

Official Transcript: Charles Adeogun-Phillips (Part 2 of 9)



| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Role: | Prosecutor |
| Country of Origin: | Nigeria/Great Britain |
| Interview Date: | 6 November 2008 |
| Location: | Arusha, Tanzania |
| Interviewers: | Lisa P. Nathan Robert Utter |
| Videographer: | Max Andrews |
| Interpreter: | None |

Interview Summary

Charles Adeogun-Phillips discusses the impact of the UN's requirement for broad regional, linguistic and racial representation at the Tribunal, which influences recruitment policies. He further emphasizes the need for practitioners, and especially judges, to understand the cultural context of Rwanda when considering evidence. Adeogun-Phillips reflects on the treatment of victims and witnesses in Court, on the merits and shortcomings of adversarial and inquisitorial legal approaches, and the need to involve Rwandans in the justice process.

The transcript of Part 2 begins on the following page.

Part 2

- 00:00 **Lisa P. Nathan: Can you speak to how it was for you as a human being, so to step aside from your role, your job role for a moment but when you, you know, landed in Kigali and began work there, as you're looking around and . . .**
- 00:15 Frightening, absolutely frightening. With the benefit of hindsight, it's perhaps been the most humbling experience I could ever have, have, have had in my entire life. Going back to the specifics of your question, yes I left; I got on a plane from London, England as a 30 year old. I had only been married ten months.
- 00:35 My wife was literally expecting our first child and I had to leave all that to get on a plane and arrive in a place I'd never – and everybody thought I was mad going to a place called Kigali. In those days, Rwanda was only known for genocide. It was a little dot on a map, but in any case, I, I decided to take the job.
- 00:53 The early days in, in, in Kigali were indeed very trying but, but, also extremely rewarding, i-, in the sense, in the sense that we lived as a family. If you've ever been to a UN mission, say for example in the Congo, we all live in one unit. Because of the security situation, it was a phase five which is the highest phase, when I arrived in December '97 or early January '98. We, we had curfews, so there was a limit to our freedom and our ability to interact and move around.
- 01:29 There were, there were places where we were allowed to go and places where we were not. And, you know, you can imagine coming from a first world country and, and having restrictions on your movement, on who you talk to, and having to com-, and having to hold a, a two-way radio which you must have with you all the time, with a call sign. You-, you're no longer Charles Adeogun-Phillips; you are now 'lima papa six' and everybody had a call sign.
- 01:52 And those were quite, quite interesting and, you know, unique experiences but eventually, things got better in Kigali. The security situation eased out a little bit and we were so involved in fieldwork which, which was, which was entirely different. Frightening in the sense that I, I, I don't think that in my entire life, I had had so much or such close proximity with a corpse, let alone several.
- 02:22 I remember I, I was assigned to the Kibuye investigations. Kibuye is one of the, one of the most outrageous crimes, crime scenes in, in the, in the history of the genocide. It was certainly the longest of, of the killings in the sense that Kibuye witnessed the longest resistance to the genocide. So the, if you hear about killings going on in June, it was in Kibuye, the hills of Kibuye where all the refugees had fled.
- 02:54 I was involved in investigations in, in the, in the, in the Kibuye prefecture and as I said to someone two days ago when we were on mission in Kigali and Butare and we were staying in what, what I would call a, a two-star hotel. I looked at her across the dining table and I said to her, "You know when I started this job in 1998, do you know where we used to stay when we went out into the field?"

03:16 And she goes, "No." I said there's a place called Home Saint Jean, which was one of the main massacre sites in Kibuye and it's featured in Nick Hughes' film, 100 Days and that was actually the location for that film. There's a church where several Tutsi civilians had gathered and were killed. Their remains were kept in the sacristy, which is just right next door.

03:39 And there was no hotel accommodation in Kibuye in those days and we had to basically stay in, in the church. The, the, the nuns had had little rooms and they would vacate their rooms for us and put us up in there. And in the middle of the night – there are no toilets, there are no en-suite toilets in your room, so if you want to ease yourself in the middle of the night, you literally have to come out of your room at two o'clock in the morning and walk to, to, to toilets

04:03 And it was the most eerie feeling I'd ever, you'd, you would literally have to wake up two or three colleagues and say, "I need to go to the loo, can you just, can we walk together," in the middle of the night. And that's how we worked in those days and things have changed a lot since then, a lot, but extremely humbling, extremely humbling.