

September 20, 2006

## **Former Rwandan Education Minister Acquitted of Genocide Charges by UN Court**

The United Nations war crimes tribunal for Rwanda today unanimously acquitted a former Rwandan education minister of all charges brought against him in connection with the 1994 genocide in the small central African country on the grounds that they were not proved beyond a reasonable doubt.

André Rwamakuba, Rwanda's minister for primary and secondary education during the 100-day killing spree between April and July 1994 in which some 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were massacred, had been accused of genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, and incitement to commit genocide.

The charges included directing a massacre against people who had taken refuge in hospitals, allegedly selecting Tutsi patients for removal from National University Hospital in Butare and leading massacres on the hospital premises. According to the indictment, he also struck wounded patients with clubs and allowed militiamen to kill women, disembowelling those who were pregnant.

Mr. Rwamakuba, a physician, pleaded not guilty to all counts. In its acquittal the tribunal, sitting in Arusha, Tanzania, said the testimony of prosecution witnesses was mainly indirect and hearsay evidence and was undermined by significant credibility and reliability issues.

It also heard testimony from defence witnesses, including Tutsi survivors, that Mr. Rwamakuba was not present at the time and location of the events and was not involved in massacres that took place either at the Butare hospital or in Gikomero commune.

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