



Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Saidou Guindo (Part 4 of 8)



Role:	Detention Warden
Country of Origin:	Mali
Interview Date:	16 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Donald J Horowitz Lisa P. Nathan
Videographers:	Max Andrews Nell Carden Grey
Interpreter:	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.

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Part 4

- 00:00** Donald J Horowitz: I, I want to move on to something more personal. You have an e-, an extensive background in the s-, well, in social sciences to begin with, but also in penology or – you I’m sure have your own ideas about what, what’s right and what’s wrong and all of that. And I’m, I’m not going to ask you to be controversial. I . . .
- 00:24** DJH: But I am, I am interested in knowing if there’s something that you’re proud of that you have done here and that you’re doing here. I’d like to know what, what you’re proud of?
- 00:35** DJH: And then I’m going to ask you the other part of it, there, there’s something that you wish had been done better. I’m going to ask you about that too. This is your personal – you’re an authority, you could teach anywhere probably. And so you – listening to what you have to say here is an important thing for the future as we go forward.
- 00:55** I am proud after implementing the international standard trying on national level and I came here, I tried. I was working also on theoretical level in Haiti and Rwanda, but to be a manager of a detention, to implement, myself, as a pioneer, one of the pioneer with my team of, of implementation of the international standards, I’m very proud of it.
- 01:25** And then we usually receive a visit of International Red Cross, of the specialist in detention. As I told you, the American Correctional Association, the president and director executive came here, visited. He was very proud; we received many personalities from the UN, the Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General.
- 01:49** Many personnel, ambassadors – they came to visit the detention facility. And many specialists in penal, in the correctional, from correctional services also visited our detention facility. And all of them, all their appreciation, they are really positive and encouraging. I’m very proud of it because I can say that there was among the pioneer in the implementation of international standards from the UN, we are among the first group – my team and myself.
- 02:24** DJH: Okay.
- 02:25** This is something – that’s why I don’t want this thing to be a lose for the UN, because having this kind of, of experience of, for ten years, I think it’s something which we can also give chance to other correctional services to share it with them. That’s why I’m always invited by the American Correctional Association.
- 02:52** I went in France, I went in Germany and we now want to create the association of All African Correctional Association, okay? Head of Correctional Services and we share always our experience with them. They come here, we go there, we share, we have a meeting, yes.

- 03:13** DJH: So I'm – what I'm hearing from you that's particularly interesting is you're not just thinking about other tribunals and their detention facilities and, and making sure that they're good, but also that what your experience has been here and what you've been able to implement can be used by other countries . . .
- 03:30 Yes.
- 03:31** DJH: . . . a-, as standards regardless of the UN, et cetera.
- 03:33 Yes. This, this I think is the experience of what my people get here. That's why even the other tribunals are now recruiting my, my staff.
- 03:43** DJH: Okay.
- 03:44 I have many of my staff in, at ICC, ICTY and Sierra Leone would like to take some of them. Even I think the other tribunals like Lebanon ad hoc tribunal, would like to recruit some of my staff. Yeah.
- 03:57** DJH: Okay. Okay.
- 03:59 I'm losing some of my staff because – but I'm proud because they were chosen to go there.
- 04:05** DJH: Of course you are, I understand that. But, and what if, if you had the opportunity to do it again or whatever, in other wor-, is there something that you're disappointed with that you haven't quite been able to do that you would like to do?
- 04:18** DJH: Or that, or that if you had the next time you would improve? Or if you had a wish that the UN had done something to help that, you know what I'm saying (____).
- 04:28 Yes, you know, sometimes you work with people, they don't understand really. They don't have experience on penitentiary areas. It is not easy area, you know. Say if you work according to the standard, according to the rules, you can be perceived like someone who would like to, you know, to, (____) to torture people.
- 04:54 Sometimes you can be perceived like someone who is giving too much as you say, compared like to Rwanda (____). And sometimes it's, it is discouraging. Even you don't get too much support.
- 05:12 But now I think with the management of the tribunal, I'm having a lot of support from my, my, my supervisors. They are giving me a lot – not all of them but the direct supervisor are giving me a lot of support, yeah.
- 05:25** DJH: Okay.
- 05:27 To understand what we are doing, that is not easy things, yeah.