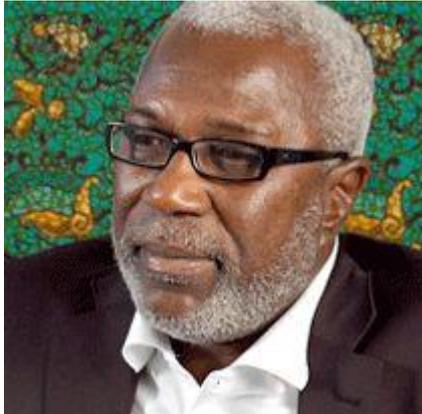




Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Bocar Sy (Part 9 of 9)



Role:	Chief of Press and Public Affairs
Country of Origin:	Senegal
Interview Date:	30 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Lisa P. Nathan Donald J Horowitz
Videographer:	Nell Carden Grey
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Bocar Sy discusses his responsibilities at the ICTR Press Office and the many obstacles he had to overcome to create an effective media program. Two key challenges included the fact that the ICTR initially saw no need for a press office and the severe limitations on communication posed by an inadequate technological infrastructure in Arusha. Sy speaks about the various methods used by the Press Office to disseminate information about the ICTR to the public.

The transcript of Part 9 begins on the following page.

Part 9

- 00:00** Donald J Horowitz: There have been criticisms at various times of the work, or what people perceived as the work, of the tr-, various parts of the tribunal. And you're the press guy and you have to some, sometimes respond to it or get information out so that people know more, or respond to the criticism, or whatever.
- 00:26** DJH: One example of that, that I-, we've become familiar with here, is we've, we've heard the dete-, the detention facility referred to as 'the Hilton.' Well, I've been in a lot of Hiltons and I don't ever . . .
- 00:42** Oh yes, oh no, (___) just, yes.
- 00:42** DJH: . . . (_____) like that. Is, is that part of your job that you need to, from time to time, make clear what, what the si-, situation or the, or the reasons for certain things are? In other words, I, perhaps I'm saying are you not just a purveyor of other information but also something of an educator?
- 01:05** Yeah, but you know that, you know that at the beginning we were facing as you say some, some problems. Some misinformation coming from various part of, we don't know, part was coming from Rwanda, part was coming from journalists, "western journalists," quote, unquote, if I can say that.
- 01:26** Because they didn't get the proper information. As I told you it was not so easy to reach this place. It was not so easy to call or to fax, whatever. Because at that time we didn't have, there was no website, there was no internet you know, which facilitate the things now and that was no dishes for, to facilitate you know our communications links.
- 01:51** And people were not receiving the proper information and I think that they start building information. Instead of trying to gather the information from, from the proper sources people were just catching you know, a small part of – and from that building the, the information, that is how we had this information, regarding the, the, the Hilton, (_____) . . .
- 02:19** DJH: Sure, and how (_____), I guess my question is how, how did you deal, how did you try to deal with such kinds of criticism?
- 02:30** The, dif-, ve-, very difficult first of all to deal with that, because as I say, usually unless, unless, unless you have real confidence with the people you're talking to like you know, your correspondent or your part of your network, don't try, you know, to, to do what, what usually people think that is easy to do, is to publish what we call a droit de réponse. Like you know, you have written this on me, I have the right too.
- 03:09** DJH: Yes.
- 03:10** That is maybe the worst thing sometimes that I see usually to do because you focus all the attention of people on that. Because some people maybe were not aware about that but then they publish what we call the droit de réponse. People will try to know

what was you know, what, what justified this droit de réponse and they have to go to the, from the beginning and whatever.

03:32 It, it can blow, it can go further than that, that you can imagine but usually what we do is to try to publish wherever is possible information on that work of the tribunal. You don't have – unless it is confidential, but you don't hide anything, whatever, whatever happens here. If the chamber don't decide that it is confidential as we say, it is public for us.

04:02 DJH: Of course.

04:03 Yes. We should, we should, we should put it on the public record. People should know about that. There is nothing to hide here. It is . . .

04:11 DJH: And then you can just refer people to those facts.

04:13 Yes, to those facts, yes. The fact the, the fact, yeah, because we are dealing with facts.

04:17 DJH: Mm-hmm.

04:19 Note: Gap in Interview (Approx. 16 seconds in duration) Gaps occurred due to interruptions during the interview, technical issues, or corrupted data files.

04:29 DJH: I guess, Mist-, Bocar, the, the only thing I would ask you now is, you are (___), you have the opportunity now to talk to your grandchildren, to the future, 20, five years, ten years, 15, 25 years.

04:49 DJH: So I'm going to give you the opportunity to say whatever you would like, if you will, about this experience, your job, and what you would like the future to know and may, that may hopefully give them some ability to do better or just to have some hope or, or not, as you wish. So what would you like to say?

05:15 But that anyway, I have, I have, I have seen these, these, these things which have happened in Rwanda. I have been a witness of what is going on the court. I don't wish my daughter or my granddaughter or my, you know, relatives, whatever, to experience these kind of things. I hope that, my hope and my wish is that that will be the last genocide or the last mass killing that the world would experience but today we are talking about that, but DRC Congo . . .

06:04 DJH: Yes. We're right now facing possibilities . . .

06:05 . . . is, is, is going yes, something like that and the international communities seems to be expecting, waiting for – nobody knows what they're waiting to, to do. But anyway I hope, I hope that, that, I hope that the – my wish will be that, that the, the, the Rwanda genocide will be the last genocide and people will be, I don't know, friends or whatever.

06:36 And, and things may change if, if, if as we, we hope and we wish. Things are changing in the United States, you will have a new president who will stop all this war around the world. I don't know. Anyway . . .

- 06:57** DJH: In any event, I think we can count on you to do the best you can in your job to make the, the better things happen.
- 07:03 Yes, we'll, we'll try to do our best like you are doing your best. Merci beaucoup.
- 07:08** DJH: Thank you.
- 07:09 Merci beaucoup. Thank you.