

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT
OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR

WITNESS STATEMENT

WITNESS INFORMATION:

Last Name: ABOUBAKAR

Gender: Male

First Name: Diakite

Father's Name: Aladji Ibrahim DIAKITE

Other names used:

Mother's Name: [01/18] PRV

Place of Birth: MBAIKI

Passport / ID number:

Date of Birth/Age: [01/18] PRV

Declaration of loss

Nationality(s): CAR

Ethnicity: Fulbe

Religion: Muslim

Language(s) Spoken: Fulbe, Sango, Arabic, Sarakoule, Bambara, basic French, understands Ngbatì.

Language(s) Written: Arabic

Language(s) Used in Interview: Sango-English

Occupation: Farmer

Place of Interview: [01/18] PRV BANGUI

[01/18] PRV

Names of all persons present during interview:

Diakite ABOUBAKAR (Witness); [01/18] PRV (Interpreter); [01/18] PRV

(Investigator) and [01/18] PRV (Associate Investigator)

Signature(s)

[01/18] PRV

[01/18] PRV

[01/18] PRV

[01/18] PRV

Witness statement of Diakite ABOUBAKAR

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CAR-OTP-2104-0274



WITNESS STATEMENT

Procedure

1. I was introduced to [01/18] PRV and [01/18] PRV and told that they are investigators with the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Court (ICC). I was introduced to [01/18] PRV and told that she is a Sango-English 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 to date. 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 Sango – English. I fully understand and speak Sango.
5. The investigators explained to me that I do not have to answer their questions. The investigators explained to me that they are seeking 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.

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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. I was born on 25 August 1959 in MBAIKI. When I was 11 years old, I was sent to study in Mali and Mauritania at the Koranic school. I returned to MBAIKI when I was 21 years old. When I returned to MBAIKI, I started working as an intermediary between diamond diggers and buyers. I also engaged in the trade of cigarettes, shoes, women's clothes and other items.
12. I was 22 years old when I got married. I stopped trading and started teaching in the Central Mosque of MBAIKI, in the BAGUIRMI neighbourhood. I became the Imam when I was 30 years and a few months. I replaced my father when he passed away. I married my second wife after 9 years of my first marriage. I abandoned my third wife. My fourth marriage was during the events in MBAIKI.
13. I have 7 children with my first wife, 4 with my second wife; the third wife did not have a child because we separated and my fourth wife has 2 and is expecting the third child.
14. My mother, [01/18] PRV was born in the area between [01/18] PRV at a place called [01/18] PRV in the area of [01/18] PRV in Central African Republic. Her maiden name was [01/18] PRV but when she married my father, she changed her name to [01/18] PRV because she was a Christian converting to Islam.
15. My father was a merchant and he met my mother in the area of LOBAYE where he was a diamond trader. They got married and settled in MBAIKI. My parents had 7 children including me. My father became the Imam of the Central Mosque of MBAIKI at the time when BOKASSA rose to power. He remained an Imam for 27 years.
16. My brother [01/18] PRV was the chef de quartier of [01/18] PRV. He was also a coffee trader. He currently lives in [01/18] PRV. The rest of my family were merchants. I continued in coffee trade after inheriting the farm from my father. I was the head of the family after my father passed away.
17. My grandfather was a war veteran during the time of General DE GAULLE. My grandfather was born in KAOULAR - DAKAR, in Senegal. He later on got French nationality. When my grandfather got the French nationality, he was stationed first in BRAZAVILLE. My father was born in BRAZAVILLE. My grandfather moved his family to DOUALA and then to NDJAMENA in CHAD and when the African

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countries got independence, my grandfather was stationed in MBAIKI. My grandfather was an engineer so he was in charge of building all the official property in MBAIKI. He later on decided to start farming. I cannot remember when my father arrived in MBAIKI but it was prior to the independence of Central African Republic.

Life in MBAIKI prior to the events

18. I was the Imam of the Central Mosque of BAGUIRMI in MBAIKI. There were four Mosques in MBAIKI; one in BAGUIRMI, the main Mosque, second and third in YERIMA and the forth small one in BATE. The Mosque referred to as at GRAND MARCHÉ, is the one at YERIMA. The Imam at GRAND MARCHÉ was FAKI YAKOUB SOULEYMAN. The Imam at the second Mosque in YERIMA was MALLAM DJIDA. MOHAMAT KOURE was the Imam of the small Mosque in BATE. I do not have the contacts of any of these Imams. I lost contact with them since they were evacuated by the Chadian Army. The Imam of BAGUIRMI before me was Issa LANGABA. He was also a big merchant. When I became Imam, he slowly relinquished his duties and eventually moved back to CHAD.
19. There were many churches in MBAIKI. There was a Catholic Cathedral, IFEB church, ANEB church, Apostolic church, Jehovah witness church and the Bahai Temple.
20. The population of MBAIKI was very mixed with people from different cultures. Everybody had their own interests and businesses to focus on so people lived alongside each other without any trouble. People were engaged in different activities such as dealing in diamonds, gold, fishermen, hunters, people collecting pepper in the bush, planting cola and harvesting wild cola and other casual jobs. If someone was unemployed, it must have been by their own choice.
21. The Muslims were the main people engaged in dealing in diamonds, gold, general commerce, and harvesting and selling a vegetable used in a traditional sauce. The people engaged in coffee plantations were mainly West Africans because they arrived in MBAIKI before the Arabs. When I say Arabs, I mean Arabic speaking people who came from either Sudan or Chad.
22. I was the president of the football club called VIPER in MBAIKI. As a young man, I trained as an athlete in VIPER, although I never practiced professionally. VIPER sports club was made up of many ethnicities and different religions. The club had people from different trades including farmers, hunters, diamond and gold traders and office employees. Usually, when a new person moved to MBAIKI, the different leaders of clubs in MBAIKI approached the individual and informed him of all the available clubs and it was up to him to choose. MBAIKI was one united society.

