

THE AD HOC TRIBUNALS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

An Interview with

Carolina de Lima

International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life

Brandeis University

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Interviewee: Carolina de Lima

Location: The Hague, Netherlands

Interviewers: David P. Briand (Q1) and
Leigh Swigart (Q2)

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Q1: This is an interview with Carolina de Lima for the Ad Hoc Tribunals Oral History Project at Brandeis University's International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life. The interview takes place in The Hague, Netherlands, on May 24, 2015. The interviewers are Leigh Swigart and David Briand.

Why don't you start by just telling us what you were doing around the time of the breakup of Yugoslavia, how you were following what was happening, and then we can move to how you then came to be part of the ICTY [International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia].

de Lima: I think probably the first contact I had with the idea of Yugoslavia, I was in college and I was taking a history course at Adelphi [University]. I think one of the professors—this is before the fall of the [Berlin] Wall, so we were talking about countries in the Eastern Bloc that were more open and more closed, and he said, "Well, funny enough, I think the next big problem will be Yugoslavia." I remember thinking, well, why? And you're young and it's not much of an issue. Then what I really wanted to do was InterRail, and when I graduated in around 1991, we were InterRailing through Europe. We realized to get to Greece we no longer could go through Yugoslavia, and you had to take the ferry to Brindisi. So I guess in all the bigger scheme of things, we were

looking at other things. Yugoslavia wasn't—I studied political science and Latin American studies, so I never really considered that's what I would end up doing.

I had come to study my masters here in Leiden, and I had an old friend who eventually became Diederick's [Diederick Zanen] boss—still quite a character, like I told you previously. Somebody you might want to interview at one point. We were very good friends in the States and his stepfather at the time worked here in The Hague. So, he said, "Carolina, what are you doing?" I was in Portugal. "Don't you want to come and do your Master's here in Holland?" Since we were gypsies at the time I said, "Well, why not?" I packed a bag and I came to live here. I left; I had finished my Master's. I only needed to write my thesis. Then I got a job in the States. I went to work for a bank, and I worked in a non-profit organization, and I worked in the communications department. I used to review projects that would get funding for Latin America because I spoke Portuguese and Spanish, and I was thinking, God, what am I doing here? I'm reading these projects; I want to be doing these projects. It's great, I get paid well, New York is nice, but—.

I used to also have to go to a lot of these events for the UN [United Nations]. I remember reintroductions of the Contras into civilian life. All of that sounded a lot more exciting than to be sitting and reading projects. So, at that time, my friend was still here and he started working in the very beginning in ICTY, and he said, "Oh, why don't you consider coming back to Holland? You still have to write your thesis." "Oh, yeah, okay," so it was sort of, let's apply, let's see what happens. And there I was. I applied. I first got in to work at the OTP [Office of the Prosecutor].

Q2: When you applied, was there a whole listing of different positions and you applied for a lot of them? Did you just put your name in? How did it work?

de Lima: It was a bit haphazard. I actually came with a little bag and then they said, "You have to start within a week." I didn't have clothes. I think we were very naïve, like I said. Maybe it's interesting to know because a lot of us young people, we said, "Oh, the UN, how cool. Let's apply," but we didn't really know about a lot of the rules and regulations of how the UN worked as far as you were a professional or a general service, which afterwards I think became the big problem. You probably will hear from a lot of people complaining about the structure. A lot of the young people came, like myself, like Gonzalo, like Diederick, we said, "Oh, the UN. How exciting!" We didn't realize how promotions or your—as a young person at the beginning of your career, even though you got a lot of responsibilities, maybe your pay rate or your level wasn't equivalent to what you were doing. That became a big issue in all these organizations later on.

So I applied. Pretty much they said, "Look, they're looking for young people to do political analysis, to be reading—you need to speak English well. Why not?" I think we were all in our second or third job, and we had done an internship maybe, a proper job and, "Oh, okay." So I sort of landed in the Evidence Unit at that time.

Q2: And what year was this?

de Lima: This was somewhere, I think, October 1994. I remember at the time we still were in two digits, so we hadn't reached a hundred people in the tribunal yet.

Q2: Oh, wow!

de Lima: I think I was something like number eighty-two. This was a time we still had parties for the whole tribunal at the beach; we had barbeques and everybody knew each other by name. That was pretty much how it used to be.

