

THE AD HOC TRIBUNALS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

An Interview with

Mirko Klarin

International Center for Ethics, Justice and Public Life

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Interviewee: Mirko Klarin

Interviewers: Leigh Swigart [Q1]  
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**Q1:** I was reading an article in the *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, and you mention in there that when you first came to the ICTY you were working for an independent newspaper from Belgrade. We would really like to hear about how you first came to be covering the work of the ICTY, and also how this transitioned into the SENSE Agency and the kind of presence that you now have here, right in the lobby of the ICTY.

**Klarin:** Well, all my life I was a journalist. I graduated in law, but I never worked as a lawyer. When I graduated in 1966, I immediately became a journalist. And back at the end of the '80's when things started to fall apart in the former Yugoslavia, I was amazed how those things could happen and that nobody reacted, nobody was responsible. Because it was absolutely clear to me that there would be a war; there would be war crimes, destruction, refugees and everything else. So, in May '91, I think it was the 16<sup>th</sup> of May, one and a half months before the war in Slovenia started, I wrote an editorial in my newspaper, called *Borba*. The title of the editorial was "Nuremberg Now." And I said that two important principles from the Nuremberg chapter had been violated by our political and intellectual elite at the time. One is planning war which is a crime against peace, and the second is crimes against humanity, because we had mass production of ethnic and racial hatred, which is the precondition to committing crimes — to kill, torture,

rape — on the same basis. So I said, "Let's organize a small international criminal tribunal," something like a small Nuremberg, and let's try our leaders, big and small, before the war, even better instead of the war. It will be much better for everybody if it happens sooner rather than after four or five years of war, two hundred thousand dead, millions of refugees, destroyed cities and so on.

So I wrote this in May 1991, before the war started. At the time I was already selected to go as a correspondent of my newspaper to Brussels, because I was covering the international community's efforts to solve the Yugoslav crisis. So when I came to Brussels, I think in July 1991, my first idea was, "Let's see, let's talk with some law professors, with some legal advisors from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs about the possibility of creating something like [Laughs] an International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia." Because I simply could not stand the idea that such things could happen at the end of the 20th century, and that nobody would be responsible, nobody would be accountable for those things. I was pretty much disappointed; you know, when I heard the answer. Nobody can try them, only you can try them, nobody else can do that, I was told. So I remember, I think it was in October 1992, when the Bassiouni Commission of Experts was created, the next day I was in Leiden for an interview with Professor Kalshoven, the first president of the Commission. I saw this as the start of the realization of my idea finally. And of course I made a huge interview with Professor Kalshoven and, well, the next May the Tribunal was created. Luckily I was in Brussels, which is one and a half hours by car from The Hague, so I could cover everything that was happening in those first days of the Tribunal.

And there was not much going on. Gradually, when things started to develop here, I transferred to The Hague and created this agency with the sole aim of covering the Tribunal, because nobody else was doing that. I have spent years doing it; I have felt obliged to continue because I think it's important. Even if the public is not interested very much in it, I think it's important to leave the historic record. Not the record of an archive with its transcript of a million pages, but the stories about what happened from day to day in this institution during the trials. So that's how I moved to The Hague and created this agency, and we are still doing that although it's not much fun anymore. But since we have been here from the beginning, we have to stay until the end.

**Q1:** Is there a relationship between SENSE and the Institute for War and Peace Reporting?

**Klarin:** Absolutely no relation. When I was a correspondent for my newspaper, back in '96, IWPR used my articles from *Borba* for their bulletins. Eventually, I think in 1996, we started the Tribunal update. I stayed with them for some seven years and three hundred weekly editions and then I gave up. I couldn't do it anymore. SENSE Agency had already been up and running for five years when I quit writing for IWPR in 2003. So for a few years IWPR was my side activity.

**Q1:** And how did television enter into the work of SENSE?

**Klarin:** Well, we created this agency in 1998, and since then we have covered all the trials. We are writing daily reports for our web site, for the media in the region and for the general public worldwide. We have been translating them into English for the last ten years or more. But, well, being a journalist from the written media, in '98-'99, I felt almost powerless to express — to present all the emotions, the feelings, what I saw in the courtroom. So I decided I must go into TV. What especially inspired me to go to TV was when I heard the guilty pleas, and at the beginning we had only two, Erdemović and Jelisić.