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Arrival of Seleka in MBAIKI

23. I believe DJOTODIA arrived in BANGUI in March 2013. The arrival of DJOTODIA brought only bad things. Prior to the arrival of DJOTODIA, we all lived in peace. Once, DJOTODIA arrived we started looking at each other with suspicion and the tension grew.
24. The Seleka arrived in MBAIKI less than a week after DJOTODIA came to power. I was already an Imam at this time. The first event that affected me happened to my younger brother who was the chef de quartier in BAGUIRML. The Seleka came and took him to my compound. They beat him till he was injured. I had to bring my brother to BANGUI for treatment. After this incident, we looked at the Seleka as our enemies.
25. The Seleka at first were led by a Colonel whose name I cannot remember. We started hearing gunfire with the arrival of the Seleka. One Friday when I was in the Mosque reading the Koran, some of the Seleka came to the Mosque and said they wanted to pray. We prayed and when we finished praying one of the members of the Mosque told them: "We are all Muslims here in the Mosque so please stop shooting." I also told them the same thing.
26. A few days after Monseigneur RHINO sent an Abbey to me to tell me to ask 'my people' to stop shooting; I went to the Prefecture to meet the Seleka Colonel whose name I cannot remember. I told him that I had come to ask him to stop the shooting because it disturbed the city. The Colonel threatened me and I never said anything to anyone again. He threatened me by asking me: "Is this the advice you came here to give me? From now on, I do not want to hear the words you just told me.", while looking at me really mean. I took this as a threat because I could see in his eyes that he was angry. This was the same Colonel who beat my brother so badly. I do not know why he beat my brother but at this time, you could not question the Colonel or you would get into trouble.
27. I do not know why the Seleka were shooting in the air. I believe they just wanted to cause chaos in the city. I was never personally harmed by the Seleka.
28. I personally experienced the animosity between Christians and Muslims during this time. I was ashamed because of what was happening because I could not help. I felt pity because my in-laws who were Christians were coming to me to complain and I couldn't help them. I told them that I was only a servant of God and all we could do was pray.

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29. I left the city and went to [01/18] PRV and remained there for a week. When I returned to MBAIKI, I found people had been sent to arrest this Colonel and he was brought to BANGUI. At the time of this Colonel, people started looking at each other with suspicion and living in tension because under his leadership, Seleka were acting as judges instead of the official authorities.
30. Colonel ANOUR was sent to replace the arrested Colonel and life returned to peaceful co-existence in MBAIKI. However, there were some people who had already been affected and remained angry. The sentiment remained between some Christians that it was the Muslims affecting them. The Seleka did not kill the Christians but stole their things, tried them and sometimes punished them. As Muslims we did not agree with what Seleka were doing but we were unable to intervene. There was so much disorder in the city.
31. The situation of disorder in the city was already bad but even worse in the villages. One time the Seleka went to the company ESCADE and pillaged all the vehicles in the company. This was reported to me because I was the Imam; people often reported events to me. Another time, a young man came to me and pointed at a Seleka soldier who had come to his house and took his DVD, television and 45,000 Central African Franc. He told me that he tried to defend his property and the Seleka soldier fired his pistol through the roof. I advised the young man not to mention this to anyone; I asked him to let me deal with it. Later on, I called the Seleka soldier and told him that someone had reported him for stealing things. I advised him that if he believed in God, he should return the stolen property. The soldier reached in his pocket and took out the 45,000 and gave it to me to return to the young man and promised to return the other items when it got dark. That same night around 11pm, I heard a knock on my door. I opened the door and it was the Seleka soldier with the DVD and television and he handed it to me to return it to the young man. He wanted me to give 5000 Francs to repair the hole he made in the roof, but I told him that I would deal with that myself. I later gave the things to the young man and asked him to reconcile with the Seleka soldier. This was the only intervention I ever made.
32. When ANOUR arrived in MBAIKI, he came to say hello to me. We often saw each other and I became his advisor on how to do things in MBAIKI. Imam YAKOUB SOULEYMANE also advised Colonel ANOUR. We told him that everyone in MBAIKI; Christian and Muslim lived together in peace and he should not take the role of judge because there were other authorities in place for that. We told him that the religious laws did not apply in CAR. He listened to us and respected what we said. He behaved in the way that we advised him. He lived close to the house of YAKOUB SOULEYMANE. ANOUR integrated in the city. He would attend the baptism of Christian children and join in Muslim and Christian feasts. When he arrived, the Seleka stopped being judges. For instance, if someone had a problem

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and went to him, he would tell them to go to the nearest gendarmerie or police since they were the ones responsible for resolving or handling disputes.

