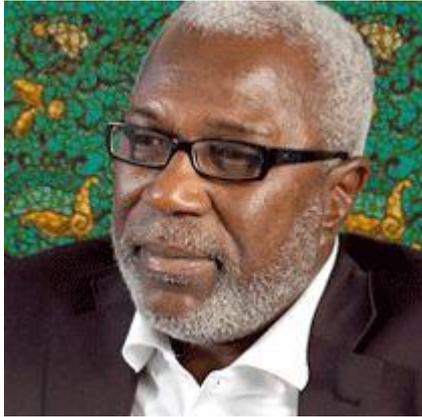


# Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

## Official Transcript: Bocar Sy (Part 4 of 9)



<b>Role:</b>	Chief of Press and Public Affairs
<b>Country of Origin:</b>	Senegal
<b>Interview Date:</b>	30 October 2008
<b>Location:</b>	Arusha, Tanzania
<b>Interviewers:</b>	Lisa P. Nathan Donald J Horowitz
<b>Videographer:</b>	Nell Carden Grey
<b>Interpreter:</b>	None

## Interview Summary

Bocar Sy discusses his responsibilities at the ICTR Press Office and the many obstacles he had to overcome to create an effective media program. Two key challenges included the fact that the ICTR initially saw no need for a press office and the severe limitations on communication posed by an inadequate technological infrastructure in Arusha. Sy speaks about the various methods used by the Press Office to disseminate information about the ICTR to the public.

*The transcript of Part 4 begins on the following page.*

## Part 4

- 00:00** Lisa P. Nathan: **Can you tell me – as you reflect back on your time here I imagine you have some surprises, like the first day when you came and there was no office, but I’m sure that there are some others. Can you ref-, think back for a few moments and share with me some other surprises that you have experienced in your time here?**
- 00:23 Surprises, oh, I would say that on my day here, everyday I’m surprised at what’s going on or how the things has, has moved, has improved, yes. Well it's, in any case it, it is related to the, to my work and to the, to the perception that people had about the press, you know. What, what is press, what means press, what is the work of the, what is the job of the press? Yes, that is, that is, that is something that . . .
- 01:00 One of the most – yes, that was, that was – one, one of this experience was that for the first judgment, the first case which has been tried in this tribunal, I mean tried, I, I did-, didn’t talk about the sentence or whatever, tried you know (\_\_\_\_\_) the process tribunal was the one of Jean Paul Akayesu.
- 01:27 At that time it was so difficult, as we say, you know, for the press people to join Arusha, to reach Arusha, to come to Arusha. But because it was the first judgment by this tribunal, I have contacted all my network and I, I meant my network worked, I contacted colleagues in Dar es Salaam, Paris, wherever, in Nairobi, and a lot of press people came down. They came down from these various countries, from South Africa, and from whatever.
- 02:08 But the problem was where to house them? At that time we did not have the pressroom, which was also one of the big fight – I can call it "big fight" quote unquote – that I had to, to deliver with the, with the administration. We didn’t have, we didn’t have nothing, and as I told you it was so difficult.
- 02:31 The telephone lines were not very good. We didn’t have at that time these big dishes, satellite which facilitate our communication now. And people has come down here. But people has to work, to write their papers, or to record their voice for the radio or whatever and to send it also because they, they just cannot keep it but they have also to send it as we see, (\_\_\_\_\_).
- 02:56 What, what can we do? (\_\_\_), I was, I was thinking of, of a way maybe where to house these colleagues coming from outside and coming to report on our work. And we had a meeting with the colleagues at that time, here the colleagues, the Chief of the Administration, the, the, the Registrar at that time. I say, anyway in any case we will have to find a way to share with them what we have; telephones, offices or somewhere.
- 03:29 And someone am-, among the colleagues had a brilliant idea and say, “Oh, yes I know what we can do. We can set a tent.” A tent like when you go to the bush for the safari, in the, in the car park for them, for the press people, you know. Can you imagine, “We can, we can just put them in a tent, in the car park, that is not a problem. They don’t

need all these whatever, Bocar, (\_\_\_\_\_) these facilities, they don't need it. Let us just put them there."

04:02 I was, I was – yes, it was, it was, it was amazing (\_\_\_\_\_\_). And also I was just surprised how, how someone can think that you know, just because they are press people they don't need all these things you know, facilities or they don't need you know, you just have to leave them there. They just need a piece of paper and, and their pen and just they'll just do, do the, whatever, job.

04:28 And I get, I got a little upset about that and I had to argue, to argue with this, to let them know that anyway the job they are doing is maybe the lawyers are doing a very good job but they should know that without the press the job will not be done and that will be just, maybe I can say zero.

04:51 Yes, because they can do the best job they, they, they think they are doing that if it is not known by the, the public, by the, by the, by the press, if it's not known by the international community, if it is not known, it is nothing, it is just peanuts.

05:04 They should know that. First of all they should consider the press as part of the mission. Without the press they should forget about it and that is, that was one of, you know, this experience that I had, (\_\_\_\_\_) that it's not easy for them to deal with the press.