I was very naïve; I thought that if you give them a picture of "their guy," speaking "their language," saying, "I am guilty, I did that," then nobody can deny. Of course I was naïve, everybody's is still denying [laughs]. But anyway, that's how I entered television production. So we started in March 2000 and, let me see, this Friday we produced the 673rd program. [Q1: Wow!] We didn't miss a single working week of the Tribunal, and right now we have four weeks without trials. So, we are preparing four different programs connected to the Tribunal. We will make four stories about Srebrenica, because this is the 20th anniversary year. So instead of weekly reports from the field, we'll have a kind of reminder of the events in Srebrenica twenty years ago. So that's basically it.

**Q1:** Do you have a sense of how big your audience is in The Balkans, how many people read your reporting?

**Klarin:** I think it's diminishing. You know, I have a very absurd theory that the image of the Tribunal and its importance, and the acceptance of the Tribunal was much bigger, let's say, in Serbia during the Milošević time than afterward. And the same, the acceptance of our reporting, was much bigger in that time because the situation was very clear, black and white, you know. If you are against Milošević, against the war, against the regime, naturally you are for the Tribunal, for the war crimes trials. And, of course, you follow our work, our reports and so on, not because you believe in international justice necessarily, but because you're against Milošević. And you think that the Tribunal will help you to get rid of him.

And I think the same was in Croatia during the Tuđman years, so that's why I said it has become much more complex and complicated afterward with so-called democratic forces coming to power. Now we can follow the process of a kind of rewriting of history, the process of — almost the process of fascization of those societies there. You can see the re-evaluation of the Second World War legacy and the roles that different forces played during the that war; you have the rehabilitation of Chetniks in Serbia, the rehabilitation of Ustasha in Croatia and so on.

**Q1:** I was wondering if "SENSE" has a meaning. How did you choose — is it an acronym for something?

**Klarin:** Well, yeah, our aim was to bring some common sense into the public perception of the work of the Tribunal. And since we have been pleading for financial support from the European Commission, and [laughs] other donors, we needed that kind of acronym.

**Q1:** Is that your major funder? The European Commission?

**Klarin:** Yes, yes. The European Commission and the Dutch government, all the time, and periodically Luxembourg, Switzerland, Germany, Norway.

**Q2:** So going back to the beginning of the Tribunal, we're very interested in what it was like for you to cover the *Tadić* case, and the very first trials since Nuremberg.

**Klarin:** Well, I mean it was — it was absolutely exciting that, finally, my idea had come to life, and that I was able, because I was living very close to The Hague, to come here to follow the trials, to write about the trials for my newspaper. At the beginning, I was often the only journalist from the region on the public gallery. So the *Tadić* trial was being covered by me and a correspondent from SRNA, the Bosnian Serb Agency. And soon I realized that the media in the countries of the former Yugoslavia, the official media or the majority of the public are much more interested in the trials where their fellow nationals were accused rather than victims. The next trial was *Celebici*, to Bosnian Croats and Bosniaks accused for crimes against Bosnian Serb victims, and suddenly the Bosnian Serb Agency was not interested in covering that trial. And the most fascinating example was the Croats covering the *Blaškić* case; for every small status conference, an unimportant pre-trial event, there were ten journalists coming to cover it from Zagreb. And it happened once that, at the same time that a status conference was happening in the *Blaškić* case, in another courtroom there was the opening of the trial for the shelling of

Dubrovnik, and not a single Croatian journalist went one floor up to see the opening of the trial for the crimes against Croats, for the attack on Dubrovnik.

**Q2:** So they were interested in Blaškić—

**Klarin:** Absolutely.

**Q2:** Because he is a Croat, and —

**Klarin:** Yeah, sure, sure.

**Q1:** So they were much more interested in the accused than the —

**Klarin:** Than the victims, their own victims. That's a problem that was following the Tribunal from the beginning till the end.

