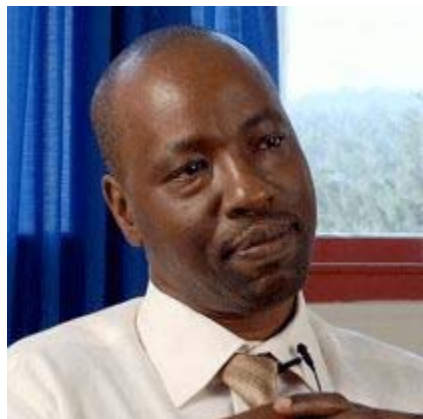




Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Straton Musonera (Part 1 of 6)



Role:	Information Officer
Country of Origin:	Rwanda
Interview Date:	14 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Lisa P. Nathan Donald J Horowitz
Videographer:	Max Andrews
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Straton Musonera discusses his experience working on outreach and capacity building programs for the ICTR, including capacity building of the judicial sector in Rwanda. He addresses the special insight and knowledge he has as Rwandan working for the Tribunal. Musonera explains the challenge of working daily with testimony and information about the genocide, yet also needing to retain a certain distance from it to function professionally. He emphasizes the need for an outreach program for courts such as the ICTR around the world, to ensure that people know justice is being pursued.

The transcript of Part 1 begins on the following page.

Part 1

- 00:00** Lisa P. Nathan: I would like to begin with learning about your name, if you could speak your name and tell me where your home country is.
- 00:09 My name is Straton Musonera. I come from Rwanda.
- 00:14** LPN: Thank you. Can you walk me through your timeline at the ICTR, so when you first, the year you first came and then the different roles you've had, so, sort of walking me through . . .
- 00:30 Yeah.
- 00:30** LPN: . . . your history here.
- 00:33 I joined the ICTR in 2002 exactly on 26th August and at that time, when I joined the ICTR I served as Information Officer. I was in charge of preparing and implementing the Outreach Program of the Tribunal. And then in 2003 when th-, our section, the External Relations and the Strategic Planning section was restructured, I was given new responsibilities.
- 01:16 At that time, I was given responsibilities of designing projects, mobilizing resources and supporting national jurisdictions.
- 01:32** Note: Gap in Interview Gaps occurred due to interruptions during the interview, technical issues, or corrupted data files.
- 01:42** LPN: So where, can you recall where you were in the spring of 1994?
- 01:48 The spring of 1994 I was in Burundi, yeah. When the genocide took place in Rwanda I was in Burundi.
- 01:59** LPN: Can, do you recall or describe to me in some detail how you first heard about the events in Rwanda at that time?
- 02:07 When I, the first thing I heard from the radio was the, the accident of the, that took lives of the Burundian and the Rwandan Pre-, Pre-, President. And then the next morning, we heard that some killings were taking place in, in Kigali but later on we knew that it was a genocide which was unfolding because there were widespread killings.
- 02:42 And the people who – different media were saying that there were a lot of people being killed in Kigali and also listening to the report, radio, listening to different radio to Rwandan radio, so we knew that something terrible was going to happen but we didn't really know the, the magnitude of what was going to happen.

- 03:09 It's around the, the month of May that we realized that it was really a genocide because it had really affected the, the whole country, all communes, all hills of the country had been affected by the, the, the mass killings.
- 03:32 LPN: When did you first learn of, can you tell me about when you first learned about the ICTR?**
- 03:40 I knew it at, when it was created in 1994 because at that time I was just, in 1995 I was a journalist in, in, in Rwanda so that's when I started to know the, the, the ICTR.
- 04:03 LPN: Can you tell me or recall sort of how you first felt about the ICTR or what you understood it to be or your thoughts at that time?**
- 04:13 ICTR, when I heard about it and when I saw some staff of the ICTR really, I've, I consider, I considered ICTR as any, any organization which is really far from my, my, my country. I couldn't really believe that it's an organization which is coming to help my country, to help the process of reconciliation in Rwanda, to help prosecute those who were involved in, in planning the genocide in Rwanda. So it was really, we didn't have enough information about the tribunal.
- 04:58 LPN: So, can you tell me about how you first came to work here in 2002?**
- 05:04 Before joining the, the tribunal I was working for the United Nations Development Program in Rwanda. I was in charge of inform-, I was information officer there and I knew that they were looking for an information officer. And then I applied. I got selected. I was interviewed and then after the interview, I got selected again to, to join the ICTR. That's how I came to, to, to work here.
- 05:41 Note: Gap in Interview (Approx. 43 seconds in length) Gaps occurred due to interruptions during the interview, technical issues, or corrupted data files.**
- 05:51 LPN: So you were saying that when you first learned about the ICTR, you felt as though it was something quite far away from your country, and you couldn't understand how it was going to help the people of your country. And then, years later you were working for the UN in a capacity in your country. Why did you decide to work for the ICTR?**
- 06:17 There were two reasons. First of all, when I joined UNDP, I knew, I learned a lot about the ICTR because I was getting information from the tribunal and that information, I was relating, relaying that information to other UN agencies in Rwanda. So I knew its mandate.
- 06:49 I knew what they were doing, so I thought that by joining the ICTR I could bring my humble knowledge, my, my little knowledge and my humble contribution to building the national reconciliation process in Rwanda.

07:12 So that's why I joined the ICTR but to be t-, frankly speaking also, there was also a good salary in the ICTR. That's also another reason which pushed me to come here.

07:28 LPN: Mm-hmm.

07:29 Yeah.