

Statement of

WITNESS STATEMENT

WITNESS INFORMATION:

Last Name: [REDACTED] Gender: Male
First Name: [REDACTED] Father's Name: [REDACTED]
Other names used: [REDACTED] Mother's Name: [REDACTED]
Place of Birth: Bangui, CAR ID No: [REDACTED]
Date of Birth/Age: [REDACTED] Nationality(s): Central African Republic
Ethnicity: [REDACTED] Religion: Islam

Language(s) Spoken: French and Sango
Language(s) Written: French, Sango
Language(s) Used in Interview: French-English

Occupation: [REDACTED]

Place of Interview: Bangui, Central African Republic

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



Statement of [REDACTED]

Signature(s) [REDACTED]

WITNESS STATEMENT

Procedure

1. I was introduced to Investigators [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [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 [REDACTED] and I was told that they are interpreters for 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 1st 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 agreed that the interview would be conducted in English and interpreted into French. I fully understand and speak French.
5. The investigators explained to me that I do not have to answer 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.

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Statement of [REDACTED]

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.

Background

11. [REDACTED] I then moved to MBAIKI, LOBAYE District.

12. [REDACTED]

13. [REDACTED] One such person was a man who I later learnt to be Alfred YEKATOM. I knew him as a FACA but



Statement of [REDACTED]

I did not know his name then. He would come to MBAIKI to visit his parents and I would see him sometimes.

14. [REDACTED]

15. In [REDACTED] I converted to Islam [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Many people thought that Muslims were only traders while there were many intellectuals amongst the Muslim community. [REDACTED]

16. [REDACTED]

Arrival of the Seleka

17. In 2012 I started hearing rumours that Seleka rebels would come from the North West. I learnt this from fellow Muslims including my parents who by that time [REDACTED]

18. When they came to MBAIKI they bothered everybody, Christians and Muslims alike. I was in MBAIKI when they arrived. As far as I know, this was the first time armed rebels came to MBAIKI. They had a negative and destructive attitude and were people I could not collaborate with. We as Muslims were worried about the Seleka because they shielded themselves behind the name of Islam but they did not respect its teachings.

19. I cannot estimate how many Seleka came to MBAIKI, they were many. Some of them came from Chad. They arrived well equipped and armed. They

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arrived on their vehicles but they also took vehicles from the police, gendarmerie and some individuals. Some locals, including some Chadian Muslims who had settled and established themselves in MBAIKI for a long time, joined or collaborated with them. They would guide the Seleka to some traders' homes and shops which they then looted.

20. This is why later on in MBAIKI and elsewhere in the country all Muslims were perceived as Seleka.
21. They treated people like animals. They would tie them up and brutalize them. People had to flee or hide for protection. The Police and the Gendarmerie did not protect the people. They were also frightened and went hiding within the communities.
22. As soon as they arrived I went and stayed at my farm. They would pass by my farm but they did not bother or take anything from me. I avoided contact with them. They remained in MBAIKI until DJOTODJIA resigned. When DJOTODJIA resigned some of them retreated to Bangui and others went to KAGA BONDORO. The Chadian collaborators didn't leave with the Seleka. They stayed behind but were later evacuated to Chad. Today there not as many Chadians in MBAIKI though some Muslims have started coming back. The Chadians cannot come back to MBAIKI because they are still regarded as Seleka.

The Anti-Balaka Arrival

23. When the Seleka left there was tension between Muslims and Christians. After the Seleka had left and soon before the Anti-Balaka arrived in BANGUI, I was called for [REDACTED] BANGUI with the [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] On 3rd December I left MBAIKI for BANGUI on public transport. I intended to go back to MBAIKI soon after the meeting.

