

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT
OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR

WITNESS STATEMENT

WITNESS INFORMATION:

Last Name: [REDACTED]

Gender: Male

First Name: [REDACTED]

Father's Name: [REDACTED]

Other names used: None

Mother's Name: [REDACTED]

Place of Birth: [REDACTED]

Passport / ID number: None

Date of Birth/Age: [REDACTED]

Nationality(s): CAR

Language(s) Spoken: French, Sango

Language(s) Written: French

Language(s) Used in Interview: French/English

Occupation: [REDACTED]

Place of Interview: BANGUI, CAR

Date(s) and Time(s) of Interview: 11/08/2016, 0900-1400; 12/08/2016, 0940-1200

Names of all persons present during interview: [REDACTED]

Signature(s): [REDACTED]



WITNESS STATEMENT

Procedure

1. I was introduced to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and told that they are investigators with the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Court (ICC). I was introduced to interpreter [REDACTED] and told that they are an interpreter with the OTP of the ICC.
2. The investigators explained to me what the ICC is and described its mandate. They explained the role and mandate of the OTP within the ICC.
3. The investigators explained to me that they are investigating events that took place in Central African Republic from August 2012 until present. I was informed that the OTP is contacting me because they believe I may have information relevant for establishing the truth.
4. I was told that I have the right to be questioned in a language that I fully understand and speak. I confirm that French is a language that I fully understand and speak. I confirm that the language used by the interpreter in this interview is French.
5. The investigators explained to me that this interview is voluntary and that I may end it at any time.
6. I was informed that I have the following rights under Article 55(2):
 - a. The right to remain silent, without such silence being a consideration in the determination of my guilt or innocence;
 - b. The right to legal assistance of my choosing, or, if I do not have legal assistance, to have legal assistance assigned to me, without payment by me in any such case that I do not have sufficient means to pay for it; and
 - c. The right to be questioned in the presence of my counsel unless I voluntarily waived my right to counsel.
7. I agreed to continue with the interview without the presence of legal counsel and signed a waiver of rights in this regard. Attached as Annex A.
8. I chose not to have the interview tape recorded.

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9. I was informed that any information I give to the OTP, including my identity, might become subject to disclosure to the parties of the proceedings at the ICC; in particular the Judges, Accused persons, the Counsel of the Accused and the legal representatives of the victims.
10. I was informed that I might be called to testify before the Court. It was brought to my attention that ICC trials are held in public and explained to me that, as an exception to the principle of public hearings, the judges may apply protective measures to those testifying if circumstances require.
11. I am currently willing to appear as a witness in Court, if called to testify. I understand that disclosure of my identity and information I have provided may take place whether or not I am called to testify.
12. The possible security implications resulting from my interaction with the OTP were discussed with me. The investigators have explained to me the reasons and importance of keeping my contacts with the OTP confidential, which I fully understand.
13. Having understood all the above issues, I confirmed my willingness to answer the investigators' questions.
14. The investigators explained to me how the interview was going to be conducted. I was told by the investigators that it is important that I am as accurate as possible in my account; and that I state when I do not know or do not understand the question. I understand that I need to distinguish between what I have experienced or seen myself and what I have heard or learned about from someone else.
15. I was told that at the conclusion of the interview, I would be asked to sign a written statement after having had the opportunity to review it, make any corrections, or add additional information.

Background

16. I was born on [REDACTED] I am [REDACTED] from my mother's side and [REDACTED] from my father's side.
17. During Francois BOZIZE's reign, I was discriminated against due to the fact that I was not part of BOZIZE's ethnic group, Gbaya. It was hard for me to find work and I was failed on my A levels twice because I couldn't afford to pay the fee, whereas, those from BOZIZE's group could take their A levels for free.
18. I currently do small jobs like [REDACTED] to support myself and my family.

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19. I have never been a part of any political organizations, or any organizations other than the Anti-Balaka.

