



# Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

## Official Transcript: Emile Short (Part 1 of 12)



<b>Role:</b>	Judge
<b>Country of Origin:</b>	Ghana
<b>Interview Date:</b>	21 October 2008
<b>Location:</b>	Arusha, Tanzania
<b>Interviewer:</b>	Robert Utter Donald J Horowitz
<b>Videographer:</b>	Max Andrews Nell Carden Grey
<b>Interpreter:</b>	None

## Interview Summary

Emile Short discusses the importance of creating an accurate historical record of events in Rwanda. He reflects on the ICTR's contributions to generating a rich body of jurisprudence that future tribunals can draw upon. Short remarks that the ad hoc tribunals have not provided as many direct avenues to reconciliation as might have been provided by other mechanisms. That said he recognizes that reconciliation is a long and complex process of which justice is an important part, particularly for victims.

*The transcript of Part 1 begins on the following page.*

## Part 1

- 00:00**     **Robert Utter: I'll start with my introduction and then ask you to introduce yourself. My name is Justice Robert F. Utter. I'm from Washington State. I formerly served as Chief Justice of their court and on the Supreme Court for 24 years and a judge for 14 years in other levels of courts before that. I'm here with the ICTR Information Heritage Project.**
- 00:27**     **RU: And in that capacity, it would be my honor to ask questions of my colleague judge, Francis Short. Mister Justice or Judge, whichever, whichever you prefer, we'd be interested in your background, how you got here, and what were the reasons for seeking this position.**
- 00:49**     Well, my name is Emile Francis Short. Presently, judge with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Prior to taking up this position in March 2004, I was the head of the State Human Rights Commission in Ghana as well as the Ombudsman from 1993 to 2004.
- 01:19**     In that capacity, we adjudicated complaints of human rights violations, administrative injustice, et cetera, and also did a lot of public education on human rights issues. Prior to that, I was in private practice for about 20 years in Ghana and during that period, I also lectured in law part-time in the University of Cape Coast Ghana and I have also lectured in law in London for some time.
- 01:57**     And I also worked in Rochester, New York as an assistant editor with the Lawyer's Cooperative Publishing Company for a period of about three years. Briefly, that's my background. I'm of course obviously a lawyer by profession. I hold a Master's Degree from The London School of Economics and Political Science.
- 02:23**     **RU: And how did you get to your present position and what interested you in this?**
- 02:28**     **Note: Gap in interview (Approx. 1 minute in duration.) Gaps occurred due to interruptions during the interview, technical issues, or corrupted files.**
- 02:36**     **RU: Mister Justice Short, how did you arrive at this position and, and what was your interest in doing this?**
- 02:44**     Well, I've always had a passion for, for justice, you know, and have always been interested in, in adjudication, you know, which I was involved in, in my previous job as head of the Human Rights Commission and as an Ombudsman.
- 03:04**     That position was a very challenging one, inasmuch as we had to investigate as well as adjudicate on, you know, human rights complaints against public officials and the manner in which they exercise their power or exercise their discretion.
- 03:24**     After, after many years in that position, I felt I needed another challenge and I saw this position as a bigger challenge and I wanted to be involved in dispensation of justice at

the international level. So I intimated to my government that I would like to be considered for intern-, an international judicial position.

03:59 And so my name was forwarded to the United Nations and, you know, we wen-, we went through the usual process of elections and luckily I was one of those who was elected to serve on this tribunal.

**04:18 RU: Has it met your expectations?**

04:23 The – well, in many ways yes. This work is very intellectually stimulating. You know, international humanitarian jurisprudence, international criminal law jurisprudence is very complex and very interesting. It's a different kind of jurisprudence, which I wasn't used to, but I've found it very exciting and very challenging.

04:56 And here, we, we, we have to deal with lawyers from all over the world, from every part of the world, you know, and you have some of the best lawyers appearing before us and the intellectual discourse is quite stimulating. And therefore to that extent, the work itself I've found very, very interesting and very satisfying.

05:27 At times it has been stressful because we're under pressure to complete our, our work. And so for the last two or three years, we've been sitting full days, you know, that's from nine to five thirty and sitting in court continuously, you know, wi-, with the usual short breaks can be stressful at times. You know, you have to be attentive throughout such a long period. So yeah, it has been quite stressful at times.

06:07 It also has been sometimes disturbing to see or to hear the events that took place, you know, in this continent and how it has affected, you know, our national development. So there are different perspectives; I have different perspectives of my experience here. Some are very satisfying, others are quite disturbing.