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**No. ICC-01/14-01/18
Date: 19 November 2021**

TRIAL CHAMBER V

**Before: Judge Bertram Schmitt, Presiding Judge
Judge Péter Kovács
Judge Chang-ho Chung**

SITUATION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC II

**IN THE CASE OF
*THE PROSECUTOR v. ALFRED YEKATOM AND PATRICE-EDOUARD
NGAISSONA***

**Public
with public Annexes A and B**

**Thirteenth Decision on Victims' Participation in Trial Proceedings
(Groups A and B)**

Document to be notified in accordance with regulation 31 of the *Regulations of the Court* to:

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TRIAL CHAMBER V of the International Criminal Court, in the case of *The Prosecutor v. Alfred Yekatom and Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona*, having regard to Article 68(3) of the Rome Statute, Rules 85 and 89 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence (the ‘Rules’) and Regulation 86 of the Regulations of the Court, issues this ‘Thirteenth Decision on Victims’ Participation in Trial Proceedings (Groups A and B)’.

1. The Chamber recalls the procedural history set out in its previous decisions concerning victim participation.¹ In particular, the Chamber recalls the criteria for an applicant to qualify as a victim and the procedure established for the admission of Group A and B applications, namely that ‘barring a clear, material error in the Registry’s assessment’, it would ratify the Registry’s assessment of the applications.² The Chamber further recalls that Group A applications correspond to ‘applicants who clearly qualify as victims’ and Group B applications correspond to ‘applicants who clearly do not qualify as victims’.³
2. On 29 October 2021, the Chamber received 85 Group A victims’ applications (the ‘Group A Applications’)⁴ and 65 Group B victims’ applications (the ‘Group B Applications’).⁵ Additionally, on the same day, the Registry filed an assessment report,⁶ containing a brief description of the criteria applied in its assessment of the Group A Applications and the Group B Applications respectively, and several related observations.
3. The Registry notes, *inter alia*, that, pursuant to the Chamber’s previous decisions, it categorised under Group A applicants who (i) describe crimes

¹ See, in particular, Decision on Victims’ Participation in Trial Proceedings, 23 November 2020, ICC-01/14-01/18-738, paras 1-5 (the ‘First Decision on Victim Participation’).

² Pre-Trial Chamber II, Decision Establishing the Principles Applicable to Victims’ Applications for Participation, 5 March 2019, ICC-01/14-01/18-141 (the ‘5 March 2019 Decision’), paras 29-41.

³ 5 March 2019 Decision, ICC-01/14-01/18-141, para. 41(i).

⁴ Eleventh Registry Transmission of Group A Applications for Victim Participation in Trial Proceedings, ICC-01/14-01/18-1156 (with 85 confidential *ex parte* annexes, only available to the Registry).

⁵ Sixth Registry Transmission of Group B Applications for Victim Participation in Trial Proceedings, ICC-01/14-01/18-1155 (with 65 confidential *ex parte* annexes, only available to the Registry).

⁶ Thirteenth Registry Assessment Report on Victim Applications for Participation in Trial Proceedings, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154 (with confidential Annex 1, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154-Conf-Anx1, and confidential *ex parte* Annex 2, only available to the Registry, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154-Conf-Exp-Anx2) (the ‘Thirteenth Registry Report’).

committed by Anti-Balaka groups in areas neighbouring the borders of Cattin or Boeing, and (ii) clearly relate those crimes to the alleged Anti-Balaka attack in Bangui on 5 December 2013.⁷ Further, the Registry notes that it categorises within Group A ‘applicants who mention crimes committed by Anti-Balaka groups along the PK9-Mbaiki axis and clearly related to the Anti-Balaka’s advance through and takeover of villages along the PK9-Mbaiki axis, notably within a short distance of the villages of Sekia, Ndangala, Bimon, Kapou, Bossongo, Pissa and Mbaiki’.⁸

4. The Registry further notes that some of the Group A Applications seemingly ‘contain minor discrepancies, pertaining to, *inter alia*, the applicant’s date of birth, an inversion of the applicant’s first and last name, the applicant’s signature date or the spelling of the applicant’s name, or other minor inconsistencies [...] which appear to be the result of inadvertent errors’.⁹ The Registry submits that in assessing the applications, it took note of the instruction by Pre-Trial Chamber II (hereinafter: ‘PTC II’) that ‘a certain degree of flexibility must be shown’ and considers that these discrepancies ‘do not call into question the overall credibility of the information provided by the applicant’.¹⁰
5. The Registry also notes that certain applications ‘appear to provide an erroneous date (year) of the alleged events’ or ‘do not explicitly state specific dates’, while at the same time referring to ‘publicly known events’ or providing ‘any other sufficiently detailed contextual descriptions that date the events’.¹¹ In these cases, the Registry submits that it applied the Chamber’s instruction to assess

⁷ Thirteenth Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154, para. 21 *referring to, inter alia*, First Decision on Victim Participation, ICC-01/14-01/18-738, paras 27-33.

⁸ Thirteenth Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154, para. 21 *referring to* Eleventh Decision on Victims’ Participation in Trial Proceedings (Group C), 8 September 2021, ICC-01/14-01/18-1104, paras 36, 39.

⁹ Thirteenth Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154, para. 18.

¹⁰ Thirteenth Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154, para. 18 *referring to* 5 March 2019 Decision, ICC-01/14-01/18-141, para. 34.

¹¹ Thirteenth Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154, para. 22.

applications ‘holistically by assessing their internal coherence and the overall context of the alleged acts’.¹²

6. With regard to the Group B Applications, the Registry notes that, in conducting its *prima facie* assessment, it concluded that these applicants ‘clearly do not qualify as victims’ in the case because the harm alleged has resulted from events falling outside the temporal and/or geographic parameters of the case.¹³
7. The Chamber recalls the applicable law set out in its ‘Decision on Victims’ Participation in Trial Proceedings’.¹⁴
8. The Group A Applications were individually assessed by the Registry, which determined that the applicants meet, on a *prima facie* basis, the requirements of Rule 85(a) of the Rules for the granting of victim status.¹⁵ The Group B Applications were also individually assessed by the Registry, which determined that, on a *prima facie* basis, the applicants clearly do not qualify as victims.¹⁶
9. The Chamber has not identified any clear, material error in the Registry’s assessment and therefore authorises the participation as victims of the 85 applicants whose applications were transmitted under Group A, and rejects the 65 applicants whose applications were transmitted under Group B.

FOR THESE REASONS, THE CHAMBER HEREBY

ADMITS the 85 applicants whose applications were transmitted under Group A, listed in Annex A to the present decision, as participating victims for the purpose of the trial proceedings; and

¹² Thirteenth Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154, para. 22 *referring to* an email from the Chamber to the Registry, 30 July 2020, at 17:29.

¹³ Thirteenth Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154, para. 25 *referring to* First Decision on Victim Participation, ICC-01/14-01/18-738, para. 38. *See in detail* Annex 2 to the Thirteenth Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154-Conf-Exp-Anx2.

¹⁴ First Decision on Victim Participation, ICC-01/14-01/18-738, paras 11-12.

¹⁵ *See* Thirteenth Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154, para. 17.

¹⁶ *See* Thirteenth Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-1154, para. 25.

REJECTS the 65 applicants whose applications were transmitted under Group B, listed in Annex B to the present decision, as participating victims for the purpose of the trial proceedings.

Done in both English and French, the English version being authoritative.



Judge Péter Kovács



Judge Bertram Schmitt

Presiding Judge



Judge Chang-ho Chung

Dated 19 November 2021

At The Hague, The Netherlands