24. On the 5th December the Anti-Balaka attacked BANGUI and I had to remain in BANGUI for some time because it was not safe to travel. I went and stayed with [REDACTED] I stayed in Bangui for [REDACTED]



Statement of [REDACTED]

almost a month and managed to avoid any trouble because [REDACTED]

25. I kept in contact [REDACTED] MBAIKI and would hear about the escalating tension between Christians and Muslims.

26. There was also tension in PETEVO between Christians and Muslims. There were threats made against Muslims. There was a large community in PETEVO at the time. Most of the traders were Muslims. The Mayor of 6th Arrondissement called for a meeting at a Town Hall. The aim was to try and find an understanding between the two religious communities. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] However the Youth of the area took things into their own hands and interrupted the meeting. They started smashing things and attacked the Town Hall. The Imam was pushed around and he was struck on the head. [REDACTED]

27. I travelled on a commercial truck back to MBAIKI. I wore a cap and disguised myself as a truck worker. We came across nine Anti-Balaka road blocks on our way to MBAIKI. The first barricade was at PK 9 Bridge on the M'poko River and the Anti-Balaka stopped the truck. There were many Anti-Balaka at the roadblock spread all over the place. They wore gris gris and carried weapons like machetes, Kalashnikovs. Some wore a mixture of civilian clothes and military uniforms. They were searching vehicles systematically to identify Muslims.

28. I was surprised to see a man, I recognised from before, among the Anti-Balaka at the barricade. I was told but someone on the bus that his name is YEKATOM. He was apparently the Chief of the Anti-Balaka at the barricade. He wore a pair of military trousers, a T- shirt and a jacket. As I said earlier I knew him from before but he does not know me. He used to live in KINA neighbourhood on the way to FATIMA. Today he is a Member of Parliament.

29. I knew he was a Chef of the Anti-Balaka because he was giving orders and the Anti-Balaka obeyed him. I heard him instruct the Anti-Balaka to get everybody out of the truck and try to identify Muslims. His elements did as he instructed. We were stopped for about 20 minutes. They did not ask for identifying documents but they could tell by an individual's accent that you are born a Central African. Foreigners would not have the same accent unless



Statement of [REDACTED]

they have stayed in the country for a long time. They could similarly identify Muslims through their accents because they speak the local language with an accent.

30. There were no Muslims on the truck except for me and they did not recognise me as one. They asked for money which we gave them and they let us go.
31. When we got to other barricades it was just a matter of formality. You give them money for coffee and they let you go. They knew their boss, YEKATOM at the PK 9 Bridge had already taken care of business. They believed that if you had passed through the first barricade then everything should be alright and that you had no Muslims on your vehicle. Among the Anti-Balaka at the barricades there were some I had interacted with before but they did not know I was a Muslim and I believe this is why I had a safe passage. The journey to MBAIKI (107 km) took 4 hours also because of the bad road conditions.
32. When I arrived in MBAIKI the situation was stressful. There was no longer the cohesion that existed before. The Christians were insulting the Muslims. They were saying they did not want Muslims in the area. The Anti-Balaka had started threatening Muslims but had not at the point taken a decision on what to do with them. They were telling the Muslims to leave the area.
33. Some Muslims from the surrounding neighbourhoods, including MOUNGOUBA MBATA, MBATALIMO, BAGANDOU, SCAD, BOUKOKO, BOLIMBA, and BOBOUA had fled to MBAIKI and others to a Catholic Church in MBAIKI. They were looking for ways to leave MBAIKI. I and my [REDACTED] who had fled to MBAIKI, just like other Muslims families in MBAIKI did. Later we saw the Chadians MUNISCA had come to evacuate Muslims. [REDACTED] evacuated from MBAIKI to BANGUI. We left on long frame vehicles, and they were really packed with people. I only took some business documents with me and left everything behind.
34. In BANGUI I went and stayed at the Central mosque. My wife and children went to the [REDACTED] They were later evacuated [REDACTED] where they are currently living.



