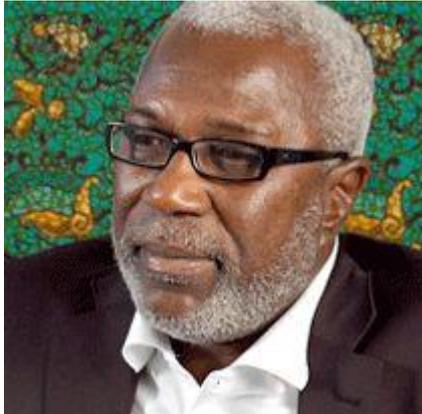




Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Bocar Sy (Part 6 of 9)



Role:	Chief of Press and Public Affairs
Country of Origin:	Senegal
Interview Date:	30 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Lisa P. Nathan Donald J Horowitz
Videographer:	Nell Carden Grey
Interpreter:	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 6 begins on the following page.

Part 6

- 00:00 **Donald J Horowitz: I'm Judge Donald Horowitz of Washington state and I'm going to be conducting the, the last half of, of the interview. I have a few questions, some of which follow on the questions that Lisa asked you. You talked about sometimes the court pro-, proceedings are pub-, available to the public and the public can go and watch.**
- 00:22 **DJH: And other times they are what you called "in camera," which means that they are off limits, private () to the public and I wanted to clarify why that would be. Do you know the answer to why they would close off a, a hearing or a portion of a hearing?**
- 00:44 You want me to answer to that question now?
- 00:46 **DJH: Yeah.**
- 00:47 Okay, first of all I'm not a lawyer.
- 00:50 **DJH: I know that.**
- 00:51 Okay.
- 00:52 **DJH: I, I mean, I have my ideas as to why they would do it . . . okay, well . . .**
- 00:54 Yes, I'm sure that you are the best person who can, who can answer to that question, but what I know is that usually what happens is that they can, they can be in a public proceeding, you know, public, public sitting, journalists are there in the public gallery, the proceeding is going on and you hear one of the parties – it can be the, the lawyers in the defense counsel or the Prosecutor, asking for closed session. What they call closed session.
- 01:24 **DJH: What are the general reasons if you hear them asking for that ()?**
- 01:28 Because, because, because sometimes it is when they have a witness that, that, I would say that they don't control properly because one, they have what is called protected witness. This guy is protected as it is say, we don't, we don't see his face, we don't hear his voice and he don't give confidential information which can identify him like where he lives, where he went in school, who is his brother, things like that which can help people to identify him.
- 02:02 And sometimes it happen that when someone is testifying, a protected witness, the witness can forget about this recommendation and he can talk about where he went to school, who was his friend and what is the name of his wife if he's a, if he's a man, or what is the name of his husband if it is, if she is a lady, things like that.
- 02:25 I mean that is to respect the confidentiality of the witness, yes. I think that is one of the reason. But the other reasons belong to the chamber. It's the President who decides yes or no; they can go in closed session.

- 02:44** DJH: Well you did a very good job of what I would call, have called witness security or witness safety or witness protection, which is the same thing. Your, you gave a good, good reasons and of course that would be my answer, that there are certain witnesses who endanger themselves or could put themselves in danger because they're giving sensitive information and if they go back to some other place and are identified, they could be harmed and the court needs to protect them to get the information.
- 03:15** DJH: And there are other times when for court security, one reason or another, they have to close, and, and also sometimes the privacy for example of a victim.
- 03:24 Yes, also.
- 03:26** DJH: Particularly in a sexual, in a case involving sexual infor-, information . . .
- 03:28 Sex, s-, yes, yes.
- 03:31** DJH: . . . and they don't want to embarrass or you know, somebody, and so forth. I, I just wanted that for the record so . . .
- 03:37 Yes.
- 03:39** DJH: . . . one of the things I'm interested in, there, there are sometimes that things go on with the court that have more nationa-, international implic-, significant international implications. Do you coordinate with New York, with the headquarters, from time to time on releases or on stories, responses and so forth?
- 04:00 With New York, we are, we are in, as we say, permanent contact.
- 04:06** DJH: Permanent contact?
- 04:07 Yes. I call it permanent contact. It is not, it is not, it is not a daily, in a daily basis but if necessary it can be it. I mean, at any time I can take my phone and call the headquarters, specially the Office of the Spokesperson or the Office of the DPI if I need any support, or any help, or any answer to an information.
- 04:29 And they do also the same when we release, because I can tell you that in our mailing list you know, that we have a mailing list, which we have the name of people to whom we send the information.
- 04:43 At the top of this mailing list you have the Office of the Secretary General first of all, the first in the list, followed by the Office of the Spokesperson in New York. They are the first people informed about what is going on. They are the first person who received whatever information we send out from here. They are the first who received it first of all.
- 05:05 And, and it happen that sometimes the Spokesperson or one of the, his colleagues or one of the staff take his phone, telephone here to have more detail in the information

that we have released and they do also the same when we have very important information we first inform them, like we will have a judgment.

05:30 I'm thinking of an example of a judgment because judgment for a court, you, you would judge you know, that the most important thing for a court is a judgment. I don't know if, if I'm right or not anyway.

05:40 When we have something like that here, we inform the, the Office of the Spokesperson and the Office of DPI to approach the journalists because they have very important team you know, of journalist at the headquarters, to inform them about this event which will come and they help us organize sometimes telephone interviews with the journalists who are there, to, to talk to them or for them also to talk to someone here. We are, we are in a . . .

06:14 DJH: You're capable of being in, in, in very, in consistent contact.

06:19 Yes.

06:19 DJH: If you, if you wish it and they wish it, at any given time.

06:21 Yes, absolutely and then, and what's happened is that whenever we have our officials going there in, in, in New York, we organize with the DPI and the Office of the Spokesperson, what we call noon briefing. You know that every day, at every time – except maybe on Sunday, I think they don't have it but I'm not very sure, we'll have to check – they have what they call the noon briefing. At every noon in New York, the Office of the Spokesperson briefs the journalists on the last development on the, the organization.

06:56 Then what's happened is that whenever we have our officials going there, the President, the Prosecutor, the Registrar, I try to organize with the Office of the Spokesperson for them to be invited once for this briefing. I mean for them to meet the journalists, to be in contact with them, to approach them, and also they, as I told you they, they, they help us organize because we're not there, I'm not present there.

07:22 DJH: Of course.

07:23 They, they will help (____) organize interview with CNN, it has happened, and then, and, and, and also with the UNTV. You know that the United Nations has a TV, which is called UNTV which broadcasts in Manhattan I think. And yes, these kind of things happen . . .

07:39 DJH: You mentioned, you used the letters DPI, that's Department of Public Information?

07:43 Yes.

07:44 DJH: Okay.

07:45 I, sorry, yes, DPI, yes.

07:45 DJH: Yeah, yeah, yeah, in, in, in New York. Okay.

07:48 In New York, yes.