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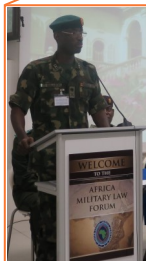
# AMLF SENDS

African Military Law Forum Newsletter, Issue 3



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## President's Welcome

Welcome to the Third edition of *AMLF SENDS*. Wishing everyone a good new year. It is my honor to introduce a most distinguished colleague, and the first President of AMLF, Lieutenant Colonel Desire Hakorimana of the Burundi National Defence Forces.

## Interview with Lt Col Desire Hakorimana

In this issue, Ms. Sandra Franzblau, USAFRICOM Office of Legal Counsel, conducts an interview with Lieutenant Colonel Desire Hakorimana, General Military Prosecutor, Burundi National Defence Forces, and the first President of AMLF.

1. Hello Lt Col Desire Hakorimana. Could you please describe your current position with the Burundi National Defence Forces (BNDF)?

**Yes, thank you for the question, Sandi. I am the General Military Prosecutor for the Burundi National Defence Forces (BNDF). I deal with penal cases involving senior Officers, from the rank of Major to the rank of Colonel.**

2. How many years have you been with the military?

**I entered the army in January 1998, meaning that in this next January 2022, I will have 24 years serving the Army.**

3. Were you always working within the legal field, or have you also been a soldier?

**Before joining the legal field, I was a Commanding Officer at the level of Platoon Commander. After that, I entered the Academy following studies in the field of Law. In September 2005, after completing my lawyer's school, I became a Junior Military Prosecutor (Military Prosecutor's substitute).**

4. I understand that you have served as a lecturer for a variety of institutions. What areas do you teach, and for which institutions?

**Thank you, after getting my Master's degree in human rights and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, and after obtaining my diploma in crime scene investigation, I have been invited to teach courses related to Law in general, and International Law and Human Rights law in particular, at academic institutions and centers for research like the University of Ngozi, Burundi Military Academy (ISCAM), and the Center for Research and Development Burundi (CEREPE). I'm also a trainer in specialized military schools like at Senior Command and Staff College (ESCEM), Military Intelligence School.**

**Moreover, I'm among the team of permanent trainers of international humanitarian law and human rights law at the BNDF especially for pre-deployment and post deployment courses.**

5. You deployed I believe twice in support of AMISOM? The first time was as a legal advisor to the BNDF deploying to Somalia. The second time as the Senior Provost Marshall, correct? Could you please describe what were your primary responsibilities for each of those deployments?

**Thank you, I did deploy twice. My primary responsibility was giving legal advice to the Contingent Commander. In particular, I referred to AMISOM regulations to advise the Contingent Commander in solving issues related to compensation, to penal cases, and to disciplinary cases. For the appointment of Provost Marshall, my main duty was investigating criminal and disciplinary cases.**

**I was also on staff in the protection of AMISOM Headquarters and VIP security.**

## Interview with Lt Col Hakorimana continued

6. What did you find particularly interesting, or challenging?

**What I particularly found interesting is working in a multidisciplinary context. You learn a lot, you interact with others who are not military, and sometimes this context may challenge you because the understanding is not always the same.**

7. If you could give guidance to a young military legal advisor preparing to deploy in support of a peace operation, what would you say?

**My advice shall be to invite all people preparing to deploy to read a lot in order to understand the culture of the people of the host country.**

8. You were the first Chairperson to the African Military Law Forum (AMLF), along with co-chairs BG Dan Kuwali from the Malawi Defence Forces, and Lt Col Marguerite Meffand-Loew, former President of the Yaoundé Military Tribunal, Cameroon. What do you hope other military legal professionals could learn from the AMLF?

**Yes, I was the first AMLF President and the task was not easy. The first challenge was communication. It was not easy to join all military lawyers across the continent. As the organization was young, it was not easy to set up the AMLF legal framework such as the charter, determine our motto, the aim of AMLF, and the objectives.**

**What I hope military legal professionals could learn from the AMLF is that it is a good opportunity to share knowledge and best practices with other military legal professionals. The AMLF is currently active and is trying to identify more important areas and a framework for reflection that is oriented towards solving new problems including terrorism, transnational crime, cybercrime, etc.**

9. Is there any area in your professional practice that you find particularly challenging?

**Thank you, yes. Combining military and legal careers is not always easy. The military career requires knowledge of tactics to reach operational objectives. The legal career requires guidance on reducing the use of force in the application of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and International Human Rights Law (IHRL). The lawyer is involved in that dilemma of balancing application of the law to operational tactics. His or her advice as a lawyer will contribute to the success, or not, of the mission.**

10. If you could give advice to your younger self regarding working within the military, what would you say?

**My advice to the younger person is that law directs all other fields. That is the same in conducting operations. If the law, especially the IHL and IHRL, is not well followed, that can undermine the success of the operation. The younger legal advisor should be educated in law and the military, so that they can communicate how the law is applied to everything.**

Thank you for your time Lt Col Hakorimana.

Thank you for interviewing me, Sandi.



### Upcoming AMLF Events:

*The AMLF Executive Committee and Advisory Council have been working throughout 2021 to plan the next AMLF General Meeting, currently scheduled for 2022. Additionally, AMLF is starting a virtual speaker series, AMLF Streams, in 2022 to offer an opportunity for any interested African Military Legal Professional to log in on their computer and listen to and discuss a chosen legal topic of interest.*