33. I heard of Seleka distributing guns within the city, prior to the arrival of ANOUR. I do not know what type of guns the Seleka were distributing because I was not told this. I did not hear who exactly received the guns. I did not hear what ethnicity the people receiving the guns belonged to. I cannot tell you more about this. The Seleka were foreigners but spoke Arab and Sango.
34. The Seleka are of Muslim religion. When the Seleka arrived, they spoke Arabic and could speak to Muslims in MBAIKI. But the other people could not distinguish between the several dialects, which is how all Muslims were labelled then as Arabs and considered as Seleka. The Seleka was made up of different ethnicities but their common language was Arabic.

Evacuation of Muslims to MBAIKI

35. We heard on the radio and from different people that the Anti-Balaka had attacked BANGUI. Rumours that the Anti-Balaka were in the bush and planning to attack MBAIKI started coming to MBAIKI after the 05 December attack on BANGUI. The first time I heard of the name Anti-Balaka was on the 05 December on RFI. It said that the Anti-Balaka had attacked BANGUI. I did not know anything about the Anti-Balaka prior to their arrival. I did not know anything about their composition, religion or ethnicity.
36. Prior to the departure of DJOTODIA, we started hearing rumours that there were Anti-Balaka in the bush planning to come to MBAIKI. The rumours came from the Ngbati ethnicity and the Muslims but everyone who heard something about the people in the bush talked about it. It was general rumours and as an Imam people came and told me these rumours but I never bothered to check the source of the rumours. At this time the Muslims started living in fear because they had heard that when the Anti-Balaka attacked BANGUI, they killed many Muslims. We heard on radio RFI, London radio and Washington radio that the Anti-Balaka during the attack of 05 December had killed several Muslims and their bodies were brought to the Ali BABOLO mosque in BANGUI. We only heard this on the radio. It is during this time that the relationship amongst the people started changing again. I am an Imam and I knew how people used to interact and after the rumours, I noticed how people changed. As an example, I realised that people were not looking at me the same way they looked at me before. I believe that since I was an Imam and praying with the Muslims I was perceived as friendly with the Seleka. The Christian people who used to speak to me started avoiding me.

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37. Monseigneur RINO organised a meeting for all the imams and pastors. The meeting was to discuss the security situation. The president of the group was Abbey ANTÉRESS and I was the vice-president. The name of our group was *Siriri*, which means 'security situation' in Sango. Initially we also heard of a group called Siriri preparing in the bush to fight but we never saw them. That group is different and not to be mistaken for our group. We made a flyer and distributed them in the churches and mosques. We also distributed these to the authorities. I was responsible for the distribution. The flyers called on the Muslims to desist from doing harm to the Christians; and at the same time to the Christians calling on them not to think of revenge on the Muslims. The words in the flyers were written by ANTÉRESS and were in French. We did not want anything bad to come to our area. There was an apostolic pastor SENGUÉTÉLI Apollinaire, now deceased, who also worked very hard to maintain peace.
38. The flyers were distributed prior to the arrival of Anti-Balaka in MBAIKI. It was distributed in the city and the small villages. Once people read the flyers, they calmed down and the tension reduced. Many people in the area could read French so they were able to understand what was written in the flyers.
39. The hope of the Muslims at this time was that the flyers would help to protect them and then they prayed. As responsible members of the community, we started worrying about our people because we were afraid of what could happen to our communities. We lived in prayers and hope that the flyers would help us. One of my fears was what would happen if the Anti-Balaka arrived in the city. I asked myself whether I could still live in MBAIKI. I worried that when they arrived in the city the Anti-Balaka would kill all of us including our wives and children and we would be left at God's mercy. I worried that even if God saved us and we escaped from the city alive, all our mosques, property and livestock would be destroyed. These are the things that I was so afraid of.
40. Seleka were still in the city when the rumours started coming. Seleka did not do anything in response to the rumours but one time we heard that, in the area of PISSA, in BOUKANGA, the Anti-Balaka attacked and killed two men. The two men were a father and son. There was also a pregnant woman who was wounded very badly and she was brought to MBAIKI and she gave birth on arrival. Her child was also wounded. Muslim civilians went to the village to collect the bodies and bring them to MBAIKI. I went with them. I saw the bodies and buried them at Bokombo cemetery in MBAIKI. The father and son had bullet wounds. Prior to our trip to the village to collect the bodies, one Seleka chief told us that we should not go without security since we were unarmed. He sent a security escort with us to the village to collect the bodies. The two people who were killed were Muslims but I do not remember their names. The man who had been killed had lived in BOUKANGA for over 30 years and owned a coffee plantation there.

