

Trial Hearing
WITNESS: CAR-D29-P-3014

(Open Session)

ICC-01/14-01/18

- 1 International Criminal Court
- 2 Trial Chamber V
- 3 Situation: Central African Republic II
- 4 In the case of The Prosecutor v. Alfred Rombhot Yekatom and
- 5 Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona - ICC-01/14-01/18
- 6 Presiding Judge Bertram Schmitt, Judge Péter Kovács and
- 7 Judge Chang-ho Chung
- 8 Trial Hearing - Courtroom 1
- 9 Monday, 11 March 2024
- 10 (The hearing starts in open session at 9.31 a.m.)
- 11 THE COURT USHER: [9:31:30] All rise.
- 12 The International Criminal Court is now in session.
- 13 Please be seated.
- 14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:31:54] Good morning, everyone.
- 15 Court officer, please call the case.
- 16 THE COURT OFFICER: [9:31:59] Good morning, Madam President, your Honours.
- 17 The situation in the Central African Republic II, in the case of The Prosecutor versus
- 18 Alfred Yekatom and Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona, case reference ICC-01/14-01/18.
- 19 And for the record, we are in open session.
- 20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:32:16] Thank you very much.
- 21 I ask for the appearance of the parties, Mr Vanderpuye, first.
- 22 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:32:24] Thank you, Mr President. Good morning, to you.
- 23 Good morning, your Honours. Good morning, everyone.
- 24 Good morning, Mr Witness.
- 25 Today the Prosecution is represented by Irina Galupa, Yassin Mostfa and myself,

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1 Kweku Vanderpuye.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:32:35] Thank you.

3 Ms Massidda next.

4 MS MASSIDDA: [9:32:37] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours. For

5 the victims of the other crimes appearing today, Mr Alexis Lariviere,

6 Ms Evelyne Ombeni and myself, Paolina Massidda.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:32:49] Thank you.

8 Mr Suprun.

9 MR SUPRUN: [9:32:52] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours.

10 The former child soldiers are represented by myself, Dmytro Suprun. Thank you.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:32:57] I turn to the Defence of Mr Yekatom,

12 Ms Dimitri first.

13 MS DIMITRI: [9:33:01] Good morning, Mr President. Good morning,

14 your Honours. Good morning, everyone.

15 Mr Yekatom is present in the courtroom this morning, he's represented by

16 Mr Gyo Suzuki, Ms Laurence Hortas-Laberge, Mr Lionel Messi Tikpa,

17 Ms Anta Guissé, Ms Maider Cordova and myself, Mylène Dimitri.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:33:22] Thank you.

19 And Mr Knoops.

20 MR KNOOPS: [9:33:24] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours. Good

21 morning, everyone in the courtroom.

22 The Defence team of Mr Ngaïssona appears today before the Chamber with

23 Mr Mélissa Beaulieu, Mathis Goffe, Kenza Ayadi, and Mr Ngaïssona is also here.

24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:33:36] Thank you.

25 And we have not a new witness, we have a witness that has already appeared in

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1 the courtroom a couple of weeks ago.

2 Good morning, Mr Soussou. Do you hear and understand me well?

3 WITNESS: CAR-D29-P-3014 (On former oath)

4 (The witness speaks Sango)

5 (The witness gives evidence via video link)

6 THE WITNESS: [9:33:59](Interpretation) Good morning, your Honour. I can hear
7 and understand you well.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:05] Mr Soussou, first of all, our apologies for
9 the delay. Unforeseen things can happen during the course of criminal and trial
10 proceedings, so we appreciate it a lot that you are still willing to continue and that
11 you came to the extended courtroom, so to speak, at the video-link location. We
12 thank you for that.

13 Mr Soussou, let me remind you that you are still under oath, like you have taken
14 the solemn undertaking a couple of weeks ago, so you still have to tell us the truth,
15 the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

16 You understand that, Mr Soussou?

17 THE WITNESS: [9:34:58](Interpretation) Your Honour, I have sworn the oath. I
18 understand that I have to tell the truth.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:35:05] Thank you very much.

20 If I recall it correctly, Mr Suzuki had finished his examination.

21 Mr Knoops, I'm not sure if the Defence of Mr Ngaïssona wanted to question
22 the witness. I don't think so, but I just want to make sure.

23 MR KNOOPS: [9:35:23] Mr President, you are right, in this stage we have no further
24 questions. But --

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:35:28] Yeah.

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1 MR KNOOPS: [9:35:29] -- we have indicated that we might --

2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:35:31] Yeah, absolutely.

3 MR KNOOPS: [9:35:32] -- re-examine (Overlapping speakers)

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:35:34] Yeah, yeah, yeah, I recall that now.

5 Then I give the floor to Mr Vanderpuye from the Prosecution.

6 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:35:39] Just before I start, Mr President, first, I will ask

7 the Court's permission to remain sitting, because it is a video link witness. Second,

8 in response to Mr Knoops' remark concerning the examination of the Ngaïssona

9 defence, to the extent that they haven't questioned the witness, I don't believe so that

10 there would be, normatively an opportunity for re-examining a witness that you have

11 not examined in the first place, so to speak.

12 And so I think if the Ngaïssona Defence does wish to question the witness, they have

13 been in possession of the Prosecution's list of exhibits for over a month and they have

14 a pretty good idea of where the Prosecution is going and on that basis I would invite

15 Mr Knoops to do so ahead of time, but just for the Chamber's -- just so that

16 the Chamber knows what our position is, it's that we would oppose re-examination

17 under those circumstances because it's effectively a rebuttal.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:36:42] Okay. I think we don't -- Mr Knoops, you

19 don't have questions at the moment and the situation has not arisen yet, so I have

20 learned, you know, that I am not a native speaker, English native speaker, that there

21 is an expression, when we reach this bridge, Mr Vanderpuye, then we ponder if we

22 cross it or not. So, please, speak.

23 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:37:04] Thank you very much, Mr President. Thank you.

24 QUESTIONED BY MR VANDERPUYE:

25 Q. [9:37:08] Good morning, Mr Soussou.

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1 It's been some time since I last saw you, so let me re-introduce myself. My name is
2 Kweku Vanderpuye. I'm with the office of the Prosecutor and I'll be posing some
3 questions to you in relation to your previous testimony, I believe at the end of January.
4 I hope to be about maybe an hour or a little bit more than that, maybe two, depending
5 on how things go, okay?

6 A. [9:37:57] Yes. That's agreeable to me.

7 Q. [9:38:02] Thank you. I hope you're feeling well.

8 Let me start out by asking you a few questions about contacts you may have had with
9 individuals since you testified last before the Chamber. Have you been in contact
10 with anyone with respect to your testimony or the subject matter of your testimony
11 since you were here last?

12 A. [9:38:44] Mr President, I haven't discussed anything concerning my testimony.

13 Q. [9:38:54] Has anyone approached you regarding your testimony, your
14 appearance in this case since the last time you were here?

