

# Lawyers Abroad

Far-flung Arizona lawyers may be more common than you'd think. As we went to press, we spoke with a second lawyer in the Netherlands about his life and work.

**B. Don Taylor III** served for eight years as an Assistant City Prosecutor for the City of Phoenix. Now in The Netherlands, he works as an Associate Legal Officer with The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, at The Hague.

Taylor, 39, had been interested in international criminal law for a long time, and in August 2005, he took his family abroad, where he began work on his L.L.M. at Leiden University. Studying only minutes away from the tribunals at The Hague would have career-altering consequences.

**AZAT:** *What led you to work at the Tribunal?*

**Taylor:** I visited the Tribunal several years ago and sat in on a few hours of the trial of Slobodan Milosevic. That was really the start of this journey for me. It was exhilarating, and I wondered what it would be like to be a part of such a historic process. Then, while studying in Leiden, I met several of the lawyers working at the Tribunal and I was very impressed. So when the opportunity to join the Tribunal arose last May, I jumped at the chance.

I work as a legal officer for the Judges in Chambers, which gives me a different perspective than I had as a prosecutor. And I have been deeply impressed by the level of commitment and respect the Judges have for the seriousness of the work they do.

I also enjoy the international character of the staff. It struck me a while back as I looked around at a group of my closest colleagues that we were American, German, English, Israeli, French and Japanese. I found it fascinating that 60 years after World War II, this group was working together on a genocide case in an international tribunal.

Working at the Tribunal combines the opportunity to work in the field and live in Europe. There just aren't that many international criminal tribunals operating around the world, and most of the rest are in places I



Taylor next to the Hofvijver, a small lake in front of the Dutch parliament buildings

can't really take my family. Plus, I ride a bicycle to work now.

**AZAT:** *What matters are pending before the Tribunal?*

**Taylor:** The Trial Chamber I work for is currently presiding over the trial of seven accused charged, variously, with genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes for what occurred when the Srebrenica enclave fell in July 1995. The indictment alleges that five of the accused were part of a joint criminal enterprise to murder all the able-bodied Muslim men, and all seven were part of another joint criminal enterprise to forcibly remove the rest of the Muslim population from the area.

Overall, the Tribunal is the busiest it's ever been, with six trials currently in process involving 24 different accused.

**AZAT:** *Over what matters does the Tribunal have jurisdiction?*

**Taylor:** The jurisdiction of the Tribunal is actually best summed up in its official name: The International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991. The specific crimes over which the

Tribunal has jurisdiction include genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions. To date, the Tribunal has indicted 161 persons and has concluded proceedings against 100 of them.

**AZAT:** *How long could your position last?*

**Taylor:** I tell people we're here indefinitely. My current contract expires in 2007, but I'm certainly not ready to leave. We'll see.

**AZAT:** *Do you expect to return to the United States?*

**Taylor:** If you're interested in international criminal law this is a great time to be working in The Hague. The Tribunal is tremendously busy. The new International Criminal Court is up and running. The Special Court for Sierra Leone will be trying Charles Taylor here next year. That's an exciting dynamic.

But as much as I like The Hague I've never seen myself living here forever. Ultimately, we'll be back in the United States. How long that might take, and where else we might stop along the way, I just don't know yet.

**AZAT:** *Who in your family accompanied you to Europe?*

**Taylor:** My wife Jennifer and our three children.

**AZAT:** *Have they had an easy adjustment?*

**Taylor:** Our lives changed dramatically when we moved to The Netherlands, but we have really found ourselves appreciating a slower-paced life than we were living in Phoenix. There were some difficult moments early on, but the family has adjusted remarkably well. The kids attend international schools, and they have done a great job reaching out and making friends. Jennifer started some dance and drama classes at our daughter's school last year, and they were a big hit.

**AZAT:** *What do you miss most?*

**Taylor:** We miss family and friends, of course. And good Mexican food. **AF**