In the beginning, I worked there, and then later when cases—well, the big joke between everybody is that we worked for [Duško] Tadić. You know, "Who do you work for?" "We work for Tadić." Unlike any other UN organization, the funny thing is most people weren't from the UN. More than about me, what I'd like to say is this was really an experience about people. Maybe because I'm not a lawyer, and a lot of the people will tell you about how it developed legally, a lot of people will tell you the structure, and a lot of people forget that we were working for people. Even though I had this time in the OTP, and I did for [Tihomir] Blaškić—I reviewed a lot of the documentations. They didn't have legal aides at the time, so I ended up doing a lot of the disclosure for Blaškić.

After a while I said, "What am I doing here? I'm a people person and I'm looking at all these documents." At the time there was an opening in the Victims and Witnesses Unit; it was a unit then. That's when I transferred. I went to Registry. At that time, we were very few people, and I had the best boss I had, still—Frans Bauduin, a Dutch judge. I don't

know if you know a little bit about Dutch politics, but he also did a lot of important legal cases here in Holland. Frans is also one of the best humans in this world.

Q2: Was he the Registrar?

de Lima: No, he was the head of Victims and Witnesses. Head of the Registry was Madame [Dorothee de] Sampayo [Garrido-Nijgh], who is also still a very good and dear friend to me. I think the highlight of the tribunal, of the people, was the moment we had Madame Sampayo as the Registrar, Judge [Gabrielle Kirk] McDonald as Head of Court, and Louise Arbour as Prosecutor—and I think like we were saying, good female roles.

The typical American school question—who are your role models? Of good female role models, those were three amazing women. Fortunately I'm still very much in touch with Madame Sampayo, who is a very dear friend. The other ladies, they've moved on. Judge McDonald will always be in my heart.

When the first cases were starting—eventually more people appeared; it wasn't only Tadić in our lives—I always remember Judge Arbour saying, "Everybody's always complaining that we're working for the small fish, but it doesn't matter. We should do the small fish." I think we never, ever expected to catch the big fish. I think it was the innocence of this time that really made the whole difference. That's why if you speak to people who were there at this time, it's very nostalgic; there's nostalgia for this time, and the nostalgia is because everybody was really young. I can't remember but I think it was

something like the average age was thirty-six-years-old. I might be wrong. We always said that the judges brought the age up.

Q1: Oh, the median age. Yes.

de Lima: Brought the median age up. You had a few of the bureaucrats of the administration that were UN-ers and a few people who just sort of landed here. There was a guy from New Zealand, Todd Cleaver. He was a lawyer, and I think he just backpacked here and sort of stood in front of the tribunal before it was born and—

Q2: And said, "Can I work here?"

de Lima: "Can I work here?" And Todd did it. For some bizarre reason, he was an exchange student in Brazil and spoke Portuguese. Those were the things that were very cool.

Q2: In those early years—and I'm sure it went over a hundred people very quickly—was there already a strict separation between the organs? You're saying you all went to the beach and had a barbeque.

de Lima: Yes, but eventually—the thing is, it was a time to begin rules and regulations. It was new. For example, Victims and Witnesses—how do you do that within an organization that already exists? How do you pay witnesses when they're here? How do

you do transfers? How do you get money? How do you get a budget? For a long time, the budget for coffee—it was us! We used to do a pool—"Can you put the five guilders in to have coffee for the witnesses?"

Diederick had a very good experience also because he had to deal with people from the area, and he had to work with them—a lot of people having their own stories and histories. There's a lot of people who worked there and never saw the people. If you work in Administration, if you work in Personnel, if you work in Budget, you might as well be working at Shell, do you know what I mean? When the cases started coming through and the court started working, all of a sudden we had to figure out, how do we do this? How are these people witnesses, but they need guidance? How do we do that? Without going into details, those were all the things while still trying to run the courts.

Q2: Can you go into detail? Because that's fascinating. You said if you had a witness who's going to testify, what are the things you had to do for that person?

de Lima: Everything. You had to do it for prosecution and for defense, because you were unbiased and you worked for both. First of all, you had to find the people. Those contacts you got through OTP or through defense. At the time we used to have one person who formerly was in the military who worked with us and he would go in the field and pick them up.

Q2: The military of what country?

de Lima: Any country. In our unit, it was Frans Bauduin, who was Dutch. He was the judge. There was William McGreeghan, who was from Northern Ireland, and he used to work with Scotland Yard. He was the one who dealt—much later, I mean—with all the security issues within Witnesses. Later on we had relocation of people who had witnessed and could no longer go back to whatever situation they were in. We had Wendy Lobwein, who was Australian—she was a social worker—myself and Maree doing all the logistics, contacts, and God knows—whatever else arose—and one officer that would do all the driving and all. That's how we started off.