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41. From this moment on, fear increased in the other villages of PISSA, BANGUI-BOUCHIA, BOUCHIA, MBATA, BATALIMO, MOUGOMBA, ESCADE, BAKANDOU, NDOLOBO, BOUKOKO, BOBOUA and BOUAKA. As fear increased, people could not access healthcare, food and could not stay in their villages and started moving to MBAIKI. We heard that the crimes were being committed by the elements of RAMBO. All the Muslims from these villages were evacuated to MBAIKI after the two people were killed. They all fled to MBAIKI out of fear for the Anti-Balaka. The people were evacuated by the Seleka because rumours spread that the Anti-Balaka who killed the two men were going to attack one village after the other. I believe that the Seleka people helped because they knew that their president had lost power and they were leaving so they wanted to protect the Muslims in the villages from being killed by bringing them to MBAIKI.
42. The first time I heard of RAMBO was on radio RFI on 05 December when they said that RAMBO and his elements had attacked some areas in BANGUI. The announcement did not specify which areas he had attacked. BANGUI is close to MBAIKI and we heard that RAMBO and his elements were based in PK9. Everybody knew that this was the area of RAMBO and his elements. I'm sure of this because first came the rumours, second came the crimes and the subsequent meeting with RAMBO in MBAIKI.
43. People believed that it was the Anti-Balaka who killed the two men in BOUKANGA because there were no Seleka in this area. We were convinced that it was the Anti-Balaka because they use machetes to kill people. I further confirmed this when I saw the two bodies had been cut up. It is not plausible that the two men could have been killed as part of a dispute between neighbours or by common bandits, because around the same time, we heard that other Muslims were also killed in different places. At that time the war pitched Christians against Muslims and vice versa. I did not see with my own eyes the other people who were killed, but I remember that Imam MATTAR of BAGANDOU was killed during this period. I heard that the nuns of BAGANDOU tried to save him. The nuns put him in a vehicle to bring him away from his village, towards MBAIKI but he came across his attackers and he was killed. I only heard this; I did not meet any eye witness to confirm this. Three other Imams got killed as well. MALLAM BAKARI of ZALINGO. Imam YAMOUSSA of BOUGERE and his deputy, FAKI ZACHARIA, were both killed in BOUGERE the same day.
44. The Seleka then asked the ESCADE Company to help them with trucks to evacuate the people to MBAIKI. They also asked individual Muslim truck owners in MBAIKI to provide their trucks for the evacuation. The evacuation happened after the distribution of the flyers. When we were in BOUKANGA to collect the two bodies,

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many Muslims came to us in panic, also seeking to leave the villages, afraid also to be killed. Some forcefully placed their belongings in our vehicles.

45. When the people from BOUKANGA were evacuated, the Muslims from other villages also started leaving for MBAIKI. Some even left on foot and the ones who had money paid to be evacuated. The others who could not afford the transport were assisted by the Seleka, using the trucks from MBAIKI. It was hard to know who exactly organised the evacuation, people were just leaving. For instance the people of BATALIMO and MONGOUMBA who lived on the border with CONGO just crossed to CONGO. In BATALIMO, a timber logging company provided trucks to evacuate the Muslims in their area. The evacuation of the entire areas to MBAIKI must have taken 3 or 4 days.

Seleka leaving MBAIKI

46. Seleka suddenly left MBAIKI in the middle of the night. I know this because we heard people in the city shouting that the Seleka had gone. We had heard rumours before that the Seleka were about to leave but I did not approach them to ask when or why they were leaving. Colonel ANOUR did not say anything to me about them leaving. I did not hear what made the Seleka leave but I thought that maybe it was because their president had lost power. I do not know why they had to leave in the middle of the night. I do not remember what date the Seleka left.
47. It was reported to me that as the Seleka were leaving, they pillaged someone called [01/18] PRV who sold hunting ammunition (OO). [01/18] PRV was not killed. The Seleka stopped his vehicle and took everything that was in his vehicle worth about 12 million CFA. He told me that he fled and hid. The Seleka took things from people as they fled MBAIKI. I learnt this prior to leaving for BANGUI. [01/18] PRV was a Christian.

Appearance of Anti-Balaka in MBAIKI

48. Nothing special happened in the two days after the departure of the Seleka. People were generally happy that the Seleka had left the city. I could see them happy but did not ask them why they were happy. Nobody organised the celebrations by the people. Nothing else happened then the Anti-Balaka arrived.
49. The Anti-Balaka arrived in MBAIKI two days after the departure of Seleka.
50. I was at my home in BAGUIRMI. My house was on the roadside. I was sitting on a mat on the veranda outside my house as the Anti-Balaka arrived. It was a coincidence that I was seated on the veranda when the Anti-Balaka arrived. This road leads in [REDACTED] BANGUI.

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51. According to me, the 'Anti-Balaka' are the armed people.

Three Anti-Balaka bases in MBAIKI

52. The Anti-Balaka arrived in vehicles, motorbikes and some got off the vehicle and walked. Some of them were carrying guns, others carried machetes and bows and arrows. They mainly carried hunting guns usually referred to as *ganna point*, meaning self-fabricated or homemade guns. I saw maybe one or two automatic guns. They did not attack anybody but marched straight to the city and settled in three bases. The first base was at BANGUIRIMI, the second at *Maison de Jeunesse* and the third at Socatel. They settled in these bases the same day they arrived.

53. The Anti-Balaka arrived in two pick-up vehicles. One of the pick-ups was white with camouflage spots double cabin LD100 Mitsubishi model. The other was a light brown military colour with black spots single cabin. I cannot remember the model of this pick-up. I did not see a big gun on the pick-ups but some of the soldiers carried guns. I did not count how many people were in the pick-ups. I also saw many motors but I did not count the numbers but they were less than 50. Some of the motors carried 2, 3 or 4 people.

54. The Anti-Balaka were 'young boys', I mean I did not see old men. There were also some women amongst them. There was more than one woman, but I did not count them. Some of the women carried guns, just as some women in Seleka carried guns. I saw maybe two or three boys amongst them. I can estimate their ages to be 15, 16 or 17. They were shouting in joy. They were saying, "Seleka left, now we take back our city, our country."