15 A. [9:39:27] I haven't been approached.

16 Q. [9:39:28] Okay. Let me ask you a few questions about your prior contact with
17 the Defence in this case. Do you recall when it was you first met with the Defence of
18 Mr Yekatom, or members of the Defence team?

19 A. [9:40:00] Your Honour, I met them in 2022. I don't remember the exact date,
20 month and day.

21 Q. [9:40:14] Do you remember how many times you met with the Defence before
22 providing a statement in relation to these events in September of 2022?

23 A. [9:40:47] I met them in 2022, 2023 and 2024.

24 Q. [9:41:02] Did you meet them in regard to the statement that we have here in
25 evidence which you signed on September 14, 2022? Did you meet them regarding

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1 that statement in 2023 and 2024?

2 A. [9:41:33] Yes.

3 Mr President, yes, indeed we discussed this in 2022, 2023, until the signature of
4 the document in 2023 and 2024.

5 Q. [9:41:55] Okay. Well, I have a document here. It is CAR-D29-0009-0355.

6 I believe it's already in evidence and it's signed on 14 September 2022. Do you recall
7 signing the document on that date, or did you sign it after that?

8 A. [9:42:37] Mr President, I signed the document after or at the time of the end of
9 the interviews.

10 Q. [9:42:43] Okay, all right.

11 Do you recall who you met with on the Defence team of Mr Yekatom in relation to
12 the statement that you gave either in 2022 or 2023 or 2024, aside from Mr Tiangaye,
13 which is indicated in your statement?

14 A. [9:43:25] Mr President, I can't remember the names of the people who I spoke to.
15 But I remember having met with a young lady and a lawyer. We all worked
16 together as a group, not individually. And after that interview I signed all the
17 documents before leaving.

18 Q. [9:43:56] Okay. Let me get to the substance of some of the questions I want to
19 ask you. Last time you were here you testified that you were of an influential family
20 in Boda; is that correct?

21 A. [9:44:32] Mr President, indeed, I am the father of a large family and I have 12
22 children -- 20, I have 20 children.

23 THE INTERPRETER: [9:44:50] Corrects the interpreter.

24 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:44:53] Okay.

25 Q. [9:44:55] You indicated that during the events in Boda, at least when they broke

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1 out in early 2014, you were in Bangui; is that right?

2 A. [9:45:17] Mr President, indeed, I was in Bangui.

3 Q. [9:45:22] How long had you been in Bangui before the events in Boda took place
4 in late January? How long before then had you been in Bangui?

5 A. [9:45:50] Mr President, I don't remember the period. But I came to Bangui to
6 follow treatment for my health, because I suffer from cardiovascular problems, and so
7 I came to Bangui for my health check, but I don't remember the exact period or
8 the date.

9 Q. [9:46:21] Do you know if it was before or after the 5 December attack on Bangui
10 by the Anti-Balaka 2013?

11 A. [9:46:51] Mr President, I haven't understood the question properly.

12 Q. [9:47:00] My question is: Did you arrive in Bangui from Boda before or after
13 the 5 December 2013 attack on Bangui?

14 A. [9:47:28] Mr President, I arrived well before, well before the events that occurred
15 in that locality.

16 Q. [9:47:41] All right. So am I right to say that you were present in Bangui when
17 the Anti-Balaka attacked on 5 December 2013? Do I understand you correctly?

18 A. [9:48:06] When I arrived in Bangui, as I said, I came to Bangui for health reasons,
19 and the events occurred towards PK12. We heard people speak about it. We didn't
20 know what was happening. As for myself, I was living in the Fatima neighbourhood.
21 It was difficult for me to have a clear idea on what was happening with regards to
22 these events. We didn't know what was happening clearly, in fact.

23 Q. [9:48:50] Did you come to learn that the Anti-Balaka had attacked Bangui on
24 5 December 2013 at a later point?

25 A. [9:49:17] Mr President, I didn't really follow the situation in the town of Bangui

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1 at the time. But I can speak to you about events in Boda. But where it concerns

2 Bangui, I have no clear idea about that.

3 Q. [9:49:41] All right. Well, we'll talk about the events in Boda.

4 At the time that you went to Bangui for medical treatment, did you hold any position
5 in Boda, official or unofficial?

6 A. [9:50:22] Mr President, I no longer had an official post at the time that
7 the incidents. You have to know that I was a deputy in Boda and, afterwards, I
8 finished with these activities in 2003. And in 2004, I became mayor and that was for
9 a time, but there were political problems, but because I wasn't in the KNK I was
10 removed from my functions and I started to work on my fields in Boda.

11 Q. [9:51:11] While you were in Bangui, and this is before and after the events in
12 Boda began to take place, were you in contact with notables and authorities in Boda?

13 A. [9:51:43] Mr President, I had no contact with the authorities of Boda. I was in
14 Bangui to get treatment. I was just busy with my health problems. And if I called, I
15 would just call the members of my family. I had no contact with the Boda
16 authorities.

17 Q. [9:52:16] Do you know somebody by the name of Maxime Mbondjo?

18 A. [9:52:40] Your Honour, I know Maxime Mbondjo, this was our deputy.

19 Q. [9:52:53] Was he a deputy of or from Boda at the time that you were in Bangui?

20 A. [9:53:16] Yes, Mr President. When I was in Bangui, he was still a deputy or
21 member of parliament and a native of Boda. He built a house in Boda.

22 Q. [9:53:35] Were you in contact with Mr Mbondjo while you were in Bangui,
23 Mr Soussou?

24 A. [9:53:53] Mr President, I wasn't in contact with him. I was just dealing with my
25 health problems. I didn't have time to speak to him.

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1 Q. [9:54:10] All right. So you didn't call him then. Or do you mean you didn't
2 see him?

3 A. [9:54:26] Mr President, I didn't see him, I didn't even call him.

4 Q. [9:54:38] Did you call your son?

5 A. [9:54:58] Where it concerns the children, I have several. But when I was in
6 Bangui, I would call members of my family to tell them about how my health was
7 developing, and I would call them from time to time.

8 Q. [9:55:18] Thank you for clarifying that. I was referring to your son
9 Habib Soussou. You called him, didn't you, during the period of time that you were
10 in Bangui before and after the events in Boda took place in 2014; right?

11 A. [9:55:57] I don't know. You want to know whether I called him when I was in
12 Boda or Bangui. I haven't understood the question, I'm afraid.

13 Q. [9:56:07] When you were in Bangui, did you call your son, Habib Soussou, in
14 2014?

15 A. [9:56:26] No. When he was in Boda, I didn't call him. But in Bangui I saw him
16 before the events of Boda and he was at my house, at my home. I came to meet him
17 at my home before he left for Boda.

18 Q. [9:56:54] Mr Soussou, do you remember the telephone numbers that you used
19 back in 2014 and 2015? And if you don't want to say it publicly, just let me know
20 and I'll ask the Presiding Judging if we can go into private session.
21 First, do you remember the numbers, without saying what they are?

