



Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Roland Amoussouga (Part 1 of 13)



Role:	Spokesperson for the Tribunal
Country of Origin:	Togo
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Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Batya Friedman Donald J Horowitz Ronald Slye Robert Utter
Videographer:	Max Andrews
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Roland Amoussouga discusses his extensive history working for the UN and with the Rwanda Tribunal. As Chief of External Relations he describes the function and operation of the strategic planning section of the Tribunal and reflects on the difficulty of working in Kigali immediately following the genocide. He highlights the need to train and prepare staff members sent to work in post-conflict situations, and emphasizes the need to create training manuals for humanitarian workers placed in conflict situations in the future.

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Part 1

- 00:00** **Batya Friedman: Say your name for everyone, your title and your nationality.**
- 00:04 My name is Roland Kouassi Géro Amoussouga. I'm originally from Togo and I'm currently a Canadian citizen. I'm one of the Senior Legal Advisors of the registry and I'm the Chief of External Relations and Strategic Planning Section as well as the Spokesperson of the tribunal.
- 00:30** **BF: Great. So can you start off by telling us a little bit about your role in – as Chief of External Relations and the Strategic Planning Section?**
- 00:39 Yeah. The, the section was established at the request of the management group review, which was sent here by the General Assembly sometime in 2001. And they made recommendations to enhance the efficiency of the tribunal and proposed that an external relation and strategic planning be established in the Office of the Registrar to coordinate all the external matters particularly in the area of cooperation, judicial assistance, protocol and external liaising with stakeholders.
- 01:25 Various unit used to handle those specific tasks and in 2003 a budget was given and a section was established and I was recruited after a competitive test to establish the section. And the section per se is the body that is in charge of maintaining contact with all the ext-, external stakeholders, the diplomatic community, in charge of the communication of the tribunal to the p-, press corps, to the media hubs, to the diplomatic community, to New York.
- 02:13 And also, the section is in charge of handling the outreach program of the tribunal, bringing the result of the work of the tribunal to the people at the grassroots level in Rwanda, throughout the Great Lakes area, as well as in Africa or throughout the whole world.
- 02:34 And the section is also in charge of handling all protocol matters that as you know we receive more than 3,000 people visiting the tribunal every year ranging from military personnel, academia, diplomats, lawyers, journalist, et cetera, et cetera. Student, local officials, government officials coming to see how the tribunal is working.
- 02:59 So the protocol aspect of all this is within the ambit of the section. We also have the duty to put together a capacity building program and coordinate all the capacity building activities of the tribunal vis-à-vis the judiciary sector of Rwanda as well as in Tanzania or elsewhere in Africa.
- 03:25 We also are in charge of mobilizing resources to support those capacity bu-, building project and we also provide support to national jurisdiction. And we are also handling all cooperation matters such as requests for cooperation emanating from the trial chambers through directives, orders, decisions, requesting the tribunal to ask member states to cooperate on specific matters.

- 04:01 Making available document, facilitating movement of witnesses, et cetera, to the tribunal. We also are in charge of helping the parties to ensuring that they have easy access to government officials abroad, to witnesses abroad, by way of ensuring that we obtain the facilitation that is required to ensure that their mission abroad is successful.
- 04:30 We are in charge of drafting all the note verbales, receiving all the requests coming in from all external entities, and preparing draft for the key organ heads in terms of their re-, their response. And basically the section also help out in terms of planning for the completion strategy, in terms of planning for the best approaches that we can use to discharge the mandate of the tribunal and to support all the respective organ of the tribunal.
- 05:07 And as head of that section, I'm also the spokesperson of both the Registrar and the President, and I carry the word of the tribunal to the media, to the press corps, to all the television stations and to all the visiting VIPs or delegations coming to find out how the tribunal is doing.
- 05:30 So any time they come in, I always happen to be the first person to brief them; to give them a short briefing on the challenges, the work, the challenges and the achievements of the tribunal. I, I believe that is not that many but those are the few aspect of the work that we do in the section.
- 05:50 **BF: Wow, it's extremely broad and extremely important, important work.**