55. The Anti-Balaka were dressed in different type of clothes; others were in military wear, jeans, shirts, jackets etc. They dressed in clothes similar to those of people in the city and others like those in the village. The only way I could differentiate them from the ordinary people was because they carried different kind of guns and some of their clothes looked dirty. Some of the Anti-Balaka wore Ranger boots and others wore Palla (foam sandals-flip flops). Some of them wore amulets. Actually, even the Seleka wore amulets. I also saw that some of the Anti-Balaka tied the *kadamul* (long piece of cloth mainly used by Muslims) around their head, others wore turbans and many had short scarves tied around their heads. I did not see anything else on their heads.

56. I could not identify any leader of the group.

57. When the Anti-Balaka passed, I moved to a mango tree in front of my compound, from where I could see a group of the Anti-Balaka set up a base under a mango tree.

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From here, I could also see them set up the second and third base. I could see the other bases because not so far from my compound there are antennas for Telecel and Socatel. I left my house to go and see my friend and saw that the second base was at *Maison de la Jeunesse*. The third base was at Socatel. This third base had also been previously used by the Seleka. I saw the third base when I was on my way to go to Telecel to see my friend. Socatel was between the Gendarmerie and the Municipality. To me a base is where the Anti-Balaka came and settled. They remained there day and night. They cooked and slept there.

58. While passing by the base at the mango tree, I saw a tall man with long Rasta hair and believe it was COEUR de LION because I had heard a rumour that that is how he looked. COEUR de LION's real name. I was later told that COEUR de LION who had attacked BODA had been killed and his body was in the hospital in MBAIKI.
59. The investigators asked me to draw a map of the three bases but I do not feel comfortable to do this. I believe that the names of the areas where the bases were set are self-explanatory.
60. The Anti-Balaka at BAGUIRMI settled at the base under a mango tree. There were small houses around the mango tree and that is where they slept. I do not know the owners of these houses but they were empty because at this time of the year many of the non-Muslims had gone from the city to their farms in the villages. The people had gone to their villages to weed their crops and they would normally spend two to three months doing this.
61. There was so much movement at the base so I could not determine the number of the Anti-Balaka in this base.
62. *Maison des Jeunes* was a youth cultural centre. Young people could play basketball, football etc. Seminars/congress and gatherings with government officials from Bangui would also be held here. There was one main office surrounded by big open grounds. The ground was not fenced. I saw the Anti-Balaka here and they slept there as well.
63. Socatel was a company from telecommunication services. The building was had a ground floor and first floor. The Anti-Balaka occupied all the two floors. The building was not fenced. The Socatel Company had gone out of business and there were only people sleeping there so the Anti-Balaka came and just took over the building.
64. There was the main chief of the Anti-Balaka at one of the bases and the other two were led by commanders but I did not get to know their names because I was afraid to ask. I do not know the relationship between this chief and RAMBO.

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65. When I passed by the bases, I saw them cooking and talking to each other. Some came and left on their motorbikes. The pick-ups the Anti-Balaka arrived in were parked at the Socatel.
66. A day after the arrival of the Anti-Balaka, about 5 or 6 of the Anti-Balaka boys came to my house and told me, "Baba we have not had even just coffee since morning." I asked my younger brother to give them 2000 CFA to buy some coffee. They thanked me and left. The reason I gave them money was because 'no soldier is small' and they were armed. They also did not do anything to me so I wanted to help them. Also, culturally and as an Imam I am used to helping people. Many people would come to me as an Imam and tell me that they were hungry and I would help them. I believe that asking for coffee actually meant they wanted food and that's why I gave them money since they looked quite hungry.
67. I have not heard of anyone else who gave money to the Anti-Balaka. I am not aware of Muslims collecting money to give to the Anti-Balaka.
68. One day while I was praying in the mosque, they came and stood in front of the mosque and said, "You, we told you to stop your business but you still continue." When I finished my prayer and came out, I found that they had broken the signpost of the mosque and left it on the ground. One of them ran to their commander to report that I was being threatened by some of his elements. Other elements came and chased them away so they left. This was the only day that I was threatened by the Anti-Balaka.
69. The Anti-Balaka who came to investigate the incident at the mosque was one of the boys who came to my house and asked for coffee. From the day, I gave them money for coffee; one of them was friendly to me and often enquired after my welfare. I even offered him tea one day as he passed by as I was having my tea. Another time, I was having a meal and as he passed by, I invited him to join me and we ate together. After eating, he told me that I should not be afraid of him and that he was not there to harm me. He told me to inform him should anyone try to harm me. This boy never told me his name.
70. I could not ask the names of any of the Anti-Balaka. I was one day visited at my home by a white European journalist. She spoke French, English and Arabic. She carried cameras and wore a journalist badge. She arrived in a double cabin vehicle but the driver parked a bit further. The driver was dark skinned but I do not whether he was local. She told me her name but I have forgotten. She asked me to tell her what I had witnessed about the incidents in my area. As I was still talking with the journalist, the Anti-Balaka arrived and surrounded us. They demanded to know if I had mentioned their name to the journalist. They warned me that they did

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not want to hear their names mentioned anywhere. Since this day, I became really afraid to ask their names.

71. From the moment the Anti-Balaka arrived in MBAIKI, it was known that they had taken over the check-points normally used by the authorities. They used it to check the movement of vehicles, trucks and the passengers and ask for money from people in the same way that the Seleka had done before them. From then on, the Muslims felt that they had become prisoners in their own city and did not dare to leave the city out of fear of being killed.