Stay at the Central Mosque

35. Conditions at the Central Mosque were bad. We were sleeping on the ground. Some had tents but others had no shelter. I met many Muslims from different areas taking refuge at the mosque, including some from Lobaye region. I learnt that they fled their areas because they were afraid of reprisals from the Anti-Balaka.
36. While at the Central Mosque, I learnt that the Mayor of NOLA in BOUKOKO, Adamou DEWA was killed by the Anti-Balaka. He was shot together with his son in BOBOUA where they lived. They refused to flee the area like other Muslims did. I learnt that this happened on 14th February 2014. I learnt this from the [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The Anti-Balaka who killed the Mayor were led by MASSAKO Louis, a Pastor for the Apostolic Church. The other Anti-Balaka from MBAIKI who took part in attack were MOKONZI Melvy (a Custom Officer), NZOKPIAN Cyril, DEMOU Nestor, GUEREKO Etienne and DOPANI Firmin. DOPANI is the one who shot the Mayor. The Muslims in BOBOUA went hiding in the bush. One week after the attack, a young Muslim boy went to BOBOUA to buy some items. The same group of Anti-Balaka captured him and beheaded him.
37. One Friday soon after prayers, [REDACTED] called us and told us that the deputy Mayor of MBAIKI, DIDO SALHET, had been killed by the Anti-Balaka. He was in MBAIKI when this happened and he witnessed the incident. [REDACTED] home was close to the deputy Mayor's. [REDACTED] did not leave MBAIKI because he [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] He said this happened on 2nd March 2014. The deputy Mayor was killed by Anti-Balaka led by COBO and a man called Prince MONDOUNGA was among them.
38. The deputy Mayor tried to flee to the Gendarmerie station but the commander of the Gendarmerie put him back to the street, where he was killed. I don't know the name of the commander of the Gendarmerie. A woman, an element of COBO's group severed his genitals. COBO is in MBAIKI. He has only one leg. The other leg was cut off by some unknown people due to his bad practises. He is well known in LOBAYE.



Statement of [REDACTED]

39. Later an NGO called, International Organisation for Immigration (IOM), approached me and [REDACTED]

40. When some Seleka realised [REDACTED] Colonel ISMAIL and General CHAFAR [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] They created the security structure for the [REDACTED] because really [REDACTED]

41. [REDACTED] The Seleka came heavily armed and we all fled and they looted the food items.

42. The Seleka occupied a fenced house not far from the mosque. I could see them walk in and out of the house. [REDACTED] I saw vehicles and different types of weapons in the compound. On the day of the Fatima church attack, I saw a large number of Seleka leave the compound with different calibres of weapons. I learnt that the Anti-Balaka had attacked PK 5 and the Seleka from PK 5 retaliated by attacking the church. There were no Anti-Balaka in the church that I was aware of. They were many casualties, including the Priest of the church.

43. When the Fatima Church attack took place, I decided to leave the Central Mosque and re-join my family in [REDACTED] I thought I would be safer there. I was afraid of reprisals from the Anti-Balaka due to the attack on the Church.

44. At the beginning life in the [REDACTED] was not easy due to my Islamic faith. I took part in [REDACTED] In the beginning Muslims and Christians were [REDACTED] separately. Later on they started [REDACTED] both groups together. The [REDACTED] changed the people's mind set and tension in the [REDACTED] began to decrease.

Closing Procedure

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Statement of [REDACTED]

45. I was informed that individuals, who according to the judges, qualify as victims will be entitled to participate in future Court proceedings and potentially to receive reparations. I was informed of the existence of the Victims' Participation and Reparation Section and its function, as well as of the procedure for applications. I consent to my personal data being shared with the Victims' Participation and Reparation Section.
46. I was informed that I may 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.
47. The investigators informed me of the protective measures that may apply during and after the investigation and/or trial proceedings.
48. 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.
49. I have given the answers to the questions of my own free will.
50. There has not been any form of coercion, duress, threat, promise or inducement which has influenced my account.
51. I have no complaints about the way I was treated during this interview.

WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This statement has been read over to me in English with interpretation in French 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 [REDACTED]

Dated: [REDACTED]

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Statement of [REDACTED]

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 she 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 her statement, as translated by me, are true to the best of her knowledge and recollection and has accordingly signed his signature where indicated.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Dated: [REDACTED]