Q2: So the OTP would give you the name of such and such a person we would like to call to the witness stand—

de Lima: Here's the phone numbers, the contact—

Q2: And then what would happen? Somebody down there would find them?

de Lima: We would send this one person to the field office. He would get in touch and we would do all the travel arrangements, all the visa arrangements, and all the hotel arrangements. Sometimes we couldn't appear with names. We had to do a whole policy with the UN to be able to pay them their meals and their lodgings, but we couldn't give them money, and it was a very—

Q2: You couldn't give them money? They had to pay—?

Q1: Yes, how did that work?

de Lima: That was very complicated. They were not expert witnesses. A lot of people had never been on a plane before. They weren't under our umbrella, they were free, but at the same time they needed guidance, so there was a lot of dancing—let's put it this way. We needed a car, and the UN would say, "We can give you a white Volvo saying UN," and we said, "No. They're witnesses. We need a van with tinted windows." "Okay, it'll take a while before you—" [Laughs] Or, "Can we have a coffee machine?"

Q2: So presumably the people who were being brought in to testify already had been contacted and given statements so they agreed to do this, but did they have second thoughts and think, Oh, my God. I don't—?

de Lima: Second, third, fifth. This was the beginning. Later on OTP also re-contacted them, or—I must say, a lot of times, Defense was very organized.

Q2: The Defense was organized?

de Lima: Yes, a lot of the times Defense—and they were very thankful. While we were in the tribunal, having worked on both sides, OTP sometimes thought we were part of them. So it's always interesting.

Q2: There was less gratitude?

de Lima: Let's say every case was one case, because you always had a contact person in a team, for example, when you were doing a case. I ended up doing all the Srebrenica trials. When I sleep that's what I still think about. I could not do this now, having children. It's what we were saying—you're immortal; you can do anything when you're young. I'm not too keen on war movies anymore. I'd rather remember the people.

One person—I can't even remember what case it was—but she had a very horrible experience, needless to say. She was in a camp, and for maybe the six months she was in the camp she only had one sweater. I still remember it was black and yellow. For six months she wore the same sweater. She was raped, and it was a very, very sad story. You never know if these people will come, if they will testify. You don't know their conditions, so you really live that for those moments because you're their reference point. You're bringing them into the tribunal, you're sitting with them, you're giving them coffee. What I'll never forget is she kept the sweater, and she wanted to wear it on the stand.

Q1: Wow!

de Lima: Yes, because that was her thing. She wanted them to remember her.

Q2: The accused.

de Lima: The accused. Those are the things, twenty-one years later, that I remember. So she did it, and she was on the stand for a long time. I remember we said, "Okay, it's over. Shall we do a ceremony? You have to let it go now. Should we burn it?" I think those are the things I remember.

I also remember an older man. He actually broke his visa stay because he was in a refugee camp in Germany, but all his family, all his sons had died in Srebrenica. And he came. He wasn't supposed to leave Germany, because we also had a lot of problems with visas, of getting people out of—especially in the United States. Oh, my God. People who had emigrated and they needed to testify because it's also—you have to go by state law, and, oh, a nightmare. So this man arrived and he wouldn't leave the front of the tribunal, but nobody could give him information. OTP said, "No classified information." All he wanted to know is if anybody had seen his sons, if they were dead.

Q2: And they said that they could not—?

de Lima: People are going through the cases so it usually ended up with us. So okay, what are you going to do? Let's buy him a meal. We will all chip in. Let's give him a coffee. We would say, "Go try to contact the ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross]," but there was very little we could do. But I think we had just a great team of great people.

Q2: So when you had a witness come in, I'm sure that someone at the OTP told them what it was like to testify, but did you have to give them moral support?

de Lima: Yes.

Q2: Did you go and listen to their testimonies?

de Lima: Sometimes.

Q2 : You took them to their hotel?

de Lima: Yes, not only that, but you had twenty-four hour supervision. There was a project, and we had these interpreters that stayed in the hotel with them twenty-four hours.

Q2: Oh, I see. I wondered how that worked

de Lima: They were never on their own.

Q2: Because otherwise how would they even know how to order food or—?

de Lima: They had monitoring twenty-four hours.