Arrival of RAMBO in MBAIKI

72. RAMBO's elements arrived in MBAIKI before he did. He arrived a few days later. As the elements entered MBAIKI, they shouted while lifting their guns in the air, "*Victoire RAMBO, victoire RAMBO.*" I believe that it was RAMBO's group because they are the ones who entered MBAIKI city shouting, "*Victoire RAMBO, victoire RAMBO.*" They were shouting RAMBO's name so I concluded that it was RAMBO's group because RAMBO arrived soon after these elements.
73. When RAMBO arrived, he was welcomed by the non-Muslim population, they applauded him. It was like the arrival of the president. Both the Anti-Balaka and the non-Muslim population went out to welcome him. The Muslim community did not go out to welcome him because he was known for one thing, that is killing people.
74. I was in my compound at the shower when RAMBO arrived in MBAIKI. It was almost 5pm. We had already finished praying. I heard people shouting in Sango, "RAMBO has arrived, RAMBO has arrived". I dressed up quickly and came out of the house. I stood outside my house at the border of the road. I then saw three vehicles arriving. One pick-up was well armed at the front, he was in the middle pick-up and there was another well-armed pick-up at the back. He wore a military uniform and had dark sunglasses. He also wore a red beret. When he came to where I was, he stopped and asked the people, "Who is this one?" I saw the young children who were running after the vehicles point at the mosque so I assumed that the children must have told him that I was the Imam of that mosque. He waved at me and drove away. He waved in a friendly way and I could see his teeth so I also waved back in the same way. I had heard before that RAMBO wore dark sunglasses.
75. The next day, RAMBO called all the pastors and Imams to go to a meeting with him at JEANNE-D'ARC Cathedral. Someone came to me and asked whether I was the Imam of the mosque and I confirmed that I was the one. He then told me that RAMBO was calling all the Imams and leaders of the community to go to meet with him. The person who came to me was a non-Muslim and I did not know him. He

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came on foot. He also went to Mohamed DIAKITE, Chef de Quartier of BAGUIRMI and invited him to the meeting. The meeting took place in the meeting room at the Cathedral. During the meeting, I was seated at the front next to the Monseigneur RHINO, Abbey ANTERESS and two other Abbeyes whose names I forget. The others at the meeting were Imam ISSA, Imam FAKI Yacoub SOULEYMANE, HABIB a merchant, Abdul KARIM also a merchant. The Prefect was also present but I do not remember his name because he had just arrived in MBAIKI. There were also pastors from other churches led by the now deceased SENGUÉTÉLI Appolinaire. There were also other people but these were the important ones in the community. The Police or Gendarmerie were not present in the meeting. At this time I could not look around and check who else was in the room because we did not know what to expect. My family were so afraid and told me that I would not return home because RAMBO would be there.

76. I believe it was RAMBO who called the meeting because no meeting had been organised before but he arrived and the next day, we were called to the meeting.
77. When RAMBO arrived, the Abbeyes were waiting for him at the entrance, he greeted them individually and then they all entered the room together. He sat down and said, "My brothers Christians, my brothers Muslims... raised his hands and said... I greet you all." The meeting started with a prayer led by an Abbey. RAMBO then said that the Muslim would conclude with a prayer.
78. He asked if all the Imams were in the room and we confirmed this. He started by saying, "You the Muslims of MBAIKI, I have no problem with you. When I was young, the Muslims took care of me and educated me. I only have problems with DJOTODIA but he has already left." I raised my hand to ask something but someone behind me told me not to say anything. It was the deputy Mayor Saleh DJIDO. He rose up and thanked RAMBO and asked RAMBO if he would go to the city centre and say the same things he had just said in the meeting. RAMBO said that he would do that. We immediately moved to the *gare routière*, at the city centre and he addressed the crowd and told them that he came to MBAIKI against DJOTODIA and his elements and since they had gone, he would not harm anybody. RAMBO added that he did not want to see any disorder in the city..
79. What we noticed was that the Anti-Balaka were generally not happy about this meeting and what RAMBO had said because they wanted to kill and pillage. Right after RAMBO's speech, they started saying, "We do not agree with what RAMBO is saying, he has to leave us to do what we were doing." From that day on, we became like prisoners in MBAIKI. We could not leave our homes.
80. I only met RAMBO this one time. Prior to meeting with RAMBO, I heard that he was Anti-Balaka but also a member of FACA, a Chief-Corporal.

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81. Later, after the events, RAMBO called me on my phone. He wanted to become the *Député* (Member of Parliament) for the LOBAYE. I do not know how he got my number. He asked if I was the Imam of MBAIKI speaking and I confirmed. He told me that he wanted to become *Député* in my area. I wished him good luck and hung up. I do not know why he was telling me this, but I believe it was because he thought I could help mobilise for him. After some time, I heard that he had become the *Député*; only then I learned that his name is actually YEKATOM.

