

Housekeeper's Lawyer Says She Was Misquoted

A lawyer for the hotel housekeeper who accused [Dominique Strauss-Kahn](#) of sexually assaulting her in May said Wednesday that taped conversations, two of them made a day after the encounter, prove that his client had no intention of exploiting the charges against Mr. Strauss-Kahn to make money.

The lawyer, Kenneth P. Thompson, and the housekeeper, [Nafissatou Diallo](#), spent much of the day at the district attorney's office in Manhattan, where they listened to a recording of conversations Ms. Diallo had with a fellow African immigrant in an Arizona jail after she said she was attacked. Law enforcement officials told Mr. Thompson and [The New York Times](#) last month that Ms. Diallo could be heard saying on the tape "words to the effect of: 'Don't worry, this guy has a lot of money. I know what I'm doing.' "

But after listening to the recording on Wednesday, Mr. Thompson told reporters at a news conference that Ms. Diallo's statements had been mischaracterized. He said that at no point did she raise the issue of Mr. Strauss-Kahn's wealth or status in the way that prosecutors had described it. Rather, he said, the man she was speaking with, who initiated the calls to Ms. Diallo, remarked during one conversation that Ms. Diallo could stand to gain money from the case, but she quickly dismissed the idea and said it was a matter for her lawyer.

Of even greater importance, Mr. Thompson said, during the first of the calls, her description of the encounter with Mr. Strauss-Kahn was consistent with what she told investigators a day earlier. In sexual-assault cases, people who hear an early account of an attack are called "outcry witnesses," and are often used to buttress the credibility of a person making an accusation.

"She told the guy that someone tried to rape her at her job," Mr. Thompson said in an interview after his news conference. "She said: 'I didn't know who he was. We fought each other. Because he wasn't able to take off my clothes, he put his penis in my mouth. He touched me. They took me to the hospital, and they arrested him.' "

In a statement Wednesday, Erin M. Duggan, a spokeswoman for the Manhattan district attorney, Cyrus R. Vance Jr., said: "This is a pending criminal case. We will have no comment on evidence, or on any meetings between prosecutors and witnesses, civil attorneys or defense counsel."

According to Mr. Thompson, Ms. Diallo said during her first conversation with the man in jail that her attacker was a powerful person, but that she was now with the government, presumably a reference to protection provided by investigators.

“The first call that the guy in prison made to Nafi Diallo corroborates that Dominique Strauss-Kahn violently attacked her and tried to rape her,” Mr. Thompson said.

It was during the second call that the subject of money came up, the lawyer said.

“The guy in jail called back several hours later, expressing concern, ‘Are you O.K.,’ and she says she is,” Mr. Thompson said. “During the second conversation, she said, ‘People from France keep calling me and saying he’s rich and powerful.’ ”

The man then expressed concern about her, the lawyer said, asking whether she was safe.

“She told him she was in Manhattan, that a lawyer was coming to see her — it was not me,” Mr. Thompson said. “She said, ‘Don’t worry, I know what I’m doing.’ ”

At some point, the man told Ms. Diallo that by moving forward with the case, “you’ll get a lot of money,” Mr. Thompson said. But he insisted that Ms. Diallo made it clear that was not her intention.

“She said, ‘Stop, stop.’ He’s going on and on on the phone about it, she didn’t want to deal with that. She said, ‘Please stop. Wait, wait. The lawyer will get it.’ Meaning, the lawyer would deal with it.”

But prosecutors did not see it that way. Mr. Thompson said that in a phone conversation late on the afternoon of June 30, he was told by a senior prosecutor that the conversations created “big problems” for the case, and that the prosecutor mischaracterized Ms. Diallo’s statements as implying that she intended to exploit the charges for money.

“It is a fact that what they told me and what they told you was not accurate,” Mr. Thompson said. “Ms. Diallo never said, ‘I am going to get this guy’s money’ or anything about scheming to get his money.”

Mr. Thompson was not given copies of the recordings, and described them based on notes he took during an extended meeting with prosecutors, in which he

listened to the recordings with a Fulani interpreter hired by the district attorney's office. The calls were recorded at an [immigration](#) detention center where the man was incarcerated.

The meeting with Mr. Thompson came just days after Ms. Diallo broke her silence and [granted interviews](#) to Newsweek and ABC News. In the interviews, she disputed the account in The Times of what she said to the man in the Arizona jail, saying, as Mr. Thompson argued on Wednesday, that it was in relation to getting a lawyer.

Mr. Strauss-Kahn resigned as managing director of the International Monetary Fund after his arrest.

Prosecutors are still deciding whether to proceed with the case.

Lawyers for Dominique Strauss-Kahn and Ms. Diallo had discussions in mid-June regarding sharing facts about the case and exploring a potential resolution.

The discussions did not include substantive talk about the case and ended without any agreement, according to a lawyer briefed on the discussions who spoke only on the condition of anonymity because the conversations were private.

But a different person briefed on the matter said that Mr. Thompson had sought a monetary settlement.

Mr. Thompson plainly denied that assertion. "At no point in time did I ever convey a monetary settlement demand to Dominique Strauss-Kahn's lawyers," he said later.

One of Mr. Strauss-Kahn's lawyers, William W. Taylor III, called Mr. Thompson's statement "extraordinarily misleading." But Mr. Taylor declined to elaborate.

The talks apparently broke down because the parties could not agree on whether to use mediation, the lawyer briefed on the discussions said.

Mr. Thompson has said that Ms. Diallo intends to file a lawsuit against Mr. Strauss-Kahn.

Colin Moynihan contributed reporting.