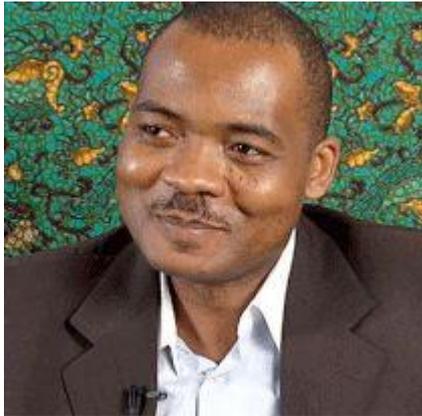


Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Jean-Pele Fomete (Part 14 of 15)



Role:	Program Director
Country of Origin:	Cameroon
Interview Date:	24 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Batya Friedman John McKay Robert Utter
Videographer:	Max Andrews
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Jean-Pele Fomete speaks about his role in court management services, overseeing legal aid and capacity building for pan-African justice systems. He highlights the need for civil society support to make the Tribunal a success, which has been challenging in Rwanda. He also comments on the lack of infrastructure in Africa, and the difficulty in mobilizing resources and ensuring adequate access to information about the Tribunal's work. He discusses the positive and negative impacts of the ICTR and international human rights standards on Rwanda's justice system.

The transcript of Part 14 begins on the following page.

Part 14

- 00:00** **Robert Utter: You're designing something not just for your problems now, but in this project that we're involved with, we're designing for the future as well.**
- 00:09 Yeah, yeah.
- 00:10** **RU: How would you pass on the information that you have accumulated for the future? 40 years, 50 years, 100 years from now.**
- 00:20 Yeah.
- 00:21** **RU: Or maybe paper will be a thing of the past. We'll use other ways to record knowledge.**
- 00:28 So what we have been doing in, in anticipation of our winding down, but also in the framework of our effort aimed at reaching out to as many constituencies as possible – because we created our website, but we have a database with the entire judicial records of, of, of the tribunal accessible via the internet also, but that's mainly for the paper record.
- 00:58 We are currently implementing a project that will allow us to digitize roughly 40,000 hours of sound and video of our proceedings. And the idea is once it's digitized we could redact the collection and make it available to, to, to stakeholders.
- 01:24 But again, we have been thinking about the, the internet but that only applies to regions and countries with access to the, to the internet.
- 01:35 So with regard to the African continent and especially Rwanda, we're doing two things, because there's hope that the situation will improve and when you look at Rwanda's strategic plan for 2020 you see that IT and the internet is at the heart of it. But in the meantime, the facilities are not there.
- 01:56 So what we are doing is we, we have an information center in Kigali. We have eight additional information centers in the provinces where the information we have is available in the form of paper, is available in the form of DVDs, videos and things like that, and we are planning to work with other stakeholders like a victims' group, you know, NGOs involved in the area of human rights.
- 02:26 The judiciary itself, you know, to make available everything we have to them. So for the future we have the digital collection. But for areas where we need to rely on other medium to make the information available we are trying to adjust.
- 02:47** **RU: Along that line . . .**
- 02:48 Yeah.

- 02:49** **RU: There are limits to what the written record or even the video record can provide us. Given these limits, what would you like to tell people who will be looking at this interview 100 years from now that wouldn't be readily apparent in the records of this tribunal that would be helpful to them.**
- 03:10 That's a daunting task to project oneself 100 years into the future. In the course of our work, we've been relying a lot on the, like the proceedings of the Nuremberg trials. So it was wonderful even just to flip through some of those old papers and things like that.
- 03:37 You, you have the feeling, listen – those people who were doing this in the 40s and 50s, did they imagine that we'll be doing what we are doing now? I, I said no, because we're saying – you know, we are doing this but for the future we hope not to face another holocaust or another genocide. But it happened, unfortunately.
- 04:03 And unfortunately it looks like, it looks like it might still happen. So frankly I, I will hope not to project myself into the 100 years to come to tell people, "Use what we have been doing to undergo other trials."
- 04:21 No, I'll just be – my hope is in the years to come when they look at this is simply to say, "How come in, in that century they were still killing each other, they were still creating international tribunals to deal with this?"
- 04:37 But again, if we have to deal with some of those things I will hope those issues are dealt with at the national level. I think we should work hard on building the capacity in, in national jurisdictions to ensure that human rights are respected, that there are avenues available to people to resolve their differences in ways other than resorting to killings.
- 05:06 It might be idealistic, but experience shows that when you're in an environment where people feel free to run their businesses, feel they have avenues, they have recourses to have their differences resolved, conflict are less likely to escalate to the level where we'll have to build mechanisms like the, the ICTR.
- 05:34 So I, I hope when they see this in 100 years it's simply to say, "Oh, those are the last guys who had to deal with these atrocities. That's the antiquity of the international criminal justice, that's the old man," and that by that time the real new man could have manifested itself.
- 05:57 That's my hope for those who would probably see this feature in the 100 years to come.