Q2: Was that so they didn't take off, or is it because they were unsafe, or—?

de Lima: First of all, this is a small city. We had also to protect their identity, some more, some less. There were few hotels or few lodgings, and you can't put them with defense or with prosecution, so there was a lot of crazy logistics going on. We had witness waiting rooms with coffee and we sat with a lot of them. A lot of them smoked, so in my Serbo-Croatian, I can say "coffee" and "Let's go have a cigarette." At this point, they need this. A lot of the older ladies knitted. They always wanted to give us little knitted socks. We weren't allowed to take presents, so we had in the office a lot of knitted socks and we just placed them there. We made sort of a painting with all the knitted socks.

Q1: The mementos.

de Lima: Yes, it was usually knitted socks. We never took anything, but they wanted to leave us knitted socks. But we held a lot of hands. A lot of people fainted. There were a lot of people who got extremely anxious. Can you blame them? At the time you have one view. I don't know if I would have testified if I was them, now, in my position. Knowing what I know, maybe that's not the nicest thing to say, but the continuations of the tribunals, of everything that came out of it, I think it's very positive, but [Sighs] it's heavy. I had a world; these people didn't. We asked a lot of them. I think a lot of people forget that; they forget why we were there.

I remember the women from Srebrenica. We really did not sponsor people bringing their children because it's an emotional time. We wanted them to have a moment to be here, to do what they were here for, and try to get them back home as soon as possible. But very often, especially the Srebrenica women that lost all their men, and they had one son, they wouldn't let go. For example, how many times did we sit doing drawings with kids while their moms were testifying?

Q2: I have two questions. One is, did you organize this so that you knew exactly when they were going to testify so they could come in for the shortest amount of time possible?

de Lima: We tried to do that. That was the idea, but there was a snowstorm, there was somebody coming from somewhere else, a flight is cancelled, the court takes a recess too long, so it's—. A lot of people don't realize, when you have a court case in any country, the police are doing their job, the courts are doing their job, but it's in the same city. But when you have an international court, the flight arrangements—. We had a man who wouldn't fly, so we had to bring him by train, but you still have to send somebody to come with them. We had somebody who would not leave a country without their dog. Those are things you never thought about.

Q2: Did they go on commercial airlines or did they go on UN planes?

de Lima: A bit of everything. It depended on the situation.

Q2: It depended on the person who was coming in.

de Lima: Yes.

Q1: Once they were at the tribunal—or maybe this process began even before that—how were they prepared to take the stand? What process did they go through in your unit?

de Lima: Okay, that's interesting. The preparation actually—we had nothing to do with the case. That's very important to know. Some of us knew a little bit of the case, like the more public cases you knew, obviously. Sometimes it was even better not to know too much, let's put it this way. It's complicated if you get emotionally involved.

Q1: Yes.

de Lima: There's an interesting guy, Zoran. Zoran was the photographer and he did most of the audiovisuals for the tribunal throughout. He's also a dear friend of ours. When Frans Bauduin, the head of the Victims and Witnesses—let's say he was always up for something new, and he had an open mind. That's why I say he was a great boss. We said, "Okay, we have to find a way to communicate everything—the process," so we actually made a video.

Q1: A how-to video?

de Lima: A how-to video.

Q2: What did it cover?

de Lima: It covered everything, saying, "You are going to be picked up by a witness assistant. He'll come with you. He'll give you your passport, your visa, and he will drive you to the airport. Then you will take the plane, and you'll come to The Hague, and you'll come to your lodgings. This is the courtroom. You will be sitting here. The accused will be sitting there. The translating booth is here. Everything you said will be translated to these languages. This is the way you will walk and you will sit. Meanwhile, you will wait in a witness waiting room until you get taken to—." We had one courtroom—

Q2: At that time there was only one courtroom?

de Lima: It was one courtroom, so if you had more cases, you were having parallel cases running and you had to take those witnesses off because you had one witness room, because the other cases was coming.

Q1: You had a lot to juggle at the same time.

de Lima: So eventually there were three courtrooms, three witness rooms, three ways to get to the witness rooms. That's how we made the video.

Q2: That sounds like a very smart move.

Q1: Do you recall—you don't have to name any names—how this process worked for some people versus others?

de Lima: Different witnesses? What was his name, he was fantastic. He'd come with his big cowboy hat. You have the expert witnesses, and it was fun to see them again. You had the Dutch. You had UN Dutchbat [Dutch battalion] from Srebrenica. Sometimes they were the most traumatized.