**Q1:** Did you see the work of SENSE to some extent as an answer to that, to give a voice to the victims?

**Klarin:** Absolutely. Absolutely. I mean at that time, at the beginning, the Tribunal was claiming that it would give its voice — not only that it will give the voice, but that it itself *was* the voice of the victims. And, at the beginning, the victims had the real opportunity to tell the



story of the horrors that had hit them. But then, in the name of “judicial economy,” the *Rule 92 bis* was introduced, so the witnesses and victims describe what they have survived or seen in a written statement, and come to court only to confirm their signature and to be cross-examined by the defense lawyer of the self-represented accused, who usually ask about everything, except the suffering the victim survived. I remember one old Albanian man whose appearance at the courtroom lasted five minutes. Leaving the witness bench, he complained: "How come nobody's going to ask me about what happened to me? I am the only survivor of the massacre in Izbica." And the judge answered: "No, sorry, you explained all of it already in your written statement."

**Q2:** So he never got the satisfaction of saying —

**Klarin:** He never, yeah. So, the Tribunal started with a huge ambition to be the voice of the victims, to write the history, to bring reconciliation, and one by one they're giving away all those valiant ideals which were their starting point.

**Q1:** We can come back to that, but I just have some questions about very day-to-day things that I'm interested in. I'm wondering what your day-to-day routine was, whether you sat in on trials, or did you have staff people do it? How you wrote them up. How you transmitted them. And I'm also curious about whether you had to be careful in the language that you used so that it didn't use vocabulary that made it sound too Serbian or Croatian or Bosnian. In other words, how you handled the different language areas.

**Klarin:** Let's first start with the language because this is a very important question. I was always trying to speak the language of the accused, not to give the easy excuse to the public to say, "Oh, this is a Croat speaking about a Serbian crime," or "These are Muslims speaking about a Croatian crime," or vice versa. So that was my fixed idea from the beginning, with our staff of Serbs, Croats, Muslims, you know. So I'm always trying to make sure that a Croat covers trials of a Croat accused, a Serb the trial of a Serb accused, just to prevent this very cheap and easy excuse, you know —

**Q1:** That it's biased.

**Klarin:** That it's biased, because of the language, because of the language. It was very difficult to fulfill that because at the time we used to have six trials here, for a very long period of time, six — three in the morning, three in the afternoon. So you don't have enough people to balance all that linguistically. But as you ask for the daily routine, well, we had six trials daily and we had to cover all of them, following the trials from our office on the CCTV. We were not going very often to the courtroom, only when we expected something special like specific reaction from the audience or the accused that will not or could not be caught on prepositioned cameras in the courtroom. Or, if it is caught on camera, it cannot be transmitted to public because of strict rules.

**Q1:** So you never — so the rules said that the AV people could not film someone who looked like they were upset?

**Klarin:** Yeah.

**Q1:** Interesting. So if someone's testifying and they're getting very emotional —

**Klarin:** Of course, you see that, but not if it goes to the extreme. But you cannot show the judges, you know, in an unpleasant situation.

**Q2:** Like sleeping? [Laughs]

**Klarin:** Well, that was the rule after Judge Karibi-Whyte. They said he slept only nine percent of the time.

**Q2:** Yes, I remember that there was a calculation to that effect. [Laughs]

**Klarin:** Exactly.

**Q1:** So you were watching —

**Klarin:** So, at the time when we used to have six trials, three in the morning, three in the afternoon, we daily recorded thirty hours on tape. [Q1: Oh wow!] So five days makes one hundred and fifty hours, and then we had to take little bits and pieces to make a thirty-minute program at the end of the week, just a thirty-minute program from all that. So you had to follow the trial, to follow the picture there, to write a time code when you hear something important which could be useful for the program, and then we were editing this in the other room, we were editing to make 673 programs so far.

**Q1:** So much of what happens in the courtroom is sort of routine and tedious. What kinds of things were you looking for to make an exciting program?

