



# Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

## Official Transcript: Saidou Guindo (Part 1 of 8)



<b>Role:</b>	Detention Warden
<b>Country of Origin:</b>	Mali
<b>Interview Date:</b>	16 October 2008
<b>Location:</b>	Arusha, Tanzania
<b>Interviewers:</b>	Donald J Horowitz Lisa P. Nathan
<b>Videographers:</b>	Max Andrews Nell Carden Grey
<b>Interpreter:</b>	None

### Interview Summary

Saidou Guindo discusses the detention facilities used to house those accused and indicted by the ICTR in Arusha. He describes instances where inmates went on hunger strikes in protest against decisions taken by the Tribunal. Guindo also comments on the common critique that the ICTR detention facilities are far more comfortable than those in Rwanda that house people indicted for lesser offenses. Guindo asserts that the ICTR has a duty to meet the minimum detention standards guaranteed under international law.

*The transcript of Part 1 begins on the following page.*

## Part 1

- 00:00** Donald J Horowitz: This is Judge Donald Horowitz with the ICTR Information Heritage Project. And today I'm interviewing Mr. Guindo who is the Head of the UN Detention Facility for the ICTR. Can we start Mr. Guindo by having you give us your full name and your title?
- 00:20 My name is Saidou Guindo.
- 00:22** DJH: Can you spell it f-, because . . .
- 00:23 Saidou is S-A-I-D-O-U, Guindo G-U-I-N-D-O.
- 00:32** DJH: Okay. And your job?
- 00:33 I am the Commander of the detention facility; United Nation Detention Facility.
- 00:39** DJH: And how long have you had that job, sir?
- 00:42 Since July '99.
- 00:46** DJH: You've been here a long time. Is that when it opened or was it – had it been opened before then?
- 00:52 It has been opened in October '96. Yes.
- 00:56** DJH: Okay. Alright.
- 00:57 I'm the third commander of the detention facility.
- 01:01** DJH: And had you worked here before; before you became the commander?
- 01:06 No.
- 01:07** DJH: Okay. Can you give us a little bit about your background in the area of security and co-, corrections or penology?
- 01:16 Okay, I am a Malian. I came from Mali. I studied in a high school. I have a (\_\_\_\_) Master's Degree in Psychology and Education and after that I went to teach Psychology and Education for almost two, three years. I joined the penitentiary administration in Mali where I was in charge of the division of Social (\_\_\_\_) and (\_\_\_\_) of the penitentiary administration.
- 01:55 I also later on appointed Deputy National Director of – Acting Deputy National Director of the Penitentiary. Then I left. I went to in administration as Commander District in Administration; civil administration.
- 02:14 From there I was appointed as a technical advisor of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of, of Tuareg rebellion. It means that, it means that, you know, Mali was faced with a Tuareg rebellion. I was in charge of this, this file.

- 02:37 From there I went to Haiti in '93 as a Human Rights Officer in charge of the detention at, in Haiti. And then I came back in Mali and after that in '94 I went in Rwanda up to '98 for human right field operation in Rwanda after the genocide in '94 October.
- 03:00 **DJH: Who, who – excuse, excuse me, who, who did you work for when you went to Rwanda; who was your employer?**
- 03:06 High Commissioner of Human Rights.
- 03:08 **DJH: From the UN? Okay. (\_\_\_).**
- 03:09 From the UN. For, from October '94 up to Ju-, March '98. From there I went back in Mali and then in '99 I was recruited to be Head of, Commander of the detention facility here. I was completing the duty of, of Deputy Chief of Security and also Commander of the detention facility.
- 03:43 **DJH: Okay. What are your duties briefly, s-, your summary of your duties now in this job?**
- 03:52 My responsibility is to, to implement all the rules covering the detention facility. It means that administrating, administration, management, security and good order; to maintain a good order of the detention facility.
- 04:13 **DJH: And what . . .**
- 04:13 To be sure that the condition of the detention prescribed by the tribunal and the international standards are well implemented in this detention facility.
- 04:26 **DJH: And I was going to ask you, you said to make sure the rules and regulations are followed and I think you've answered – who provides those rules and regulations, are they written in by the UN and also by the ICTR?**
- 04:40 It's written by, by, by – we have the rules of the statu-, the statute, basic document of the tribunal. We have that rules but we have also the international standards rules provided by the United Nations.
- 04:54 **DJH: And that's your guide.**
- 04:55 Yeah, of course I have also my experience, yeah.
- 04:59 **DJH: Of course, of course and extensive experience it is and a very varied experience. W-, what kind of prisoners do you have here? In other words are there different categories of prisoners or, or people who are detained here?**
- 05:18 I have different categories. We have military high rank, we have some generals, majors, captain, major, majors also are here and even colonel among them, which means that they are well, high, well-educated. We have a member of the government; different backgrounds: doctors in medicine, we have lawyers, we have also – what they say – economists.

- 05:50 **DJH: Mm-hmm.**
- 05:51 And we have also some lower people among them – prisoners which are, didn't get high education but they are very few.
- 06:03 **DJH: I was – and that's, that's very helpful. I, what I, I think I was meaning was, are there some here who have not yet been tried, some who are being tried and some who are – have already had a trial? Different categories and have they . . .**
- 06:18 Yes, we have the detainees who didn't start their trials yet who, and who are under trial – undergoing trial and the people who are already sentenced . . .
- 06:30 **DJH: Okay.**
- 06:30 . . . yes, and waiting to be transferred . . .
- 06:33 **DJH: And waiting to be . . .**
- 06:34 . . . somewhere else.
- 06:34 **DJH: Somewhere else.**
- 06:35 Yeah. Because they are supposed after sentence to be transferred in another country where – like a country who are willing to receive them to, to, to, for the enforcement of their sentences.
- 06:45 **DJH: Okay . . . okay. So the detention center here is not supposed to be a long-term sentence, sent-, place where somebody has been sentenced for a long term?**
- 06:58 No, no, no. As you know as you finish your trial you are supposed – if you're sentenced then you're supposed to leave to be transferred somewhere else. That's, that's why we sign an agreement.
- 07:10 We have Mali who is willing to receive them. We have six people already in Mali serving their sentences. We have Swaziland, the Kingdom of Swaziland. We have Benin where we already made all the arrangements ready to receive.
- 07:27 We have of course Rwanda also who is willing to receive them. We have France; we have Sweden. We have one person already serving sentences; one prisoner is serving his sentence in, in Italy.
- 07:42 **DJH: Okay, and must the other places to which you would be sending those people, must they conform to the UN – to the standards of the UN; the international standards of the UN?**
- 07:56 Yes, this is part of agreement. We have to be sure that everything will be according to international min-, international minimum standard.
- 08:05 **DJH: Okay.**