Q2: The Dutch?

de Lima: Well, see them this way—you live in a perfect country; you're from a generation that didn't see war; you're sent by your country to a war zone, and then you see atrocities, and you come back home and nobody wants to hear about it anymore. You tell your experience once, twice, and then people say, "Oh, come on, let's go have a beer. It's sunny." Meanwhile, these people who used to come in groups, they had a common experience. The whole country went through war, and even though maybe there were different ethnicities—. Diederick talked a little bit about their divisions within his unit. In the end, they had a language in common, they had a war in common, they had more in common than there was a war, and the war made them different, but they had a common heritage somehow. These people who were caught in the war and weren't supposed—nobody's supposed to be there, but I think they couldn't digest that so easily. You see it a

lot with American kids going to war, and you come back home and life goes on as usual and you're the one who's sitting there going, how can I go on after what I've seen?

Q2: Of course, the suicide rate among returned service people is so high in the U.S. right now.

There's a British anthropologist who's done some work with the ICTR and he has noted this phenomenon that would happen with witnesses who came from Rwanda to testify at the ICTR. They were put into a sort of a residence in Arusha, and they end up having a composite narrative because they would talk with each other so much, and in some ways they'd kind of forgotten what their own experience was, and it became kind of a common one. I just wondered if you ever had any concerns about people having too much contact among witnesses?

de Lima: I don't think at the time—I really can't tell you. A lot of the witness assistants who stayed there twenty-four hours and spoke the language—language is a very binding thing. We were still the nice girls who smiled and gave them coffee, we organized their trips, but of course those ladies who actually stayed twenty-four hours with the witnesses probably are the ones who can tell you a lot about what—. We got them in groups but we dealt with them individually once they came in. To a certain extent I'm sure it must happen. I think it happens to all of us.

Q2: Exactly, yes.

de Lima: If you keep your childhood friends and you talk about your experiences, eventually you forget which one is yours.

Q1: Who did what.

de Lima: Who did what. That's always the problem when you go to court—how much of your memory is yours, and how clear is it? Judge [Almiro] Rodrigues did a talk to future judges, and he actually said some very interesting things about perception. I helped him out in the University of Sao Paulo. He was doing a course for judges, so I did it with him. He did something interesting about that.

Q2: What language was he doing it in?

de Lima: He was doing it in Portuguese, but he can do it in English or in French, I'm sure.

Q2: Interesting. Did you notice the resiliency of different witnesses? Did it have anything to do with how "cosmopolitan" they were, whether they'd lived in cities, or what their educational level was, or was it really a function of who they were as people?

de Lima: I think so. That's the shocking thing, as being a twenty-five-year old to being a forty-six-year-old now. There were a lot of preconceived ideas I used to have, being very idealistic. When I went to live in New York, I went to live with friends of my parents. I'm

not Jewish but I grew up in a very Jewish community in Brazil, and my father's friends in the states were Jewish, so I got a chance to live very much in that community. The mother of my mom's friend had been in Auschwitz, and I remember her telling me her experience, saying she still lit up a candle for her sister because when she left Auschwitz her sister was still alive while everybody else had died. It's the same as this man who was asking for his child. He just wanted to know if they were dead. I remember in the past I used to think, of course she's dead. How hasn't she come to terms with this? And being there, I saw that you can't give up. That's the thing. That's human nature. You just can't give up. What if you give up? Those are the questions.

In theory, in war, I used to think—you read a book and you think people just killed each other because they didn't understand each other, because they didn't mix. I remember, again—it's the memories you have of being in court and seeing this not very well-educated woman—one of the knitting women. You saw grown men break down. And you saw this elderly woman, and she said, "Why did you do this? You used to have a barbeque at my house. You went to school with my children." That's when it really hits you, because you say, "My God, this is a powerful woman. She can sit here and say, 'My child, why?'"

Q2: Do you know anybody who works with Victims and Witnesses at the ICC?

de Lima: Not any more, no. I used to have a few friends—actually one guy that worked with us, he started the witness unit in ICC. That was Simo, but he's left since. That's what

you get—you get amazing people. Also, one of the experiences was— [Dražen] Erdemović was one of the first people—he actually gave himself up. We always want this idea of good and evil—he's bad and he's good. Erdemović was the boy next door; he was the boy who sat next to you in school. He was caught in a bad situation and he had to make a choice, and he had to shoot a lot of people. Eventually he got shot himself. Eventually he became a witness and we got to know him quite well. When you're young, you want to have rights and wrongs, and when you get older you see how much of these lines were so blurred.