22 A. [9:57:25] Mr President, where it concerns my telephone number, you want to
23 know something about it?

24 Q. [9:57:37] I want to know if you remember the telephone numbers you used in
25 that period?

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1 A. [9:57:54] No, I don't remember.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:58:02] You can perhaps put it to the witness, we
3 can do that, because this is -- even if the witness under -- wants it or not, this is a
4 private thing, I think, we could go shortly to private session and you can put the
5 number to the witness and ask him if this jogs his memory.

6 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:58:21] Thank you, Mr President.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:58:23] Very shortly, private session.

8 (Private session at 9.58 a.m.)

9 THE COURT OFFICER: [9:58:37] We are in private session, Mr President.

10 THE WITNESS: [9:58:40](Overlapping speakers)

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:58:42] Just wait a second, the Presiding Judging
12 speaking. Wait a second.

13 Mr Vanderpuye puts a telephone number to you and will ask you if you recall it or if
14 this jogs your memory.

15 Please, Mr Vanderpuye.

16 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:58:56] Thanks, Mr President.

17 Q. [9:59:02] Mr Soussou, the number that I have here is (Redacted). Does that jog
18 your memory?

19 A. [9:59:29] Yes. That's my telephone number.

20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:59:36] Can we go back to open session, or do you
21 want --

22 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:59:39] I have another one.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:59:40] Yes. Ah, okay, yeah, then, of course.

24 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:59:44]

25 Q. [9:59:46] I have another number here. (Redacted).

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1 A. [10:00:14] Your Honour, you know, it's quite a while ago now and I've forgotten.

2 I do have issues with my memory and I can't recollect everything. Your Honour, I

3 have forgotten the number. I can't really remember it. And my memory doesn't

4 really serve me correctly to remember all these numbers.

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:00:38] Well, if I may say so, after all these years,

6 well, it's remarkable that you recognised at least one of the numbers, so it's -- let's -- it

7 has nothing to do with age, if I may -- may tell you, Mr Witness, this happens to

8 everyone. And, as I said, it's even remarkable that you remember one number from

9 10 years ago.

10 We go back to open session.

11 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:01:03] There's a document I'd like to show him.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:01:06] No, then we stay in private session, and if

13 you think the document should be shown in private session, then we do that now.

14 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:01:12] Yeah, it's just this page, actually, Mr President.

15 Q. So it's tab 18, CAR-OTP-2101-2916. And I want to show you page 2918.

16 A. [10:01:46] Mr President, I can't really see the document very well up on

17 the screen. I am long-sighted. Were you to have any questions, please put it to me

18 and I'll try to answer.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:02:05] Well, can't we -- long-sighted, what does

20 that mean? We have to enlarge it or ...

21 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:02:15] It's not that important, but (Overlapping speakers)

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:02:18] Well, I ask -- I ask someone. You also

23 have -- you also would have to put your glasses on, so I'm asking the right person.

24 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:02:25] I do, indeed, Mr President. I do.

25 I will --

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:02:29] But this is the number you put to the
2 witness, isn't it?

3 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:02:31] Yes.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:02:33] Well, then -- then it's -- I think it's okay.

5 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:02:35] I will just contextualise it, and then (Overlapping
6 speakers)

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:02:39] Yeah. Yeah, yeah. No, I understand,
8 but this is -- if it is the same number it's still -- it's a further document, so to speak, to
9 confirm that.

10 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:02:44] Indeed it is, and it refers to a meeting from 30
11 August 2014 with respect to the situation in Boda.

12 Q. [10:02:53] Let me just show you the first page, which is 2916.

13 I think you can see your name quite clearly, hopefully, at item number 1, and it refers
14 to the meeting that was held in Bangui, Saturday, 30 August 2014 at 10.30, at the
15 home of Jonas Guezewane.

16 You remember that meeting, don't you?

17 A. [10:03:48] Mr President, I remember that meeting only too well. I was in
18 attendance and I do recall.

19 Q. [10:03:58] And the -- if we can go down the page a little bit, what it says here is
20 that you transmitted the message to the population, to the non-Muslim population of
21 Boda, reads as follows: (Interpretation) "Delocalisation of all Muslims from Boda
22 which is non-negotiable." End of quote.

23 (Speaks English) You remember saying that too, right?

24 A. [10:04:43] Mr President, I had come to transmit the will of the population of
25 Boda, because there was the representative of the prime minister present, saying what

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1 the population was saying and transmitting those thoughts, so that this be
2 transmitted to the prime minister and a solution be found for peace to be restored in
3 Boda. And that is why we made recommendations and we asked for the authority
4 of the state to return to the locality. The gendarmerie needed to come back.
5 The army needed to come back so that peace could be restored in Boda. That's what
6 we said at the time. We also said that it would be better to arrest and put in
7 detention all those people who had created turmoil in Boda and allow the NGOs to
8 come into Boda to support the population. Many people had sought refuge out in
9 the bush because their houses had been burned down and nobody was able to go and
10 help them. We asked for the NGOs to be able to come and help those people.
11 Women were giving birth out in the bush and those women were giving birth to
12 many still -- stillbirths and the government had favourably responded to these
13 recommendations because Madam Konzi, the representative, drew up a report that
14 she showed to the prime minister and subsequent to that report the head of state
15 travelled to that locality.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:06:37] Well, actually the (Overlapping speakers)

17 THE WITNESS: [10:06:48](Interpretation) It's not what I thought. All I did was
18 transmit the wishes of the population of the locality. I was in Bangui. I took part in
19 that meeting in order to transmit what the population in Boda were saying, so that
20 the authorities would know what people were thinking in the locality and for
21 a solution to be found.

22 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:07:16] That's -- that's helpful.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:07:18] I think we could have discussed this in
24 open session, frankly speaking.

25 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:07:22] We could have. I was going to go through the list

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1 of names on here, but I don't need to, I can do that in open session, so that's fine.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:07:30] I think -- I think, actually, you can do that
3 in open session and you see the witness, because of his eyesight has difficulties
4 reading, please put to the witness and draw it out of the document what you want to
5 put to him.

6 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:07:40] I'll do that, Mr President.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:07:42] Yeah.

8 We go to open session.

9 (Open session at 10.08 a.m.)

10 THE COURT OFFICER: [10:08:01] We are back in open session.

11 THE WITNESS: [10:08:04](Interpretation) Mr President.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:08:13] I think you can simply continue,
13 Mr Vanderpuye.

14 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:08:19] Yes.

15 Q. [10:08:20] Mr Soussou, I believe you referred to this meeting in your earlier
16 testimony in January. I just wanted to confirm with you, you mentioned that
17 a certain Paulette Ouilidane was there, Regina Konzi was there, representative of
18 the *primature* was there, you were there, it was at the home of Jonas Guezewane.