Life of the IDP Muslims in MBAIKI

82. When the people who were evacuated from the villages arrived in MBAIKI, some of them settled with their relatives, others rented and others came to my mosque. There was also a big mosque that had been turned into the Koranic school so some of the evacuated people settled in the Koranic school. My mosque was built by a Kuwait company. There was no 'refugee camp' in MBAIKI.
83. When the evacuees arrived in MBAIKI, prices of everything went high. There was not enough meat for the people. There was a general shortage of food including vegetables like *coco*, aubergines, peanuts, manioc etc. Some of the evacuees had brought food but that was all finished. The reserve in the city was all depleted. By the time they left the city, there was nothing left. Life was very difficult. They must have remained in MBAIKI for about two weeks before the trucks came and took them. At this time the women were even scared to go to the market because the Anti-Balaka were walking around armed with knives and machetes. We had never seen anything like this.
84. There were many people living at the Koranic school. It was a mix of men, women and children. The Koranic school had a big room where we used to pray so when the people arrived, they put mats and lay on the floor. Outside the school, there was open ground where the women could cook. There were also big trees under which the people could rest. There were about 3 toilets with small shower space in the compound of the school and the people used that to wash themselves as well. Also, the people around the mosque were Muslims so they would allow the evacuees to go to their homes and wash themselves. There was a water pit in the compound where they could draw water.
85. The Anti-Balaka sometimes insulted the evacuees. I heard this from people who would come to report to me that the Anti-Balaka would insult them as they walked past them. This was common. Some of the insults I overheard them use were '*boubtiala*', Sango for stupid. The Anti-Balaka threatened the Muslims saying: "You are stupid people; we are going to kill you if you stay. We told you to leave our areas but you don't leave. If you continue to stay, we are going to kill you." I also

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heard the Anti-Balaka say these threats. I recognised them as Anti-Balaka because they had already been in the city for about three weeks.

Evacuation of Muslims from MBAIKI

86. When the Muslims in MBAIKI heard that the mosques in the villages had been destroyed. They became even more scared and realised that they would not be safe in MBAIKI so they had to save their lives by getting out of MBAIKI and moving to BANGUI. It was some of the Christians from those villages who came to the city for their daily errands or business who told us that they had passed by the mosques and all of the mosques had been destroyed. I also saw this while we were being evacuated to BANGUI and driving through the villages that had previously been evacuated. There were no mosques left along the way. All had been destroyed. I did not take any pictures of the destroyed mosques. I could not take pictures because we were in the MISCA truck.
87. The Chadian Embassy in BANGUI called the Chadian delegate in MBAIKI and asked him to inform the Muslims to prepare to be evacuated to BANGUI by the Chadian Army. The Chadian government sent the Chadian military to evacuate all the Chadian Muslims. I saw this because I was present when the evacuation was being done. We knew each other and they were saying bye to us as they left. All the Chadians in MBAIKI and the villages surrounding MBAIKI were evacuated but I do not know their number. The Chadians came with military trucks but there were also Chadian Muslims who had big trucks who provided them for the evacuation of the Chadians. The Chadians were moved in one day. There must have been about 30 big trucks used to evacuate the Chadians. I do not remember the number of military trucks. I cannot say the number of people who were in each truck but the trucks were fully filled with people.
88. The Chadian military left the Muslim West Africans behind. The Chadian military did not forbid the West Africans from getting into the evacuation vehicles but it was the West Africans who stayed behind. This was because I had not informed them that the Chadians were going to be evacuated. I had not been informed on time so we were not ready to move. I was caught by surprise when I saw a Chadian vehicle with a big gun arriving in the city. I asked a Chadian merchant delegate what was happening and he told me that the Chadian Ambassador had called him at 5am that morning and told him that they should get prepared to be evacuated that day. The military initially helped the Chadians to board the vehicles with their property but at some point told them to leave their property behind. Some of the military told the Christians who stood by looking on to take the property because there was too much to go into the vehicles. When I saw a woman taking some things, I asked her and she told me that the military had told them to take the things because they were too many. Some of the Chadians gave away some of their things like beds and

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mattresses to their neighbours. One of my wives was even asked by her Chadian neighbour to choose whatever she could take.

89. As the Chadians were boarding the vehicles, there many people gathered around watching them. Some of the Christians around the vehicles were even crying because they had gotten used to living together. There were also people who were saying bad things to the Chadians as the boarded and left. Some were celebrating the departure of the Chadians saying, "now go back to your country. We don't need you." Others said in Sango, "*boubatjala*" meaning stupid. The people who were sad about the departure told them to stop saying such things.
90. The Chadians left MBAIKI because they were afraid of being killed by the Anti-Balaka. We were all leaving in fear of being killed because we were getting information from different areas that Muslims were being killed. We were afraid of being killed by the Anti-Balaka. If it wasn't for fear getting killed I would not have left my coffee plantation, an acre and half of manioc that I was about to harvest. It was a sad day. The reason for the West African Muslims leaving was the same as that of the Chadians; they were afraid of eventually being killed by the Anti-Balaka.
91. I called my little brother the chef de quartier and asked him what would happen if the food got finished. We then went to the MISCA contingent of Congo Brazzaville and asked them to help us and bring us to BANGUI, since all the Arabs had left and we were afraid that we would be killed. I told them that we were from Mali. The person we met was a Colonel. He asked me to make a list of all the people and bring it to him. I went back and made the list of all the individuals who wanted to get out of MBAIKI, we were 103 in total. I took this list to the MISCA. I later gave this list to the CAR President of the Islamic community in BANGUI. The Congolese MISCA evacuated us in two trips; first the women and children and some men then the second group in which I was. We moved in a convoy made up of three vehicles; one MISCA truck carrying the military in the front and one in the back and the evacuated people were in the middle truck. We were brought to the Central Mosque in BANGUI. The evacuation was a week after the Chadians had been evacuated.
92. We encountered at least twenty Anti-Balaka roadblocks along the way but we were not disturbed because the convoy was led by a heavily armed MISCA Land Cruiser. When we arrived at PK9, about 20 MISCA Land Cruisers joined the convoy and escorted us all the way to the Congolese MISCA camp. They gave us refreshments and then took us to the Central Mosque in BANGUI.
93. There were no incidents when the West Africans were leaving. The people watching us leave were sad because the West Africans had lived amongst them for a long time and intermarried with their people. I was able to take some of my property with me in the truck and left the rest of my property with my [01/18] PRV who