Seleka in Power

20. I fled [REDACTED] two weeks after the Seleka entered BANGUI and my neighbourhood of [REDACTED] a gold-mining area in the commune [REDACTED] I was in [REDACTED] when the Seleka committed crimes there.
21. The Seleka leader in [REDACTED] was called [REDACTED] (who is currently living in [REDACTED] and served under [REDACTED] command. [REDACTED] both had fled BANGUI when the Seleka came and met in the bush. They then committed crimes together in the area.
22. [REDACTED] They became highway bandits. They also broke into the [REDACTED] which was located behind the military base, they killed [REDACTED] I was in [REDACTED] at the time and heard the gun shot. I helped bury [REDACTED]
23. [REDACTED] also shot and killed a young man named [REDACTED] was from [REDACTED] and sold gold. He had also converted to Islam. [REDACTED] killed him for his gold. [REDACTED] was brought back to his house in [REDACTED] and buried. I helped bury him. I saw that he had been shot in the back and the bullet exited his chest. Several of [REDACTED] men were from [REDACTED] and they told me that [REDACTED] had killed him.
24. I know of seven people who had been killed by the Seleka under [REDACTED] on the road from [REDACTED] and buried on the side of the road. I don't know their names.

Anti-Balaka in GOBERE

25. I spent three and a half months in [REDACTED] but then fled due to increasing violence committed by the Seleka there. I heard about men gathering in GOBERE to prepare gris-gris and revolt against the Seleka. I believed that the Seleka didn't just want a coup, they wanted to change the religion of the country and they also came to kill. This was different than past coups.

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26. I walked to GOBERE with others through the villages of BOGANGOLO, NDJO, BOSSANGOA to join the men in GOBERE. I arrived to GOBERE in [REDACTED] 2013. GOBERE was a place of refuge, training, and regrouping for youngsters to fight the Seleka who were a scourge on our country. "Youngsters" ranged from age 17-60. GOBERE was remote so that the Seleka wouldn't see that we were gathering and training.
27. Youth of different ethnic groups gathered in GOBERE. We all used "gris-gris" from our ancestral legacy in order to protect ourselves against Seleka bullets, provided that the combatants respected the rule, not to steal.
28. I spent [REDACTED] months in GOBERE receiving training from FACA members who had fled into the bush. The training consisted of self-defense techniques and the use and assembling of weapons, for those who had weapons. We mainly had traditional hunting rifles, "saguets" and machetes. We didn't have automatic weapons. They also taught us how to differentiate the different sounds of weapons and protect ourselves.
29. There were only about 4-5 FACA who trained us in GOBERE. Our overall objective was to "free our brothers and sisters" from the Seleka. DEDANE who was a FACA member was our Commander in Chief in GOBERE (later killed in Bangui by [REDACTED]). DEDANE, appointed [REDACTED] as ComZone for the [REDACTED] prefecture. I was ordered [REDACTED] and the other ComZones reported directly to DEDANE. I reported to my Chief of Battalion [REDACTED] (who lives in [REDACTED]). [REDACTED] reported to [REDACTED]. I didn't know Anti-Balaka leaders, [REDACTED] before the revolution. I was not from the military and not familiar with military terms. I remember there were sections and battalions of Anti-Balaka. A section might consist of 20-30 men and a Battalion consists of 40-60 men.
30. The plan was for us to go back to our original areas in OAHAM and OMBELLA M'POKO to drive the Seleka out there and then we would regroup to revolt in BANGUI. We survived on wild fruits while in GOBERE. After [REDACTED] months, we decided to revolt. It was then that we called ourselves Anti-Balaka, for "anti-machete."
31. There were no Anti-Balaka in BANGUI, the Anti-Balaka were all from the provinces. The strategy was to control our provinces first and then go to BANGUI. The leaders of the Seleka were in BANGUI. The Seleka started to send men to commit crimes in the provinces, but we needed to go to BANGUI.