19 These are all individuals that were present at that meeting; is that right?

20 A. [10:09:10] Mr President, Guezewane was present, myself, Soussou, was present,
21 Madam Ouilidane was present. I do not really know the other people who were in
22 attendance. There was also a representative of an NGO. There was also
23 a participant whom I do not know very well and don't really recall very well either.
24 Mr President, was what important to us was the presence of the representative of
25 the prime minister to whom we made recommendations for the minutes of

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1 the meeting.

2 Q. [10:10:00] Okay, Mr Soussou. I had asked you earlier about your contacts with
3 Maxime Mbondjo, who you said you didn't call while you were in Bangui in 2014.
4 The telephone number that I showed you just a moment ago, appears to have been in
5 contact with Mr Mbondjo for an extensive period of time: February 2014, March, April,
6 May, June, July, August, September, October, November, and December. Just in
7 2014. In contact with him from May 2013 -- I'm sorry, I have that backwards.
8 May 2013, June 2013, July 2013, August 2013, September 2013, November 2013.
9 Now, I could show you these documents but I'm going to ask you once again, were
10 you in contact with Maxime Mbondjo while you were in Bangui in 2014 in regard to
11 the events in Boda?

12 A. [10:12:21] Mr President, we are members of an association, a solidarity
13 association of the inhabitants of Boda. At that moment in time we would
14 communicate amongst ourselves about what was going on in Boda that was in
15 the context of our association, namely about solidarity. If there was any information
16 to be shared, we would. If I haven't answered your question correctly, maybe it is
17 because I did not grasp the thrust of the question. But if we're talking here about
18 exchange or discussions, we would talk. When the bishop called us, he would call
19 us or did call us over the telephone in order to bring us together in Mbaïki and come
20 together and meet the head of the state, Madam Catherine Samba-Panza, and discuss
21 what was going on in the locality and see what could be done.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:13:26] No, no, I think this answers the question.

23 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:13:31] Yes.

24 Q. [10:13:32] How often would you say you were in contact with Mr Mbondjo just
25 before the Boda attack or the Boda events in late January 2014? Was it a daily basis,

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1 did you call him once a week? Can you estimate for us.

2 A. [10:14:11] Mr President, he was our MP. If we had concerns to raise, we would
3 raise them with him. And if we had any difficulties we would talk to him in order
4 for him to undertake matters for solutions to be found. He was our MP and, of
5 course, it was normal for us to telephone him. I can't be in a position to know how
6 many times he and I telephoned each other, but I would call him if there were any
7 concerns in Boda. I myself was an MP and maybe some of the things that I had
8 started, well, I would call him in order to hand it over to him regarding, for example,
9 to schools, to elections, you know, so I would call him and talk to him about those
10 issues.

11 Q. [10:15:14] All right. Now that we've clarified your contact with
12 Maxime Mbondjo, let me come back to your contact with your son Habib Soussou. I
13 think you said, and you'll correct me if I am wrong, that you were not in contact with
14 him in 2014 while you were in Bangui?

15 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:15:35] Mr Vanderpuye, could we -- I think
16 you are heading at telephone contacts.

17 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:15:41] I am.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:15:41] So there might be -- you know, if you
19 make it clear in your -- in your question already that we are not talking about
20 meet -- you know we have to sometimes this -- we are not talking about personal
21 meetings, you see whatever, but telephone contacts would perhaps assist the witness.

22 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:15:59] Thank you, Mr President.

23 Q. [10:16:01] Yes, indeed, Mr Witness, we're talking about telephone contacts
24 involving the telephone number that I just showed you in the document concerning
25 the meeting on 30 August?

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:16:21] Well, I'm always in favour of continuing,
2 but there is a, let's say, an annoying, an annoying background voice. If we could
3 solve that, we could at least try to solve it, otherwise we continue.

4 Well, the court officer is working on it, but I think we can -- you can try to figure out
5 with the witness if he understood the question, then he can answer the question.

6 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:16:55]

7 Q. [10:16:55] Mr Witness, did you understand my question?

8 A. [10:17:10] Mr President, I didn't understand the question.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:17:13] I think - the Presiding Judging
10 speaking - the Prosecutor wants to know if you were in telephone contact with your
11 son in 2014, if you recall it.

12 THE WITNESS: [10:17:45](Interpretation) Mr President, well, he is my son, so I need
13 to make telephone calls in order to see how he is. But in the year 2014, when he
14 went to Boda, I did not have any telephone contact with him.

15 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:18:14]

16 Q. [10:18:14] Are you sure about that, sir?

17 A. [10:18:31] Mr President, I told you that he went to Boda and he did not contact
18 me. And even I, when I was in Bangui, did not have any telephone contact with
19 him.

20 Q. [10:18:52] When did you go back to Boda in 2014? When did you leave Bangui
21 and return to Boda, if you can remember?

22 A. [10:19:20] Mr President, I do not remember the date. But I didn't go to Boda
23 immediately after the events. There was the conflict in Boda, and Monseigneur Rino
24 convened all the inhabitants of Boda who were in the Solidarity 3B association. So
25 a meeting was convened and he was conscious of the situation. He wanted -- there

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1 was me, Willybiro-Sako, *Guezewane, Madam Ouilidane. We went to Mbaïki and
2 we had a meeting with the Congolese contingent. There was also the mayor of
3 Mbaïki, the préfet of Lobaye. A meeting was held, subsequent to which we wrote
4 and asked the president of the Republic, because the situation was preoccupying.
5 We asked for a meeting with her and, 48 hours later, Madam Samba-Panza, who was
6 president of the transitional government at the time, met with us.
7 We had a meeting with her and we asked the president to travel. Otherwise,
8 the situation was not going to stabilise. She accepted, and a week later we were
9 called and we -- there was a schedule. We were escorted by the Sangaris and other
10 authorities and the prime minister at the time, Kamoun, there was a -- a working plan
11 that was -- and travel arrangements were made for us. We were escorted by at least
12 40 gendarmes, because, for us, it was important to restore the authority of the state.
13 So, we deployed 40 gendarmes and policemen in order to support the Sangaris
14 detachment, because the population that no longer had any shelter had sought refuge
15 in the bush and it was important for us to meet with them. We therefore asked
16 the chiefs to have them come, because the president was to come to that place in order
17 to ascertain what the real situation was and find a solution.
18 So in 2015, the transitional head of state travelled to that location and we, well, before
19 that the préfet of Lobaye and myself went there first. We went by the Sangaris,
20 registered ourselves. We also saw the Congolese contingent. We also saw
21 the -- went to see the Anti-Balaka group. We told them that the head of state was
22 coming to see them and that they should be prepared. We went to see the Muslims
23 in order to raise their awareness, and Madam Samba-Panza went to Boda. We were
24 all present and there was a large-scale awareness-raising meeting for peace to be
25 restored in Boda.

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1 After the meeting, she received the representatives of all entities, that is to say, youth,
2 the Anti-Balaka, the representatives from the Muslim community, the representatives
3 of the women's groups, the pastors, the military authorities, were all received. And
4 then, lastly, we were received, we who were part of the precursor mission. She
5 received us, and then she left.