**Klarin:** Absolutely, I mean two things: victims describing what happened, or an accused admitting guilt, those are the things which are the most interesting; especially the second one because I think that might influence the people there who are still in denial. One of the strongest weapons against denial is the admission of guilt; at least it should be but it's not, you know, because some of those who admitted guilt later said that they did that just to get a more lenient sentence. Take for the example Biljana Plavšić. She retracted what she admitted, and she said, "Okay, I did that just to avoid sitting three years with Krajišnik on the same docket." [Laughs]

**Q2:** Did you think the effect of Erdemović's plea was different?

**Klarin:** It was the first one, it was very important, you know. It was — that was one of the most dramatic moments in the courtroom. In 1996, can you imagine immediately after the war, and he came here, and he could not wait to say "I'm guilty." He said that five times before Judge Jorda even asked him, "How do you plead?" Really, five times he said that.

**Q2:** What was the response in that moment?

**Klarin:** It was a shock. It was a shock, you know. Of course, it was incredibly important, not only the plea but his testimony, and the fact that he admitted a lot of things the prosecution didn't know, the investigation didn't know. Let's say like what happened in the Cultural Centre in the Pilica, because there were no survivors, and there was a conspiracy of silence among the Serbs living in that area; nobody was ready to come out and say what happened. So Erdemović was the first one to tell them.. His personal history was also very peculiar. He was fighting in all four armies, you know. He was in the JNA (Yugoslav Army) first, then in the Bosnian Croat army (HV) and then the BH army, and finally he finished in the Bosnian Serbian army. And I think that it was a mistake, a huge mistake was made in the appeals when they halved his sentence. I think that ten years was a very good sentence. I remember my title in that time for *Naša Borba* newspaper - it was "Justice for the Victims and for the Accused." Ten years was, I think — thanks to the huge importance of his cooperation with the prosecution. But I was pretty disappointed when they cut his sentence to five years.

**Q1:** Something that occurs to me is that the life of the Tribunal, from the mid 1990's to now, has coincided with enormous transformations in technology. So I'm wondering how the Internet, with so many more people having access to news that way, has contributed to your work, or perhaps made it harder?

**Klarin:** Now, of course, technology is making my work easier, but if this change in modern technology, these smart phones and so on, had been present during the war, we would've had many more pictures of war crimes. [Laughs] More evidence, you know, because there are crazy people who like to film themselves making war crimes, committing war crimes. [Laughs] You know just like making a selfie.

**Q1:** War Crime selfies.

**Klarin:** So of course, the Internet helps to communicate, and to send and receive the news. Ask Google what you don't know and immediately find out, consult the archives. It makes it much easier. But it's not for a TV program, no, because we are depending on what we are getting from the courtroom, we are not showing anything else. We are here to cover the Tribunal. So only what we hear and see in the courtroom or documentary material that was presented as evidence. The courtroom is boring, so we like when we have some live pictures from the events during the war in the former Yugoslavia.

**Q2:** Are there other moments in these trials, when you think about the last twenty years — like the Erdemović plea — that you thought were particularly significant, either for the victims and survivors or ones that historically struck you?

**Klarin:** Well, you know, there have been many moments like that. You cannot forget there was the Milošević trial, with the huge evidence about events, the important witnesses, international witnesses, the victims, the people who participated in the attempt to solve the crises, the efforts to solve the crises in the former Yugoslavia. I remember the presidents of Croatia and Slovenia coming here to testify. You got the first-hand knowledge, information about the events, what happened at that time, the international witnesses, many many important — like Paddy Ashdown's (British politician) conversation with Tuđman (Croatian president) in the early 90's, for example, when Tuđman drew him a map of Bosnia, and divided it amongst Serbia and Croatia. There were many, many testimonies like this one. That's why it's important. That's why it's so sad to see how this institution has lost its way in the last few years.

**Q1:** That the Tribunal has?

**Klarin:** Yes. You know what I said, it's a very sad story. But I remember, I think in 2000, we had just started to work on the TV, and there was one closing argument in the Omarska trial, for the concentration camp near Prijedor. The lawyer of Zoran Žigić — who got 25 years for murders and killings, rape and whatever he did, many bad things — discussed the common purpose doctrine. He said, "Well, you know, in everyday life there are so many common

purposes, and one can say that the common purpose of us sitting here — defense lawyer, the prosecution and the judges — is to take money from the UN, in some legal way." And everybody was shocked when he said that, but today, this is a situation that looks exactly like that. This is terrible, for me it's terrible. It's terrible to feel like that. But still there are some very good, nice, caring people with the sense of mission at the Tribunal, but I am afraid they are in minority.