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On the way to BANGUI

32. The Anti-Balaka marched throughout OUHAM and OMBELLA M'POKO prefectures. Our objective was to prevent the Seleka from killing civilians and to drive the Seleka out. The villages that we freed from the Seleka were: ZERE, NDJO, BOBALA, BOBAN, BOGANLI, BOGOIN, amongst others. Other batallions went to other locations. Some villages didn't have any Seleka in them.
33. We used traditions and customs as our method to free a village. We would find out where in the village the Seleka were located by local informants. They would draw us a plan of where they were located in the village. We would fight the Seleka with our saguets and machetes. Some Seleka and civilians died. Many fled. We didn't go into homes or mosques or schools.
34. We didn't take any Seleka captive. They were our enemies and had killed our families. We didn't look kindly on each other.
35. After the Anti-Balaka freed a village from the Seleka, we would ask local youngsters to protect and "take control" of the village. They usually had hunting rifles and ammunition. We didn't need to provide them with anything. The village chiefs still led the villages and the youngsters had to follow them. Some village chiefs refused to support the Anti-Balaka so we worked with youngsters in some villages instead. Some of the village chiefs who had fled into the bush didn't return. I assumed they didn't want to interact with us.
36. We first freed the villages in NDJO and then we moved through the bush to BOGANGOLO and to GBOZO and DAMARA and then finally to BANGUI. [REDACTED] freed the villages together.

BANGUI

37. We walked through the bush to BANGUI and to the hill behind BOY RABE. We were told that we needed to go behind POUNGOULOU and the river NGITOU. Anti-Balaka spent two weeks behind BOY RABE hill planning the revolt. Some Anti-Balaka from the provinces had never been to BANGUI before so they were paired up with Anti-Balaka who knew the city.
38. The Anti-Balaka groups progressed at a different pace in the provinces coming to BANGUI. ANDJILO was strong so he reached BANGUI before others.

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39. ANDJILO was the Chief commanding the December revolt of BANGUI. DEDANE was not with us in BANGUI, he was in BOALI. Although there were FACA advising us, it was civilians who planned the revolt. KONATE who was a FACA officer led the attack on KASSAI. The group of Anti-Balaka posted on BOY RABE hill entered BANGUI at 0400 hrs on 5 December 2013.
40. We used the same tactics in Bangui as we used in the provinces. We searched for Seleka and would be informed by informants on the phone of where Seleka were. It was a "revolution" and we needed to be informed. Richard BEJOANE was the Anti-Balaka Chief of Staff who was in charge of such communications. He died two years ago in YALOKÉ.
41. At 1000 hrs on 5 December, [REDACTED] because the Seleka were too strong. [REDACTED] when we retreated to BOY RABE.
42. Eventually the Seleka started retreating to KM5 because their bullets were not killing the Anti-Balaka and the population wanted DJODOTIA out.
43. Once the Seleka finally fled BANGUI, [REDACTED] back to their original province, the [REDACTED] area. They were hungry and were helped by the local population. The Anti-Balaka was a revolutionary movement. They had reached their objective so I wanted to stop before killings and lootings occurred. [REDACTED]
44. I saw that there were some Anti-Balaka who started to take revenge on the Seleka. I knew that the "fake" Anti-Balaka would start to commit crimes. I was worried [REDACTED] tempted to commit crimes too. They were hungry [REDACTED] BANGUI was also stable now. The Anti-Balaka could freely move around. [REDACTED] home beginning on 15 December.
45. After December 2013, men who were not Anti-Balaka joined and committed crimes, along with some Anti-Balaka. The men who committed crimes are locked up in Camp du Roux: [REDACTED]
46. Because I had always gone back and forth between BANGUI [REDACTED] I decided to stay in BANGUI.