Q2: This is a man who gave himself up and then was in prison, but was brought out to be a witness?

de Lima: Out to be a witness.

Q1: Became a witness.

de Lima: Became a witness.

Q1: How many years were you in the Victims and Witnesses Unit?

de Lima: Oh, God, now you got me. All together I was five years and a half in the tribunal, so four, four-and-a-half, something like that.

Q1: You came in very early on, in 1994.

de Lima: Yes.

Q1: So you would have been leaving about 1999-2000.

de Lima: End of 2000.

Q1: End of 2000. How did you—and you can speak to Victims and Witnesses Unit and also to the ICTY as a whole—how did you see them evolve in the time that you were there? What was your experience of their evolution?

de Lima: I think it's what I said. There were a lot of young people who were very idealistic. Of course, there was some structure, and there was some bureaucracy—a lot of bureaucracy, especially for us because we didn't sit anywhere, so we had to have stamps and a hundred million signatures for our coffee budget. [Laughter] It also made you laugh. You needed a good sense of humor. On the other hand, I think eventually it became an institution, so there was this structure and it runs. But it also lost a lot of the people because of course it's ending. But the legacy is—for me, when I saw [Ratko] Mladić—because I did all the Srebrenica—when I saw him caught, for me it was, "Phew!"

Q1: It must have been a huge—.

de Lima: For me, for my personal journey, it was like [Gasps], "He's caught!" It's just that. It was some amazing people.

Q2: Have you ever gone to see his trial?

de Lima: No, I never wanted to. That's up to somebody else, do you know what I mean? It's not about me anymore. You have to let go. Another interesting person—Patricia Sellers.

Q2: Yes, she's on our list.

de Lima: If you talk to her, send her a huge kiss. Patricia for me was another really important woman. She met her husband in Brazil. She used to work for the Ford Foundation in Brazil. She was always telling me, "Carolina, you have to go do this, do that," and we had a lot in common at that time. So she was also an older woman for me at the time, but she's also an imposing woman. She had long hair with all her braids, and she was cool, you know what I mean? And experienced. The other thing I wanted to tell you guys, maybe three, four years ago, I bump into Mark Harmon—

Q2: From the OTP?

de Lima: Yes. He was head prosecutor for a long time, and I bumped into him in a café, because he still lives here. He went to Cambodia. He had retired, then decided to go to Cambodia and came back. But before he went to Cambodia I bumped into him by chance. I hadn't been living in Holland anymore. He said, "Hello, Carolina!" I said, "Hi, Mark. How are you doing?" And I realized he retired. He really wanted to talk to somebody. It's something I see in my dad—you're retired but you had this life that's gone. He's still young. It was really nice. We talked, and then he went off to Cambodia, and I bumped into him again. I bumped into him on my birthday in March, when I turned forty-six. I realized you retire at sixty-two, and he was four years in Cambodia. Then I realized he must be about exactly twenty years older than I am. Then I thought, he was my age when I started at the tribunal. I used to look at him like an older man, and he was somebody who knew what he was doing, and sometimes I had to tell him, "I don't think I can bring your witnesses, but you didn't give me this info—." But he was always fantastic.

I'm friends with one of the prosecutors in the ICC. He said, "Carolina, now I realize the younger kids are looking at me as this older man." I said, "Well, you also have to consider that they might look at you with some admiration." That's the thing. That's the nice thing that you take after twenty years. It's twenty-one years since you began.

Q2: I get the impression from what you were saying and from what other people said that in the early years the people working there had a real sense of solidarity in a community that seems to have—

de Lima: Disappeared.

Q2: Well, but you still have this feeling for each other—

de Lima: Yes.

Q2: —even though it was twenty years ago.

de Lima: Yes. Having been a kid that grew up in so many different countries, you look back and you end up choosing places to work that look a bit like what felt like home. That was the beauty, because you had people from everywhere and you all worked together—some better than others. The Witnesses Unit in the beginning was really a special place; it was really, really a special place—William with his strong Irish accent, Maree—who's still one of my best friends—her Scottish accent, Wendy with her Australian accent. I was the non-English speaker there, and we had a recorded message for the witness line, and we had to leave a very clear message, and they said, "We can't speak. You have to speak. You're the only one who can speak English clearly." [Laughs] I said, "Okay." "Hello, please leave a message after the tone."

