

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT
OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR

SUPPLEMENTAL WITNESS STATEMENT

WITNESS INFORMATION:

Last Name: KOUROUPE-AWO

Gender: Male

First Name: Alexandre

Father's Name: [REDACTED]

Other names used:

Mother's Name: [REDACTED]

Place of Birth: Mbaiki

Marital Status: [REDACTED]

Date of Birth/Age: [REDACTED]

Children: [REDACTED]

Place of Residence: Bimbo

Ethnic Origin/Tribe: Mbaka

Religion: Catholic

Language Spoken: French, Sango

Language Written: French

Languages Used in Interview: English and French

Current Occupation: Director of the Cabinet of the Ministry for Territorial Administration

Place of Interview: Bangui, CAR

[REDACTED]

Investigators: [REDACTED]

Interpreter: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Names of all persons present during interview on 16/04/2018: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Alexandre KOUROUPE-AWO.

Names of all persons present during interview on 18/07/2018: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Alexandre KOUROUPE-AWO.

Signatures:

[REDACTED]

Alexandre KOUROUPE-AWO

[REDACTED]

Procedure

1. I was introduced to [REDACTED] and I was told that they are Investigators with the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Court (ICC) I was introduced to [REDACTED] and told he was an interpreter with the OTP of the ICC.
2. The investigators explained to me again 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 the Central African Republic since August 2012. I was informed that the OTP is contacting me because they believe I may have information relevant for establishing the truth.
4. I agreed that the interview would be conducted in English and French, using the services of an English-French interpreter. I fully understand and speak French.
5. The investigators explained to me that I do not have to answer to their questions. The investigators explained to me that they are seeking to find out the truth. I agree to tell the truth and that my answers to their questions are as complete as possible and reflect the best of my knowledge and recollection



6. I was informed that any information I give to the OTP, including my identity, may be shared with 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.
7. The investigators have explained to me the reasons and importance of keeping my contacts with the OTP confidential, which I fully understand.
8. Having understood all the above issues, I confirmed my willingness to answer the investigators' questions.
9. The investigators explained to me how the interview was going to be conducted. I was told that I needed to be as accurate as possible in my account and that I should state when I do not know the answer to 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.
10. 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.

Prefect of MBAIKI

11. I was asked by the investigators about two ceremonies that took place in August 2014 in PISSA and MBAIKI regarding the handover of children associated with the Anti-Balaka to an NGO, Enfants Sans Frontières (ESF).
12. I can confirm that during the stated period I was the Prefect of MBAIKI and I was informed by ESF that they had a programme aimed at taking back child soldiers from the Anti-Balaka. I was later invited, in my capacity as the Prefect to attend a ceremony in MBAIKI where the Anti-Balaka handed over child soldiers to ESF, which I attended. The ceremony was organised by ESF in collaboration with the Anti-Balaka.
13. They had a programme/protocol for the ceremony and some individuals were requested to speak according to the programme, including myself. It is normal for someone in my capacity to be asked to say a word during such ceremonies. I cannot recall what I said during the ceremony.



Present during the ceremony

14. At the ceremony there were a number of representatives from ESF, including the Director of the NGO. His full name I cannot now recall. As far as I was concerned he was responsible for the NGO. There were community and local leaders like the *chefs de quartiers* and *chefs de groupe*, the Mayor of MBAIKI and representatives from local NGOs. I attended as a representative from the Government but I do not know if the Sub-Prefect was there. The child soldiers, both boys and girls were also present.
15. The Anti-Balaka representatives were there. I am not sure if ROMBHOT was present because at that time there was a misunderstanding between him and MINUSCA. I know that MINUSCA received a mandate to arrest ROMBHOT and they were calling him on his phone from time to time. ROMBHOT was afraid to attend the meeting in case he would be arrested.
16. I know that a similar ceremony took place in PISSA. I did not attend this ceremony because I was not invited.
17. I do not have documentation regarding these ceremonies or the work done by ESF. I believe the Office of Social Affairs could have obtained some documents from ESF. I know that the then prefectural representative of Social Affairs in MBAIKI has since died and the second in charge was posted elsewhere. I do not have names of the officers present there now but there should be someone who can assist you.

Negotiations between Anti-Balaka and ESF

18. I was not involved in the negotiations between the Anti-Balaka and ESF. However, I was informed on a regular basis about the project by ESF. I was informed at the initial stages that they had secured funding for the project. I would have been updated by the man that I knew to be the Director of the NGO both by telephone and also in person when he was in MBAIKI.
19. The work on this project took few months. ESF worked in PISSA, MBATA and areas along the road to MBAIKI. ESF conducted preliminary investigations in these localities before the ceremonies.
20. I did not work with any other NGO regarding child soldiers apart from ESF.



Trips between BANGUI and MBAIKI

21. I often travelled between BANGUI and MBAIKI and I would see very young boys from 10 years old at the SEKIA and PISSA Anti-Balaka barriers. These barriers were formerly barriers which had been manned by either the Gendarmerie, the Police or Ministry of Public Works before the crisis. These barriers were Anti-Balaka permanent posts. The Anti-Balaka were armed, some with firearms and they were a mix of military and civilians. I could differentiate a military man from a civilian because a military would wear a uniform with insignia which was not the case with the civilian Anti-Balaka elements.
22. I saw the children among the Anti-Balaka elements who were working at the barriers. I did not see the children search vehicles because the Anti-Balaka usually did not search my vehicle because they knew I was the prefect.
23. The children wore a mix of military uniforms and civilian clothes. Some of them wore *gris-gris* around their necks and arms. I saw the children, even the younger ones, carrying traditional weapons like knives, bows and arrows. I did not see the children carrying firearms. These children were part of the Anti-Balaka, not children that would just come and play around the Anti-Balaka bases.
24. I did not have direct contact with any of the children. I know that after the handover ceremony some of them have been reunited with their families.

Closing Procedure

25. I have nothing to add to the above statement nor do I have anything to clarify.
26. I have given the answers to the questions of my own free will.
27. There has been no threat, promise or inducement which has influenced my answers.
28. I have no complaints about the way I was treated during this interview.

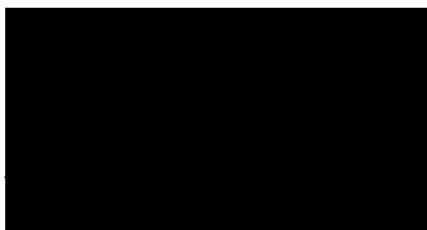


WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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.

Signed:

Dated:



INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

1. I,  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 that Alexandre KOUROUPE-AWO 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 Alexandre KOUROUPE-AWO who appeared to have heard and understood my translation of this statement.
5. Alexandre KOUROUPE-AWO 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 name.

Signed:

Dated:

