



Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Roland Amoussouga (Part 13 of 13)



Role:	Spokesperson for the Tribunal
Country of Origin:	Togo
Interview Date:	29 October 2008, 30 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Batya Friedman Donald J Horowitz Ronald Slye Robert Utter
Videographer:	Max Andrews
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Roland Amoussouga discusses his extensive history working for the UN and with the Rwanda Tribunal. As Chief of External Relations he describes the function and operation of the strategic planning section of the Tribunal and reflects on the difficulty of working in Kigali immediately following the genocide. He highlights the need to train and prepare staff members sent to work in post-conflict situations, and emphasizes the need to create training manuals for humanitarian workers placed in conflict situations in the future.

The transcript of Part 13 begins on the following page.

Part 13

- 00:00** Robert Utter: Let me commend you for your institution building program. I've read the, the report of the Commonwealth Judges Association Program . . .
- 00:10 Thank you.
- 00:11** RU: . . . it matches very closely what you're planning to do.
- 00:13 Thank you.
- 00:14** RU: As a, an aside, I had the privilege of teaching Iraqi judges . . .
- 00:18 Mm-hmm.
- 00:19** RU: . . . for three years in various programs in Prague . . .
- 00:22 Fantastic.
- 00:22** RU: . . . for (____) judges there. Ironically with all the problems they faced; with the killings, with the shootings, the instability of the government, their primary fear was how to deal with the press.
- 00:35 Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.
- 00:36** RU: Seems to be a universal concern . . .
- 00:38 Of course.
- 00:38** RU: . . . on the part of judges. One last question.
- 00:42 Yes.
- 00:43** RU: Do you have hope for the future of the Rwandan courts? And if so, why?
- 00:49 Rwandan courts or ICTR?
- 00:51** RU: No, the Rwandan courts.
- 00:54 The Rwandan court I do not wish to get involved into politics there. If you, if you rephrase your, your question, I might be able to answer it better.
- 01:09** RU: Ah, that's a challenge.
- 01:12** Ronald Slye: I can rephrase it.
- 01:14** RU: Well, I, that thought had crossed my mind. Is that, is that fair (___)? I think I have just been tossed what we call a puff ball. I, I will toss – you've been to the United States so you understand – so I will toss it back. I'll let you answer your own question . . .
- 01:31 Mm.

- 01:31** **RU: . . . hope for the ICTR.**
- 01:34 Good.
- 01:35** **RU: Better.**
- 01:37 My hope is that ICTR – I want to dream of the end of the ICTR proceedings that will be judged by history of having been fair to all parties involved. I do not wish the next generation to say that we failed Rwanda. My fear is that Rwanda has gone through a tremendous havoc and everybody was dirty.
- 02:22 Some people were more dirtier than others. And for me I really hope that nobody among the Rwandese at the end of the process of ICTR shall feel that he has received a special passport labeling impunity passport. That he can flag and say, “I can enjoy impunity.”
- 03:02 My fear is that would we have the necessary courage to live up, to the full extent, to the beliefs of the people of Rwanda that justice that is not possible within the confines by their own brothers and sisters, that that justice could also be attainable at the international level.
- 03:41 They place hope in international justice the same way the people of Rwanda were placing hope in the UN soldiers – to hope that they can intervene and stop the killings and save them. But ultimately most of them were not saved, they died. And they were saved by their own brothers who fought to win the war; by winning the war, they did also some bad acts certainly.
- 04:31 I want to believe that international justice, that all those whether they’re Hutus or Tutsis or Twa, we’re hoping for will be one that will appease them forever but not one that will be a cause for future revenge or future attempt to bring about bloodshed.
- 04:58 I love that country so much that I want to believe that when we stop as ICTR, when we give to Ban Ki-Moon or whoever will come after Ban Ki-Moon the keys of this tribunal. That all of us will go with a peace of mind saying that yes we have done something that will survive and make Rwanda not to go back again.
- 05:31 Will that be possible? I hope to live and see it. But with respect to Rwandan judiciary, I pray to God to bless them, to urge them to forgive one another, to tell the truth to one another, to accept that not all, everybody was clean. Some were dirty, some were more dirty and they should all repent and find a way to bring all into their own game.
- 06:11 To clean up their mess and to trust one another to live again not under the control of any guns, not under the control of any law and order but with the willingness. The same way that your founding members or founding fathers got together in the middle of slavery and adopted the now famous unanimous declaration of July 1776, that we all hold this to be self-evident truth that we’re all born equals, we enjoy the full rights. We don’t want nobody to take advantage of the others.

- 06:58 Let's see the new Rwanda, be Rwanda for all, not Rwanda for the minority, or not Rwanda for the majority, or not Rwanda for the other disenfra-, disenfranchised group. All of them should be in and enjoy fully the fruit of their renewal. This is very important.
- 07:24 The redemption of the whole country and the renewal process must be something that should come from Rwanda. And the justice system will only be successful if they all want it. That is my, I believe, my closing argument on this. Thank you.