**Q1:** So are you saying that you think that the Tribunal here has been prolonged as an exercise for people to have work and for people to just —

**Klarin:** Now it looks like that. As I said, it would be much easier for me to say there are those few decent people who are being really, you know, conscientiousness, and they are doing their role in a decent way. But unfortunately — you know that's the problem with all the institutions, the ad hoc institutions with limited mandates in a period of time. Because as you are approaching the end of the mandate, everybody is eager to find a new lasting job and a place in some other institution, especially in the new institutions of international criminal justice. And so who is remaining here? Those who cannot find a place in other courts, at all levels. But this is probably something we cannot solve.

**Q2:** When earlier you talked about the voice of the victims, the historical record, and reconciliation, and that you thought the Tribunal had not really achieved that, I wanted to ask, "why not?"



**Klarin:** Well, I must say, to continue this story, because they don't really care. In 2008, Diane Orentlicher invited me to participate in the promotion of her study about the impact of the Tribunal in Serbia. And I was sitting on a panel with some judges and other people, and speaking about the terrible image of the Tribunal in the region, not only in Serbia. And one of the very influential judges said, "Well, why should we think about that? Who cares what the people in the region think about the Tribunal? It's important how our decisions will be seen in the history of international criminal justice, and what science will say about them, and not about victims of the people in the former Yugoslavia." Again, like in the case of that lawyer, everybody present was shocked. But now nobody would be shocked by it anymore. That was 2008. And you know what has happened since 2008 in this institution, especially in the last few years.

**Q2:** This is a little bit off track, but I'm wondering if you think that the trials in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia, in the national systems, will make a difference in the region?

**Klarin:** First of all, we would not have trials in the national systems without this Tribunal, without this Tribunal and without the policy of conditionality of the international community, the European Union and the United States, and without the efforts to reform the local judiciary in those countries. There is another absurdity that I want to tell you about. In all the public opinion surveys in the former Yugoslavia, the local judiciary comes in the last place among institutions that the public trusts. You know, it's the church, army, parliament, government, police, [laughs] and at the end is the judiciary. But everybody thinks they will do a better job than the Tribunal.

[Laughs] So it's one of the absurdities, but this is the period and the part of Europe that is full of those absurd situations.

**Q2:** But it's an interesting insight, that we wouldn't even have those trials going on at the national level but for the ICTY, and the influence of the ICTY.

**Klarin:** Oh, absolutely. You know before the ICTY was created even, or before it started to be operational, we had trials in absentia, especially in Croatia against all kind of Serb generals. And they were two-day trials, twenty-year sentences, no problem. Nobody cared, it was not serious. But now they have some serious trials, not by their own choice, not because they feel it's time to face the responsibility for the past events and to call to account those who are responsible. But it's because of the international pressure, because of this Tribunal's pressure today. Brammertz [ICTY Prosecutor] is in Belgrade discussing that, because he has to submit a report to the Security Council. So the local authorities are under the scrutiny of the Tribunal. But once former Yugoslav countries become members of the European Union, nobody would care about that; that's the case of Croatia, which last year, I think, or two years ago became a member of the European Union and everything stopped, you know. So because there are no more conditions, they —

**Q2:** You mean, any of the improvements by Croatia were dropped, because they had already achieved what they wanted to by getting membership?

**Klarin:** Yes, yes, that's it exactly.

**Q1:** I'm wondering if you could tell us a little bit about what this work over the past twenty years has meant in your life, how it's affected your life. How you've changed as a journalist, for example. If you've ever had fears for your safety, your security. How you're perceived in your home country. What have such things meant for you personally?