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Anti-Balaka Coordination in BANGUI

47. Self-proclaimed Anti-Balaka and officials of the CAR Transitional Government tried to manipulate both the Anti-Balaka and the Seleka in order to extend the Transition period. Maxime MOKOM, BOZIZE and NGAISSONA are all relatives. They thought that they could use the Anti-Balaka to return to power. I and other Anti-Balaka revolted in order to restore the balance between Muslims and Christians, not to bring BOZIZE back to power.
48. The structure of the Anti-Balaka once in Bangui remained the same as when we were in the provinces, but there were some people who proclaimed themselves ComZones and would gather 20 men under them. We had the same sections, battalions, ComZones as in the provinces.
49. Whenever the Anti-Balaka were invited to join the Transitional Government, MOKOM, NGAISSONA and others would send their own people (Gbaya) for ministerial positions. Whoever opposed them within the Anti-Balaka would be killed. [REDACTED] was a FACA who opposed them and he was shot the night he stood up to MOKOM and NGAISSONA regarding a ministerial position going to a Gbaya.
50. I believe it was MOKOM who committed these crimes because he wanted to be leader of the Anti-Balaka. He wanted to bring BOZIZE back to power.
51. MOKOM, NGAISSONA, KONATE, KOKATE all come from the same family.
52. Before coming to BANGUI, I had not heard of NGAISSONA. He and others proclaimed themselves Coordinators after the revolt of BANGUI. MOKOM and NGAISSONA fought about who should be Coordinator. They each wanted it. Some ComZones supported MOKOM and some supported NGAISSONA.
53. NGAISSONA gave us money and got ComZones released who had been arrested. He gave wrongdoers money so that they wouldn't commit crimes. People listened to him because he helped them. I never heard him giving orders. FEISSONA who was a FACA was the one who gave operational orders, like initiating checkpoints. He was Coordinator of Operations for the Anti-Balaka.
54. NGAISSONA convened meetings in which the Section Chiefs, Battalion Chiefs, and ComZones would attend. [REDACTED] I had no contact with NGAISSONA or MOKOM. After [REDACTED] I was not involved with the operations of the Anti-Balaka, but I remained part of the movement so that they didn't view me as a traitor. I continued serving as the Anti-Balaka Coordinator for [REDACTED]

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55.

56.

57. At present there is no Anti-Balaka movement. If the government calls upon us, we are here, but there is no Anti-Balaka structure anymore. We have had no meetings since the new president took over.

Anti-Balaka in the Western Provinces

58. Men from BERBERATI, BOUAR and CARNOT came to BANGUI and we gave them gris-gris and they returned to their provinces. They wanted to continue the revolt against the Seleka that had started in the OUHAM and OMBELLA M'POKO and then BANGUI.

59. Richard BEJOANE kept in contact with the Anti-Balaka from the Western Provinces. I don't know who took over after BEJOANE died.

Anti-Balaka figures

60. OTP Investigators asked me about the following Anti-Balaka figures:

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61. ANDJILO remained a leader of the Anti-Balaka and the ComZone for the OMBELLA M'POKO area until he was captured. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

62. I viewed a CLPC document dated 14 February, 2014 (CAR-OTP-2006-[REDACTED] to 2006 [REDACTED] where [REDACTED] This is the first time I have seen this document. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

63. I have always kept the same phone numbers over the years: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

ANNEXES

ANNEX A- Signed Waiver for Counsel form.

Closing Procedure

64. The investigators informed me of the protective measures that may apply during and after the investigation and/or trial proceeding.

65. I have nothing to add to the above statement nor do I have anything to clarify. I am available to be contacted in the future for clarifications or questions on topics not covered during this interview.

66. I have given the answers to the questions of my own free will.

67. There has been no threat, promise or inducement which has influenced my account.

68. I have no complaints about the way I was treated during this interview.

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WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This statement has been read over to me in the English and French language and it is true to the best of my knowledge and recollection. I have given this statement voluntarily and I am aware that it may be used in legal proceedings before the International Criminal Court and that I may be called to give evidence in public before the International Criminal Court.

Signature

Dated

INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

1. I, [REDACTED] certify that:
2. I am duly qualified to interpret from the French language into the English language and from the English language into the French language.
3. I have been informed by [REDACTED] that he speaks and understands the French language.
4. I have orally translated the above statement from the English language to the French language in the presence of [REDACTED] who appeared to have heard and understood my translation of this statement.
5. [REDACTED] has acknowledged that the facts and matters set out in his statement, as translated by me, are true to the best of his knowledge and recollection and has accordingly signed his signature where indicated.

Signed:

Dated:

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