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## **Rwanda Proposes Removing Capital Punishment for Genocide**

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By Gabriel Gabrio

KIGALI, Rwanda—Rwanda's government has proposed eliminating the death penalty for genocide to encourage European countries and Canada to extradite suspected masterminds of the nation's 1994 mass killings, the attorney general said Friday.

Rwanda has repeatedly demanded that Western nations extradite any genocide suspects they know are living in their countries, but some nations have expressed reservations because of the death penalty.

"We know that capital punishment is a sensitive subject in Rwanda but we would rather compromise a little and get the suspects here for trial than allow them to roam the world freely," Attorney General Martin Ngoga told The Associated Press.

Rwanda's parliament is considered likely to pass a government bill eliminating the death penalty for genocide because most lawmakers belong to the ruling party and its allies.

Genocide survivors' organizations have denounced the possibility of removing capital punishment for genocide.

The country's first and only execution for genocide was in 1998 at a soccer field in the capital, Kigali. In spite of pressure from Western governments, 22 convicts were executed there by firing squad.

Last month, Rwanda released a list of 93 genocide suspects thought to be living in Western Europe and North America.

It wants more suspects to be tried in Rwanda, instead of at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in the northwestern Tanzanian town of Arusha.

The tribunal, which does not impose the death penalty, has convicted 20 suspects and acquitted three. Trials are under way for 27 others.

More than a half-million members of the Tutsi ethnic minority and moderates from the Hutu majority were slaughtered in the Rwandan genocide.

Only the United States has extradited a genocide suspect to Rwanda.

Last year, Enos Kagaba was deported from Minnesota after he was found to have entered the United States illegally.

Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark and Switzerland have been pursuing genocide suspects through their own courts.

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