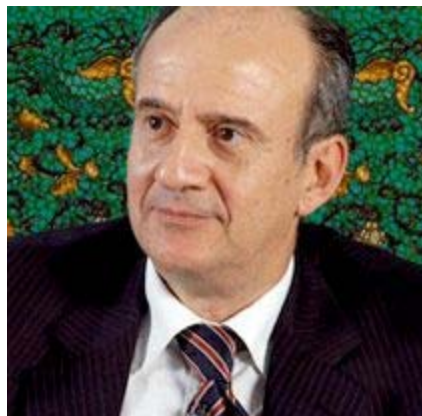




Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Alessandro Caldarone (2 of 12)



Role:	Senior Officer of External Relations
Country of Origin:	Italy
Interview Date:	3 November 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Lisa P. Nathan Donald J Horowitz
Videographer:	Nell Carden Grey
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Alessandro Caldarone compares his experiences at the ICTR with his time at the EU-Human Rights Mission in Rwanda providing technical assistance. Caldarone reflects on a personal eye-opening moment during the defense of accused genocidaires when he realized that the perpetrators were not monsters but human beings. He questions the concept of 'victim' in the Rwandan context where everybody is, in some sense, victimized. He also suggests that the ICTR should be considered an extension of Rwandan justice.

The transcript of Part 2 begins on the following page.

Part 2

- 00:00 Lisa P. Nathan: Can you tell me how you first, I imagine you were learning about the ICTR a bit in that position. How did you come to work for the ICTR?**
- 00:09 Yeah. But, you know I was with the European Union and the, the, the personal involvement, involvement for the drama in Rwanda was even, even more than the professional one because really, it was – it went deep in my, my, in my heart. Microphone. It went deep in my heart.
- 00:31 So, and, you know, with the European Union, my salary was at least 40% more than with the UN. But the, the, my feeling was, if I can do more, how can I do more – is going in a judiciary institutions. So, you know, at that time I was the number two of the Eu-, European mission so I knew everybody. I knew the Deputy Prosecutor. I knew everybody.
- 01:03 So finally, I send my application. They call me. I had an interview, or several interviews. And finally, I was, I received an offer. I was in Italy. I received an offer. I went, I went back to, to Rwanda.
- 01:16 One of the first things that we did is to go to speak to the Rwandese. Up to 1997, nobody, sorry '97, '96, nobody – when I was recruited March '96 for ICTR before I wa-, I was in the European Union – nobody has ever talked to the Rwandese. No representative of the tribunal have ever met the population.
- 01:44 So the first outreach activity that was done for the tribunal was during that period, because we had an interview on Radio Rwanda with the Judge Rakotomanana, Honoré Rakotomanana, who was a Deputy Prosecutor at that time. And we had an interview.
- 02:04 And in that interview, you can hear my voice because the judge, time by time he was not very keen to respond so he said, “Alessandro, go ahead. You respond,” so I did it. He was really an, an excellent man. And, and that is how, how we did this interview with the, with the, with the Rwandese. And . . .
- 02:28 LPN: So, can you tell me what in that role, in your first role with the ICTR, what were some of the responsibilities that you had?**
- 02:35 At the beginning, you see it was really small. In Kigali we were what, maybe a hundred people; something like that. So my re-, at the beginning, I start, I worked in some cases. I cannot say which cases but I worked in some cases which are completed now.
- 02:53 And, and after, I was involved in internal/external relations. It means everything – all type of problems, all type of activities, the car, the computers. Because you know at that time we did not have any money. We had donors, countries like Canada and so on. They were

sending money to us, or people, or the, the United States of America also, with computer, with cars and so on.

03:20 So the problem was, “How do we share these computers, these cars, these activities?” And at certain moment the situation was so tense that we start talking about even discriminations, even racism, you see because – and finally, it was decided that we were not going to accept any more contribution like, like those because you don’t have . . .

03:51 Also, you don’t have fidelity for the UN because you respond to your own country. It was a very difficult situation, honestly. Internal in term of organization and external because we had riots against the tribunal because people did not know what we were doing. That is one of the reason why we went to Radio Rwanda.

04:09 And at that time, the journalist was Innocent Kamanzi, who afterwards has been recruited. He’s, he’s in Kigali now and he’s a very nice colleague and friend of mine. So, and, but you see, the situation was not like it is now. It was really, really complicated in everything, and everything was much more difficult than now.

04:33 LPN: Can you remember some of the, as you began to work for the ICTR, some of the surprises for you – things that became problems that you were very surprised by or things that happened in a positive way that you were surprised by?

04:47 Yeah. But me, I, see, I believe that everything is positive. Even to learn something negative is positive because you learn something that you, you don’t have to eventually to do. The difficulty is, you know it was the first time in my life that I heard about problem between black and white.

05:10 Even though I’m born in Somalia, I’ve been living in Morocco, in Libya I did my study in Muslim law and, and so on, it’s the first time that I, I was facing this type of situation in which people were talking about, “You’re African, you’re European, you’re black, you’re white,” and so on.

05:30 And this, I, I learned that, that issue when I was in Rwanda because I was not aware. And it happened that I took a position of justice. I didn’t ta-, take any po-, political position myself. And my position as Chief of External/Internal Relations was more on the thought of my friends from Africa.

05:51 So I became very – and, and, and my, my colleagues explained to me, really they guided me. Said, “Look Alessandro, you know, we have this problem.” Yeah, it was very, very interesting because I think I, I grew a lot in my life on a human experience, like a professional experience, you know. What can I say? It was interesting.

06:10 I mean, it was interesting but what is really important for this type of situation is, is your human involvement. How do you want thing to be done? What do you do? That is even

more because, you see, everybody's good finally. Everybody knows French and English. Everybody knows law. You can be a little bit better and so on.

06:32 But it's the person, the nature of the person, the morality of the person which can make the difference more than his knowledge of technicality. You can read a book, you know, Article 3 and so on, you just, you know – and that is the point that really – even now I remember that one.