6 She left, and then the next day, because we were all tired, we went back to Bangui. I
7 also went back to Bangui. I did not remain in Boda. When we arrived in Boda, I
8 asked the préfet, I said, "I have a large family. I have two large families in both
9 communities, may it be in the Christian or the Muslim community." And I said to
10 the préfet that I wanted to go into the Muslim neighbourhood because at that moment
11 in time there was a red line and the two communities could not move beyond that
12 line. So the préfet said to me that because I was insisting to see my sister and my
13 nephews, he granted me authorisation.

14 I went there, the préfet came with me, we met the mayor and the mayor at the time
15 was a Muslim. We met with him. And we wondered to ourselves how such
16 a situation could happen. There were many people. He said that I could go and
17 see my elder sister.

18 Well before this conflict, the amount of Muslims in Boda was estimated at 3,000, but
19 with the displaced population, with the conflict, there are at least 6,000 displaced
20 Muslims. So I took my courage in both hands, I want to see my elder sister, we
21 embraced and I told her to keep her courage, to remain courageous. I said that we
22 had come to raise awareness and to restore peace in Boda. And well before holding
23 that meeting --

24 THE INTERPRETER: [10:26:04] The witness trails off.

25 THE WITNESS: [10:26:06](Interpretation) So everything that we had done was to

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1 restore peace in Boda and, to that end, I really committed myself. That is the answer

2 that I can provide to the question that you put to me, Mr President.

3 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:26:23]

4 Q. [10:26:23] All right, Mr Soussou.

5 Aside from Mr Mbondjo in Boda, you were in contact with other members of

6 the Anti-Balaka coordination in that town; isn't that right?

7 A. [10:27:02] Mr President, at that moment in time there were no Anti-Balakas.

8 The Anti-Balaka only came after the conflict with war. How did they come? Well,

9 when the conflict started in Boda, I was not there. I was absent. I heard that some

10 Balaka had come from Bossangoa.

11 Q. [10:27:31] Sir, that's not my question. Sir, my question was whether you were

12 in contact with members of the coordination of Anti-Balaka in Boda in 2014, and you

13 were; isn't that right? Telephone contact, just to be clear.

14 A. [10:28:01] Mr President, I did not have any contact with them.

15 Q. [10:28:08] Do you know somebody by the name of Regis Moraise Sende?

16 A. [10:28:37] Mr President, these are young people from Boda who subsequently

17 went into the army. I know them.

18 Q. [10:28:52] You know somebody by the name of Roddy Mbosse?

19 A. [10:29:11] Yes, these are all young people from Boda. I know them.

20 Q. [10:29:18] And you were in contact with them in 2014, early in the year and later

21 in the year; isn't that right?

22 A. [10:29:44] In Boda, I did not have any contact with them.

23 Q. [10:30:00] Let me show you a document.

24 This is at tab 10 -- let me make sure I have got that right -- yeah, tab 10,

25 CAR-OTP-2003-1076, and we'll need to go to page 1140. 1140. And it can be

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1 broadcast. It's not confidential.

2 What I'm showing you now is a document that's entitled (Interpretation) "Mission

3 order".

4 (Speaks English) I think you can see your son's name there, Habib Soussou, corporal

5 FACA.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:30:40] Can we enlarge it a bit for the witness.

7 Yeah, thank you. That's nice.

8 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:30:48]

9 Q. [10:30:48] This is a mission order that is dated 11 April 2014. It is issued by
10 the coordinator general, Ngaïssona.

11 If we go to the next page you can see the elements that are assigned to that mission.

12 And among them you can see several names of people that I assume you know.

13 First is your son, that's clear.

14 Roddy Mbosse is somebody who I just mentioned to you and I indicated to you or
15 asked you, rather, whether you were in contact with him in 2014.

16 A. [10:31:30] (No interpretation)

17 Q. [10:31:39] Aimé Dobo is on this list, Moraise Sendé is on this list, Alain Dobo is
18 on this list, Isao Temoungue is on this list. You recognise all these names, sir?

19 A. [10:32:13] (No interpretation)

20 THE INTERPRETER: [10:32:15] The English booth didn't get any interpretation from
21 the Sango booth.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:32:20] Mr Witness, we have had a problem with
23 the interpretation, it's not your fault, could you be so kind to repeat your last answer.

24 And we need the interpretation, please.

25 THE INTERPRETER: [10:32:39] The witness said that they were all from Boda.

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- 1 THE WITNESS: [10:32:47](Interpretation) I didn't understand your question,
2 Mr President.
- 3 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:32:56]
- 4 Q. [10:32:56] The question, sir, was whether you were in contact with these
5 individuals?
- 6 A. [10:33:18] Your Honour, I wasn't in contact with them. When they were in
7 Boda, I was in Bangui. When they arrived in Boda, there wasn't contact. I wasn't in
8 contact with them. And with regards to my son, it was when I arrived that I found
9 out about this document and saw it, according to which he was the coordinator of
10 the Anti-Balaka. It was the lawyers who showed this document to me. I didn't
11 contact them when they were in Boda, I was in Bangui.
- 12 Q. [10:33:52] What lawyer showed you this document, sir? And when?
- 13 A. [10:34:20] The day that I found out that my son had gone to the Anti-Balaka was
14 when I met the person who told me that my son was in the Anti-Balaka. I thought
15 that he was in Boda in the FACA. But it was when I met them that they gave me this
16 information. I didn't have this information before.
- 17 Q. [10:34:45] You haven't answered my question. When was this document
18 shown to you and by whom?
- 19 A. [10:35:06] Mr President, no document was shown to me, but they told me that
20 Habib Soussou was the coordinator of the Anti-Balaka. That Habib Soussou was
21 the coordinator of the Anti-Balaka. No document was presented to me. It was
22 when they called me, when they met me that they gave this information to me that
23 Habib Soussou was in the Anti-Balaka in Boda.
- 24 Q. [10:35:39] Let me just make sure I understand what you are saying.
25 Are you saying that when you met with the Defence of Mr Yekatom over there in

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1 2022 is when you found out that your son was a coordinator in the Anti-Balaka? Is
2 that what you're saying, Mr Soussou?

3 A. [10:36:06] That's correct, Mr President. It wasn't in 2022, it was in 2023. I
4 found that out in 2023, to be precise.

5 Q. [10:36:24] Okay. So when you went to Boda in 2014 -- as you can see, this
6 document is dated 11 April 2014. When you went in September -- or, rather, August
7 or September of 2014, you didn't know then that your own son was a commander or
8 a coordinator in Boda; is that what you want this Chamber to believe?

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:36:54] Mr Vanderpuye, let me -- Mr Vanderpuye,
10 same question, another tone, yeah.

11 MR SUZUKI: [10:37:04] Also, Mr President, if I may, the meeting referred to in
12 the -- in the document that my friend showed the witness earlier, that meeting
13 occurred in Bangui, so.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:37:15] Yeah. Yeah.
15 But, Mr -- yeah, that's correct.

