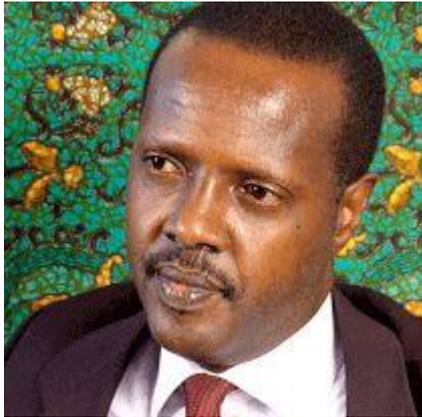




Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Richard Karegyesa (Part 3 of 11)



Role:	Acting Chief of Prosecutions
Country of Origin:	Uganda
Interview Date:	29 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewer:	Batya Friedman Ronald Slye
Videographer:	Nell Carden Grey
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Richard Karegyesa reflects on the relationship between the ICTR and domestic justice systems, discussing transfer of cases and the capacity of Rwanda's judiciary. Karegyesa discusses best practices for the prosecution, the protection of witnesses and prosecuting rape as a crime of genocide. He draws attention to the differences between prosecuting rape as an international crime and a domestic crime and comments on the importance of creating a historical record to protect against revisionist histories.

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Part 3

00:00 Batya Friedman: So at what point did you think about working for the ICTR?

00:07 It must have been – I actually thought of it much earlier but didn't join until much later, 'cause initially it was said at the time that they weren't recruiting people from within the region, you know, neighboring Rwanda. But I did subsequently in 19-, I believe 1996 or '97 respond to a vacancy announcement in one of our regional papers and didn't hear from them until about a year later.

00:50 Yes, but I did have a keen interest and, you know, I kept my feelers out there. But what blew me most was actually visiting Arusha. I was, I'd just concluded an assignment for the European Union in Zambia and got an offer from the Commonwealth Secretariat to come and work in Arusha at the East African Community as legal advisor trying to set up the regional trading block.

01:28 I hadn't been to Arusha in about ten years and I, I, I wanted to check it out so, you know, I came to Arusha to meet, you know, with officials of the East African Community and they were in the same building, this very same building, just on the 6th floor. And you know I, I, I had the opportunity for two days to sit in and watch two trials.

01:56 And I said, "This is what I want to do." You know, to hell with, with consulting and commercial practice. I said, "This is what I want to do." That was March of '98 and I got an offer I believe in August of '98, yeah, yeah.

02:16 BF: What, what was that feeling when you said, "This is what I want to do," what . . . ?

02:19 Well, I, I, I watched, you know, two prosecutions going on. They had only two courtrooms and it was a trial of Georges Rutaganda, the head of the Interahamwe. And on the stand was Professor Bill Haglund, a forensic anthropologist, and he was being led in evidence by James Stewart, Senior Counsel then. You know and I sat; I sat in the public gallery and watched.

02:49 And my prosecutorial instincts just came (___), I said, "This is what I want to do. I want to prosecute these people. You know, I can do it." There was also the trial of Kayishema and Ruzindana. Kayishema was Préfet of Kibuye, and Ruzindana was a businessman. And that trial too was going on. And I watched as Brenda Sue Thornton, she's in the DOJ back in Washington D.C., the Counter Terrorism (____) right now.

03:26 She was leading the evidence of another forensic expert, a handwriting expert. And you know I had been doing, you know, criminal prosecution for eight years and I said, "Hey, I'm, I want to take it to an international level." You know I quit the national level, but this is where I want to be. Yeah, and yeah I, I, I got an offer I believe it was August of '98.

03:54 BF: And then you've been a prosecutor here since or has your role changed during that time?

04:01 Well, work is largely the same.

04:03 BF: Mm-hmm.

04:04 I, I started off as a Legal Advisor for about two years and then was promoted to Senior Trial Attorney and since the beginning of this year I've been the Acting Chief of Prosecution Division.