**Klarin:** Well, when I feel it's difficult, what I do is say, "Okay, shut up, you asked for it. Now, shut up and continue." It's nobody's fault, it's my fault, I asked for it, you know. It was my dream come true and I have to — what I think, as you said, is that I have to face the consequences of that sometimes. I have started something so I cannot stop it just a few months or years before it ends. For the last three or four years, while I'm thinking and working on other projects for the future, after the Tribunal, I think about how to continue this story. Because no matter how much we have done — and nobody has done more because nobody else was doing this — my feeling is that we have told maybe 10% of the story. We have a remaining 90% in our archive, in our heads, in our TV programs, in our tens of thousands of articles written. So the question is how to preserve all this stuff for the future, and how to continue explaining what happened during those twenty years. How to wait for the time when this will become relevant, when people will start to be interested in asking the questions and to have some confidence in the facts which —

Because the most important thing that happened here is not who was convicted and for how many years. It's what are the facts that have been established beyond reasonable doubt about the events which happened in the former Yugoslavia between 1991 and 1995. What we have now is a project for local documentation centers.

**Q1:** In Belgrade?

**Klarin:** No, no, no. Not there because we wanted to make a local documentation center in the community most affected by the war crimes. So we opened the first documentation center in Srebrenica in September last year.

**Q1:** I saw that on your website.

**Klarin:** Yeah, yeah, it's a huge success, it's sensational.

**Q1:** Tell us about the opening; tell us about the reactions of the local population.

**Klarin:** Have you seen the picture gallery? [Shows some pictures on his screen.] This is the opening ceremony. This is within Potočari Memorial Center, you know the big memorial center, this is the former factory, which served as the UN base — the HQ of UN Dutch Battalion in 1995. And we got the space in this building, it's three hundred square meters or something like that. So we made two things: we prepared the audiovisual presentation about the chronology of

the events in Srebrenica, and the eight main chapters of the Tribunal's Srebrenica story: investigations; testimonies of survivors, those who survived the executions; guilty pleas; forensic evidence; international evidence about the lasting impact of those events; witnesses; testimony of the Serbs who participated in different parts of the operation, and who came under subpoena to testify about that; and at the end, the judicial epilogue, the judgment(s). So this is — okay, this is from the opening, this is Judge Agius, this is the president of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Izetbegović, and so on.

**Q1:** Was there any opposition to creating this documentation center?

**Klarin:** No, no, no, absolutely not. This is the presentation, and the other part is the database; This is the investigating area of the center, connected with the server, with more than one thousand hours of audiovisual material, of the images from the courtrooms about the Srebrenica trials, different testimonies, and the thousands and thousands of documents from evidence, all of which is in the database so it can be researched on this computer terminals here. The huge reader roll which shows you the chronology of the —

**Q1:** It's hard for me to see, but is it in multiple languages?

**Klarin:** Yes, English and Bosnian. And the database is also in French.

**Q1:** That's an amazing effort and it will be a very lasting contribution.

**Klarin:** I met the representative of Mothers of Srebrenica just a few months ago, in the Bosnian Embassy here, and I was crying when they started to tell me that the Documentation Center is the best thing that happened in the last twenty years. Because this is the only thing of that kind that exists about Srebrenica. You know, there is a guy who is a guard in the Memorial Center. His name is Idriz and he came and said, "Listen, I survived genocide, I went through the forest with the rest of civilians and soldiers in the column and I survived. I thought I knew everything that happened, but only now do I see what really happened to me." [with emotion]

**Q2:** What an interesting —

**Klarin:** Absolutely, for the guy who survived everything but, you know —

**Q2:** I was wondering, Mr. Klarin, if — I mean this is so important, and it is having such an impact, and makes things so accessible. Do you think, in addition to the work of journalists, there's something that the Tribunal should have done differently to connect with people in the region?

**Klarin:** Absolutely, I mean that's the main problem. As I said, they gave up all those goals which had been proclaimed at the beginning — to be the voice of victims, to write the history, to bring about reconciliation — but as I said, they didn't care about the reaction. Judge McDonald called the Republic of former Yugoslavia "our constituency," I mean that was her feeling. But I

am afraid that's very naïve, a typical American belief of "winning hearts and minds" through some kind of Outreach Program. I'll tell you, 20 years of outreach efforts in Croatia were fruitless until we got one politically motivated judgment, and now Croatia is in love with the Tribunal. For them, now it's "the best court in the world," [laughs].