16 Mr Vanderpuye, you can put the question in another tone to the witness
17 (Overlapping speakers)

18 THE WITNESS: [10:37:29](No interpretation)

19 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:37:32]

20 Q. [10:37:32] Mr Soussou, I just want to understand something: Between 2014 and
21 2023, when you spoke to the Yekatom Defence, is it your testimony that you did not
22 know that your son was involved with, never mind his position, involved with
23 the Anti-Balaka? Is that your -- is that what we should understand?

24 A. [10:38:18] Mr President, I did not know. When my son went to Boda, he was
25 not coordinator of the Anti-Balaka. I didn't know. It was when the lawyers called

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1 me, they delivered this information to me and it was at that time that I learned of this.

2 But when he was in Boda, I didn't know. I thought he was there as a FACA. But to

3 say that he was there as coordinator of the Anti-Balaka, I didn't have this information.

4 Q. [10:38:58] Okay. I had asked you about talking to other members of the Boda

5 Anti-Balaka coordination, so I'll be more specific, if I can. And I would put it to you

6 that you were in contact with Moraise Sendé in September of 2014, on the 15th and

7 24th, and in February 2014. Shortly after the events took place in Boda, you were in

8 contact with Roddy Mbosse, who you can see here under number 2. Do you deny

9 that?

10 A. [10:40:08] Mr President, I never contacted them. When they were in Boda, I

11 never contacted them. I didn't even meet them in Boda.

12 Q. [10:40:25] Were you in contact with Mr Yekatom in 2014?

13 A. [10:40:45] Mr President, I don't know Yekatom.

14 Q. [10:40:49] That wasn't my question.

15 A. [10:40:52] I've never seen him, I've never said hello to him.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:40:58] That answers the question,

17 Mr Vanderpuye.

18 MR VANDERPUYE:

19 Q. [10:41:04] So you have no explanation for why Roddy Mbosse's telephone

20 number appears in contact with your telephone number, or why Moraise Sendé's

21 telephone number appears in contact with your telephone number in 2014; is that

22 right? You've no explanation for that?

23 A. [10:41:39] I never called Mbosse. Otherwise, I would confirm that these people

24 are natives of Boda and I know them. But to say that I called them, that's something

25 that I never did.

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- 1 Q. [10:41:55] Just so we're clear, did they call you?
- 2 A. [10:42:11] Mr President, they didn't call me.
- 3 Q. [10:42:16] Did Mr Yekatom call you?
- 4 A. [10:42:29] Mr President, he didn't call me.
- 5 Q. [10:42:35] Let me ask you some other questions about your contacts.
- 6 Do you know somebody by the name of Jérémie Kotté, or Kotté?
- 7 A. [10:42:59] Your Honour, I don't know Kotté.
- 8 Q. [10:43:04] Karakamondji Vivien?
- 9 A. [10:43:15] Your Honour, I don't know him.
- 10 Q. [10:43:18] Hippolyte Yamini?
- 11 A. [10:43:36] Mr President, I know Yamini. I don't know which Yamini you are
- 12 speaking about. I know the Yamini family, but I don't know what he was doing in
- 13 terms of his work, I have no idea about that, as to what his profession was.
- 14 Q. [10:43:59] I'm talking about Hippolyte Yamini, president of the Boda youth?
- 15 A. [10:44:19] Yes, Mr President, I know him. The president of the youth, that's
- 16 somebody who I know.
- 17 Q. [10:44:29] Do you know if he was involved with the Anti-Balaka? Or you don't
- 18 know, like your son?
- 19 A. [10:44:52] No, I didn't know. When they set up their movement, I wasn't there.
- 20 I can't tell you any more about that, I was in Bangui at that time.
- 21 Q. [10:45:13] Firmin Dopani, do you know that name?
- 22 A. [10:45:26] Mr President, I don't know him.
- 23 Q. [10:45:29] Flavien Edgar, do you know that name?
- 24 A. [10:45:43] Mr President, I don't know him.
- 25 Q. [10:45:48] Are you aware that your son was subject to sanctions by

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1 the European Union and by the United Nations in 2015? Do you know this, sir?

2 A. [10:46:13] Mr President, I heard that on the radio. I heard about these sanctions
3 on the radio.

4 Q. [10:46:20] What did you hear about those sanctions, sir, and when?

5 A. [10:46:36] Mr President, I don't remember exactly the date. But I heard it on
6 the radio like everybody else.

7 Q. [10:46:47] All right. Let me show you a document.

8 It's at tab 16, CAR-OTP-2074-3246.

9 All right, we have it on the screen now. It's in English and I'll read to you what it
10 says.

11 If we can go to the next page, that is 3247.

12 All right, here you can see these are sanctions again Yekatom. You have to go down
13 the page, please.

14 And there we can see the name of your son, "Habib Soussou".

15 "Designation: a) Coordinator of anti-Balaka for Lobaye province b) Corporal of
16 the Central African Armed Forces (FACA)

17 Date of birth: 13 Mar. 1980".

18 Does that sound about right to you?

19 A. [10:48:25] This information, as I said, I found out about this information
20 concerning his role as a coordinator in Bangui. It appeared just as you say it here.

21 Q. [10:48:36] That's his telephone number too, right?

22 A. [10:48:55] Mr President, I don't see the telephone number very well.

23 Q. [10:49:02] It says (Overlapping speakers)

24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:49:03] So could -- yeah, could we enlarge it even
25 more and then, please, please, additionally read out, Mr Vanderpuye.

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1 MR VANDERPUYE: Thank you, Mr President.

2 Q. [10:49:10] The telephone number is 72198628.

3 A. [10:49:34] Mr President, I saved his name and number in my phone. Whenever
4 I was looking for his number I would find it and call him. But I -- but I don't
5 remember the number, but I saved it and registered it in my telephone list.

6 Q. [10:50:00] Fair enough. Let me go to the next page and ask you if this is
7 information that you heard on the radio.

8 On this page it says that he was appointed commander (ComZone) of Boda
9 11 April 2014. And, on 28 June 2014, for the entire Lobaye province.

10 And it says, under his command, targeted killings, clashes and attacks against
11 humanitarian organisations and aid workers have continued to take place.

12 Did you hear that on the radio, sir?

13 A. [10:50:52] Mr President, I heard that on the radio. We didn't have contact
14 between you. You know, my son is an adult. He's free to take his own decisions
15 without informing me in advance of them.

16 Q. [10:51:06] That's true. And -- but my question is, and the reason why I'm
17 putting these questions to you is that you said the first time that you heard that your
18 son was involved with the Anti-Balaka was when the Yekatom Defence lawyers told
19 you in 2023.

20 Now we're looking at a document which details sanctions that were imposed in 2015,
21 which say that your son was affiliated with the Anti-Balaka in 2014. Not only that
22 he was affiliated with the Anti-Balaka in 2014, but that he may be responsible for very
23 serious crimes. You heard this on the radio. When did you hear it?

