwanda's ruling party, has heroic status in Rwanda.

She has since served as an MP and mayor of the capital Kigali, and is one of President Kagame's closest aides.

Transfer to France

A German diplomat told AFP news agency that Ms Kabuye had been in Germany on private business and that Germany was "bound to arrest her" by a French-issued European arrest warrant.

Ms Kabuye has visited the country before but under German law could not be arrested as she was part of an official delegation.

"Rwanda has been made aware on several recent occasions that if Ms Kabuye returned to Germany she would be arrested," said the diplomat.

Ms Kabuye's lawyer said she would be transferred to France "as quickly as possible".

"She is ready to speak to the judges, especially since, to our knowledge, there isn't much in the dossier," said Leon-Lef Forster, referring to the evidence against his client.

AFP quoted Rwandan Information Minister Louise Mushikiwabo as saying that Ms Kabuye's arrest was a "misuse of international jurisdiction".

Complicity

Ms Kabuye and the eight other senior RPF officials were indicted in France in 2006 following an investigation.

The BBC's Alasdair Sandford in Paris says the charge led to an immediate break in diplomatic relations between Paris and Kigali which has continued ever since.

Although the RPF is suspected of being behind the attack on the former president's plane, their involvement has never been proved and they have rejected the charges.

Rwandan President Paul Kagame has also accused France of complicity in the genocide, in which 800,000 Rwandans were killed.

Earlier this year, Ms Kabuye's lawyers complained that they were being denied access to the indictment dossier, and criticised what they described as France's "silence" over the case, says our correspondent.

The African Union (AU) has said arrest warrants would not be recognised in AU countries and has also accused France of violating international law by failing to bring the case to trial.

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<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/africa/7718879.stm>

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