The Tribunal cannot behave like a national court in some developed democracy. Because a national court has 200 or 300 years of history, and people are used to respecting it. They don't have to love it, but they must respect its decisions. On the other side, the Tribunal must explain itself. It's not enough to say, "the judgment speaks for itself." Nobody understands those judgments, especially when they are controversial, as many of the latest judgments are. And written in, oh, 2000 or 3000 pages! Who can read that? Furthermore, the public the Tribunal is dealing with has absolutely no knowledge, no experience, of an independent judiciary.

So those are all the reasons why this Tribunal cannot behave as if a judgment speaks for itself, and that if you don't understand them, then you are the problem. But, as I already said, the judges seems more concerned with how their judgments will be seen in the history of international law and in judicial science. And, maybe, how they will be seen in some influential capitals.

**Q1:** We're getting to the end of our time, but I just wondered, when you look at the International Criminal Court, if you have advice for how they can handle this issue of

communication with its constituents. Is there something they should be doing that they're not doing now?

**Klarin:** I must say, I really don't know. I have enough work here. I had ambitions at the beginning to also cover trials at the ICC, but we simply don't have the capacity and the time to do that. But to finish about this documentation center, what we want is to bring the material, the evidence to the community where it belongs, to give it back to them, because it deals with their suffering. What we have in mind, in our plans, is to see if it would be possible after Srebrenica — which was very difficult to create but we succeeded — to create more documentation centers. We have in mind Sarajevo, Prijedor, Vukovar and Pristina. And what we are doing right now is working on creating the virtual Documentation Center about Operation Storm in Croatia, because it's twenty years now, the *Gotovina* case. We have been asked by the people from the local community there to make something, because they visited Srebrenica, and now everybody wants a center, everybody. Prijedor is calling me, "Come!", and Vukovar, Pristina. "When are you coming?"

**Q1:** When the ICTY finally closes its doors, will you return then to your home country, and do this documentation center work? Is that your plan?

**Klarin:** Well, we are in the process of transitioning from the news agency to the transitional justice documentation center. We have already our headquarters in Istria



**Q2:** We need to look at a map.

**Klarin:** Yeah, it's a peninsula, close to Italy and Slovenia, you know that part there. Pula has not been selected by happenstance as the site of the SENSE Center. Istria is one of the few — if not the only — region of the former Yugoslavia that in the 90's was not contaminated by nationalism and war hysteria. Because of its history of ethnic and religious tolerance, Istria is an ideal location: equally acceptable for all former warring sides. It is no coincidence that the first meetings of regional political leaders and judiciary officials [prosecutors, judges, ministers of justice] since re-establishment of relations between the countries of former Yugoslavia were held in Istria [Brioni Islands, close to Pula]. So we got the regional government and the city government to give us the space, which we will now finish with the reconstruction, and it's the best possible address for that kind of institution. It's Dante Square Number Three. [Laughs] We will call it The Purgatory.

**Q2:** Very nice, that's wonderful.

**Q1:** Congratulations, that's exciting.

**Klarin:** It will be, well if we get support, but it's very difficult to get support now for this kind of project. The idea is that Pula will be the headquarter, the production hub, where we will transfer all of our archives and all of our equipment. But the activities will be organized all over the region, in cooperation with our local partners and victim's associations in Bosnia, Serbia,

Croatia, Macedonia and Kosovo. The basic idea is to go to local communities most affected by the war crimes and show them — in the form of the Documentation Center or the internet-based Interactive Narrative — how their sufferings have been investigated, reconstructed and prosecuted by the ICTY. You can see on our website of the SENSE Documentation Center in Potocari the so-far produced Interactive Narratives.

**Q1:** That will be so important going forward for future generations.

**Q2:** That's a wonderful initiative.

**Klarin:** Have you seen our documentary, "Against All Odds?"

**Q1 and Q1:** I have not.

**Klarin:** It's exactly on the subject we are discussing, it's the first ten years of the tribunal. I will give you a DVD copy of "Against All Odds." It's my history of the Tribunal, at the time that I was proud of my creation.

**Q2:** Well, hopefully you will be proud of it again, or at least the legacy.

**Klarin:** My problem is that I don't want to throw the baby out with the bath water. So how to be critical and, at the same time, preserve what was good in this institution?

**Q2:** Thank you. We're so grateful that you've given us your time today to talk to us about this.

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