24 A. [10:52:11] I heard it on the radio when the United Nations decision to sanction
25 was broadcast. I don't remember the exact date, I've forgotten that, but I found out

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1 about it from the radio.

2 Q. [10:52:32] All right. Well, the one I showed you isn't the United Nations one,

3 it's the European Union one. But, there is a United Nations one as well.

4 And that's at tab 11 of the Prosecution binder, CAR-OTP-2015-0782.

5 That one's in English also, so I'll read to you what it says.

6 This you can see, it says: "Generated on: 20 August 2015".

7 Right in front of you, you can see the name of "Noureddine Adam".

8 If we go down you'll see "François Bozize". After that you'll see "Habib Soussou",

9 and at the bottom of the page you'll see "Alfred Yekatom".

10 With respect to your son, Habib Soussou, again you see the telephone number that I

11 just showed you before, and it says, under his command, targeted killings, clashes,

12 attacks against humanitarian organisations continue to take place. Just like the other

13 one.

14 You were aware of that because you heard it on the radio; is that right?

15 A. [10:54:10] That's correct, Mr President. I found out on the radio. Nobody had

16 spoken to me about that.

17 Q. [10:54:16] And what about the sanctions against Mr Yekatom that you can see

18 here, did you hear that on the radio?

19 A. [10:54:36] Yes, Mr President. I found out about that on the radio.

20 Q. [10:54:42] And when you heard about it on the radio, was Mr Yekatom referred

21 to as "Mr Yekatom" or "Mr Saragba"?

22 A. [10:55:10] Mr President, I heard "Yekatom".

23 Q. [10:55:18] Have you heard the name Saragba before?

24 A. [10:55:37] Mr President, I have never heard that name. Furthermore, I have no

25 contact with him.

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1 Q. [10:55:47] Did you give your telephone to somebody to use for a period of time
2 during 2014? Did you give the actual phone to someone?

3 A. [10:56:17] Mr President, I never gave my number to somebody. You know, we
4 don't have electricity at home. Often, we send our phones to people to charge our
5 phones, but I never gave my phone to anybody else so that they could use it, but we
6 do sometimes send them to be charged.

7 Q. [10:56:53] Okay. Do you have an explanation for why somebody would use
8 your telephone to contact Mr Yekatom?

9 A. [10:57:49] Mr President, I didn't hear the question well. I'm sorry.

10 Q. [10:57:56] Do you have an explanation for why somebody would use your
11 telephone, the device, to contact Mr Yekatom? Maybe I should define that in terms
12 of the period: In March of 2014 and April of 2014 -- no, I'm sorry, yes, April 2014.

13 A. [10:58:35] Mr President, I never called him. I don't even know him.

14 Q. [10:58:44] So I take it you don't have an explanation for why your telephone
15 device would be in contact with Mr Yekatom's telephone number, why somebody
16 would use your phone to call Mr Yekatom; right?

17 A. [10:59:34] Mr President, I haven't heard the question well because there is
18 a background noise which means that I can't hear you well.

19 Q. [10:59:43] Okay. I'll -- can you hear me now?

20 A. [10:59:57] Mr President, ah, I can hear you well now.

21 Q. [11:00:12] Okay. My question is: You don't have an explanation for why
22 somebody would use your telephone to contact Mr Yekatom in March of 2014 and
23 12 April 2014?

24 A. [11:00:38] Mr President, I never called Yekatom, never. I told you here that we
25 do not have electricity at home. We often send our telephones out to those who have

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1 charging booths so that they can be recharged. You know, I have many adult
2 children and it might be that they might have telephoned using my telephone without
3 my authorisation. But to say that I had contact with Mr Yekatom is not true, I don't
4 even know who he is.

5 THE INTERPRETER: [11:01:24] I don't even know him, correction.

6 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:01:26]

7 Q. [11:01:26] Well, you do know him, because you testified back in January that
8 your son and he were in the army together, and you knew that?

9 MR SUZUKI: [11:01:34] Mr President.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:01:35] Mr Suzuki.

11 MR SUZUKI: [11:01:37] I don't think it follows from the answer that his son and
12 his -- his son was in the army with Mr Yekatom that he knows Mr Yekatom.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:01:48] Well, I make a suggestion here, we have
14 the break now and you -- you can formulate it in a way that -- you understand, it does
15 not clearly follow from that, that's clear, but why does he know that they were
16 together in the army. So you can ask that.

17 Then let's have a break until 11.30.

18 THE COURT USHER: [11:02:08] All rise.

19 (Recess taken at 11.02 a.m.)

20 (Upon resuming in open session at 11.34 a.m.)

21 THE COURT USHER: [11:34:04] All rise.

22 Please be seated.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:34:11] Mr Vanderpuye, you still have the floor.

24 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:34:15] Thank you, Mr President.

25 Q. [11:34:17] Good morning, again, Mr Soussou. I think when I -- when we left off

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1 I was asking you a question about your -- your familiarity or not with Mr Yekatom,

2 and I was invited to rephrase my question. So I'll try it a different way, maybe.

3 Did you ever discuss Mr Yekatom with your son Habib Soussou?

4 A. [11:35:06] Mr President, I never talked to him about that.

5 Q. [11:35:15] Did you ever discuss with your son his association with the

6 Anti-Balaka?

7 A. [11:35:45] Mr President, I never talked to him about his activity in the

8 Anti-Balaka movement.

9 Q. [11:36:00] Did you talk to him about being in the Anti-Balaka at all, irrespective
10 of what his role or his function might have been?

11 A. [11:36:33] Mr President, I never spoke to him about that.

12 Q. [11:36:43] If I were to tell you that in mid-2014 your son became the
13 *coordonnateur préfectoral provisoire* for the Anti-Balaka in Boda, would that come as a
14 surprise to you?

15 A. [11:37:15] Mr President, no, it is a surprise. I did not know.

16 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:37:25] Just for the Chamber's reference, I'm referring to
17 tab 14, CAR-OTP-2068-0077, which I believe is already in evidence.

18 Q. [11:37:38] If I were to tell you, sir -- okay, we have it on the screen now, you can
19 see it, and you can see a reference to "Abib" Soussou, and a reference to Dogo Aimé,
20 who we understand is Dobo Aimé. And you can also see that it's signed by
21 Mr Ngaïssona, *coordonnateur général*. You've never seen this document before, have
22 you?

23 A. [11:38:28] I have never seen this document before.

24 Q. [11:38:31] The Defence of Mr Yekatom didn't show you this document, did they?

25 A. [11:38:50] They spoke to me about it, but they never showed the document to

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1 me.

2 Q. [11:38:56] All right. Let me show you another document.

3 This one should be at tab 8 of the Prosecution binder CAR-OTP-2001-5386, and we'll
4 need to go -- this is the United Nations Commission of Inquiry Report.