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was a Christian. There was no panic as we were boarding the trucks. The Anti-Balaka were watching us. One of them even asked me, "Imam, why are you leaving? Who told you to go away?" I responded to him that no one had told us to leave but I was going away just to rest a bit. There were no threats or insults when the West Africans were boarding and leaving. The Christian people even helped us carry and load our items in the trucks. I was escorted from my house to the evacuation truck by the Christians around me.

94. Once the Chadian Muslims were evacuated from MBAIKI, all the mosques and their homes were destroyed by the Anti-Balaka. One month ago, I was in MBAIKI with Monseigneur RHINO; we went to my mosque together and took pictures of the destroyed mosque. RHINO told me that he wanted to help renovate my mosque and that he had already made a budget for the renovation. Each time I am in MBAIKI, I visit Monseigneur RHINO. The first time I returned to MBAIKI after the events was during the last elections. The mosque has not yet been renovated because there are very few Muslims in MBAIKI. These few individuals are Muslims who left MBAIKI for a few days during the events and then returned because their Christian mothers are originally from MBAIKI.

Killing of Deputy Mayor DJIDO

95. After we were evacuated from MBAIKI by the Congolese MISCA; DJIDO Saleh the deputy mayor of MBAIKI and his family were the only Muslims who remained in MBAIKI. DJIDO got killed, three days after we left for BANGUI. I got to know this because as an Imam, people come and report things to me.
96. Prior to leaving I pleaded on several occasions with Saleh DJIDO to leave MBAIKI. I told him that as a Muslim you cannot remain here, you will be killed but he did not want to leave. His wife was pregnant and he had many children. He had several trucks and vehicles. I even tried to take his wife and children but he refused. I even told him that I had never planned of leaving the city but having seen the situation, I was leaving. I told him that if I insisted to stay like him, then other people would also choose to stay and if they got killed, I would have that on my conscious so I was going to leave.
97. One Friday in the morning while I was already in BANGUI, I got a call from my [01/18] PRV who is Christian still living in MBAIKI. She told me that she had heard a rumour that the Anti-Balaka were preparing to attack DJIDO that day. I sent her extra credit to keep me informed because she had said that she had very little credit on her phone. She later called to tell me that DJIDO had been attacked. She witnessed the attack on DJIDO to the end. She could remain in MBAIKI because her

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98. [01/18] PRV told me that DJIDO was attacked by the Anti-Balaka in his house. He was in the house with all his family. An [01/18] PRV came at the back of the corrugated iron sheet fence, made a hole and led DJIDO's family through the bush and brought them to Monseigneur RHINO's compound. DJIDO tried to flee to the MISCA compound. As DJIDO was running away, the Anti-Balaka pursued him and stoned him. He fell down in front of the Compagnie de Gendarmerie and that is when they killed him. They cut him up in pieces. [01/18] PRV was telling me this as it was happening. After the killing of DJIDO, all his property was pillaged. Monseigneur RHINO was the one who protected his children. He brought them to BANGUI to the Chadian embassy and they returned to NDJAMENA. [01/18] PRV who saved DJIDO's family left MBAIKI about three years ago and went to [01/18] PRV for fear of losing his life for saving DJIDO's family.

99. I have not heard of anyone being arrested for the murder of DJIDO.

Other killings

100. The Imam of BAKANDOU called MATTAR was also killed. His head was cut off and put on a spike. They took his head and put in the middle of the road. They put a cigarette in his mouth and left it there. I was not present but the people who saw him came and told me what had happened. We had been expecting him in BANGUI but the people who came later told us that they had seen his head on a spike. As the leader of the Imams, the people who saw it came and reported to me.

Placing of Palm Leaves in front of houses

101. I saw several people cut palm leaves and stick them in the ground in front of their houses in MBAIKI. I do not know why they did it. It was only the Christians who placed the palm leaves in front of their houses. Muslims never do such things. I did not ask them why they had stuck the palm branches in front of their houses.

Sexual Gender Based Crimes

102. I did not hear about any rapes or other sexual crimes, neither on women, men, or children.

Closing Procedure

103. 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

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consent to my personal data being shared with the Victims' Participation and Reparation Section.

104. 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.
105. The investigators informed me of the protective measures that may apply during and after the investigation and/or trial proceedings.
106. 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.
107. I have given the answers to the questions of my own free will.
108. There has not been any form of coercion, duress, threat, promise or inducement which has influenced my account.
109. 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 Sango language and 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: _____

[01/18] PRV

Dated: _____

INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

1. I, **[01/18] PRV** certify that:

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

Signed:

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Dated:

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