Q1: Wow.

de Lima: Because they said, "Nobody's going to understand us."

Q2: Oh, that's so funny.

Q1: Those thick accents.

de Lima: With defense we had—I don't even remember what case. It was around Christmas and there was nobody to translate, and there was for defense this lawyer and he needed to give me his witness list. His name was Mr. Londrović. There was nobody to translate, so he goes, "Carolina!"

"Mr. Londrović!"

"Carolina, come?"

"Go. Go."

So I used to go there, and he used to go, "Carolina!"

"Mr. Londrović!"

I remember he gave me a whole list of witnesses in Cyrillic, and I said, "Mr. Londrović, Cyrillic."

"Carolina, uh uh." [Laughter]

Then he said, "Oh," and he gave me a list.

I go, [Makes a plane sound] "Dates."

Q1: Like a plane.

de Lima: Yes. When we finished he gave me huge flowers. Those are the things you remember.

Q2: Otherwise you had a staff interpreter who was there all the time who would be—

de Lima: Or they did—the Defense.

Q2: Or the Defense did.

de Lima: They had with them.

Q2: I know that you have not been connected with the ICC, but I'm wondering if you— obviously the ICC has compensation for victims and has a reparations scheme, and I'm wondering what your view on that is.

de Lima: I think it's fantastic. We did a lot as people in the Witnesses Unit, but because we wanted to. There were a lot of people that I remember. We managed to get a prosthetic leg for a man. [Laughs] We put a lot of money there in our coffee fund and cookie fund, so I think it's fantastic. I think they've learned a lot, and that's the nice thing to see. Every tribunal now can build on the structures—on some maybe naïve structures that originally we started off with, but now the ICC is its own entity. ICTY had to be built up on a UN structure that wasn't built for a tribunal or for a lot of things. So it grew, but it grew a lot on the innocence and good will of very young people who weren't particularly UN-ers who just said—or Judge Arbour, who was willing to catch little fish to begin with. We thought we'd end up working for Tadić for a few more years. It's amazing.

Q1: [To Q2] Do you have any final questions? We're getting towards the end of the hour here.

Q2: So after five, six years, you left. Did you get frustrated with the bureaucracy, or did you decide it was enough time to put into something that could be so personally taxing?

de Lima: It's always a combination of things. It's your first long-term job—let's put it this way—so it sort of builds up to everything you do later on in your life. It was very frustrating. I wanted to work more with people. I wasn't a lawyer, so I think those career lawyers that saw the tribunal as a pillar of what would happen later on for international criminal law, they could see how their career would gain more if they got in a better position. On the other hand, I thought the experience I had opened my eyes to more

things that I wanted to do. I wanted to be more hands-on. It was nice to have the stability of the UN, but I think a lot of people were caught up in the stiff structure.

You'd see a lot of frustrated people who thought, "Oh, I got the short end of the stick," and I always say, "Nobody cares later on when you move out to the real world. They'll look at your experience, not that you were Step 2, Grade G-5, and you should have been a P-3, and you didn't get the chance." If you were looking for that, it was very frustrating. For us in the Witnesses Unit, it was very frustrating what we could do, what we couldn't do, and how hard it was in the beginning. Probably every generation, every person will have its own hurdles and they'll think theirs is the worst. It's just human nature.

As far as the people we bumped into, the role models—like I said, Sampayo, Patricia Sellers. You saw some characters like Brenda Hollis—those people that might have never come into my life.

Also, we went to university. There were the university people and there were the police people. There were the lawyers and there were the people who were in the military, so you had a totally different *modus operandi* of working. You learned how to work with each other. They would call us and, "North gate, tango, blah blah blah," and we had to learn all the military lingo. We used to tease them and say, "A for apple, G for gummy bear." [Laughter] So you had a little bit of fun. Some people were really stiff and didn't find it funny at all. You also had a bit of humor to work with these situations because otherwise it was too heavy.

Q1: Well, thank you so much for your time today.

Q2: Thank you very much.

de Lima: No problem.

Q1: Is there anything you wanted to—?

de Lima: No.

Q1: If there's something you forgot and you want to add it to the transcript, you can do that.

de Lima: No, I think I did it. The woman in black and yellow.

Q1: Yes, alright. Thank you again. I'm going to shut the recorder off now.

de Lima: You're welcome.

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