5 We'll need to go to page 5466, please.

6 This is another document signed by Mr Ngaïssona -- well, that's the same document,
7 I'm sorry.

8 We'll need to go to page 5467.

9 Here we can see two more appointments in Boda, one concerning a Rodrigue
10 Karamokonzi, as a *Commandant de Zone Provisoire*, and another Kotte Aimé Geremie,
11 *Commandant de Zone Provisoire *adjoint* at Boda. And you can see this document is
12 dated 28 June 2014, so some months before you travelled to Boda to speak with the
13 population, including the Anti-Balaka.

14 Does this come as a surprise to you that these are the positions that these two
15 individuals held within the Boda Anti-Balaka?

16 A. [11:41:06] That is correct. It is a surprise to me. I am hearing about it today.

17 Q. [11:41:17] When you travelled to Boda, to discuss with the population there
18 what their views were with respect to the Muslim community - and I believe you said
19 earlier today that you also talked to the Anti-Balaka that were there - can you tell us
20 who you spoke to in the Anti-Balaka?

21 A. [11:42:06] Mr President, I didn't talk with the Anti-Balaka.

22 Q. [11:42:21] I think you said earlier that you went there to broker peace in a group.
23 Did anybody in the group that you were with speak to the Anti-Balaka leadership at
24 Boda?

25 A. [11:42:55] Mr President, we went with a view to raising awareness amongst the

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1 population of Boda. We spoke to the entire community, not only the Anti-Balaka.

2 We spoke to the Christian community and to the Muslim community, and raised

3 awareness amongst these communities.

4 Q. [11:43:20] Who represented the Anti-Balaka in the context of these outreach -- in

5 the context of this outreach mission that you had? Who showed up?

6 A. [11:43:50] Mr President, I do not know the name of the representative.

7 Q. [11:44:02] Just so that I'm clear, at the time that you went to Boda, at least

8 according to the documentation that I've shown you, your son was the provisional

9 prefectorial coordinator of the Boda group. You had been, and you are, a person

10 with influence and who is in contact with the authorities in Boda in the form of

11 Mr Mbondjo, Maxime, throughout that period of time.

12 When you went on mission to Boda, did you speak to your son about who to contact

13 and who to speak to for your outreach purposes?

14 A. [11:45:22] Mr President, I never talked to my son.

15 Q. [11:45:30] Mr Soussou, that's a very strange thing. Why didn't you speak to

16 your son through all that period? From the moment that he left Bangui to return to

17 Boda until the time you went on mission, you said you never spoke to your son; why

18 not?

19 A. [11:46:05] Mr President, well, he was not frequenting me so I did not have the

20 opportunity to discuss matters with him.

21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:46:17] Mr Vanderpuye, move on, please.

22 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:46:20]

23 Q. [11:46:21] Were you aware, sir, at the time that you went on mission to Boda

24 that there had been previous missions to Boda to try to broker peace?

25 A. [11:46:55] Mr President, I do not know which mission you are referring to. If

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1 you could give me a little bit more information.

2 Q. [11:47:06] Well, I can give you more information, but first I want to know if
3 you're aware of any mission that preceded yours?

4 A. [11:47:33] Mr President, indeed, there was a mission with the minister of the
5 interior who was the chief of the delegation. That mission occurred before our
6 mission.

7 Q. [11:47:53] Let me show you a document.

8 This one is at tab 17 of our binder, CAR-OTP-2100-1699.

9 I think you can see on this document that it's a mission order, and it speaks about a
10 mission to go to Boda that was convened by the prime minister, Nzapayeke.

11 If we can go to the bottom, you can see that.

12 It is dated 14 March 2014 and you can see a number of participants that are
13 designated --

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:48:56] Can we --

15 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:48:53] -- above.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:48:53] Can we up a little bit.

17 The participants mentioned here are Captain Joachim Kokaté, Captain Ngremangou,
18 Captain Kamezolaï and *Caporal Chef* Yekatom.

19 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:49:17]

20 Q. [11:49:17] Did you hear about this mission, sir?

21 A. [11:49:27] Mr President, I never heard speak of this mission.

22 Q. [11:49:32] All right.

23 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:49:36] Yes, Mr President.

24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:49:38] Well, I -- we have enough time, yet,

25 however, I think with -- the witness clearly isn't aware of any, let me put it this way,

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1 at least of any specific of further missions, so it's not very promising to -- to insist on
2 that, let me word it this way.

3 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:49:57] Yes, sorry, Mr President.

4 Q. [11:50:02] There is a document that follows this that I will put up. It's at tab 12.

5 And this is a news publication that's dated 19 March 2014.

6 Yes, you can see it says: (Interpretation)

7 "Central Africa: the Muslim women are threatening to leave Bangui"

8 (Speaks English) If you go to the middle of the document, you will see where it says

9 "*Dans la ville de Boda*". It's at the bottom of the page just now, yes.

10 It describes an agreement --

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:50:53] Yeah, please, please read -- please read it
12 to the witness, yeah.

13 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:50:57] Okay.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:50:58] Be so kind. Thank you.

15 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:51:01]

16 Q. [11:51:01] It says: (Interpretation)

17 "In the town of Boda (South-West), despite the commitment of non-aggression

18 reached by the chief of the Anti-Balaka militia Aimé Jérémie Kotte and the

19 captain Benoît of the French forces Sangaris who intervene under the United Nations

20 mission in order to aid or assist restoring security in this landlocked country, this

21 poor country, incertitude -- or uncertainties remain especially on the part of the

22 Muslim population who are threatening to leave the town."

23 (Speaks English) It says: (Interpretation)

24 "We commit to no longer using weapons and to no longer attacking Muslims from the
25 town of Boda".

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1 (Speaks English) And that's attributed to Jérémie Kotte.

2 First, did you hear of such a mission in which an agreement was reached.

3 A. [11:52:27] Mr President, at that moment in time I was in Bangui, so I never heard
4 speak of this.

5 Q. [11:52:42] Okay. Let me ask you about a different document.

6 This one is at tab 13, it is CAR-OTP-2064-1015. And this one's dated, I believe, 26
7 March 2014. Just under the photograph here it says "*Les miliciens Anti-Balaka*"

8 (Interpretation) "The Anti-Balaka" --

9 THE INTERPRETER: [11:53:19] The interpreter can't see where it is. Oh, yes,
10 please scroll down.

11 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:53:27](Interpretation)

12 Q. [11:53:27] "The Anti-Balaka militia from the mining town of Boda, in the Central
13 African Republic, have rejected an initiative by the government aiming to maintain in
14 the location of the Muslim community approximately 12,000 of its members."

15 (Speaks English) This is in March 2014. It continues to say: (Interpretation) "The
16 spokesperson from an Anti-Balaka combatants group from the town of Boda, who
17 presented himself under the name -- or introduced himself under the name of Edgar
18 Flavien, said to IRIN -- said at IRIN on 19 March that he could not tolerate the
19 ongoing presence of Muslims in town."

20 (Speaks English) That's similar to what you said in September 2014; isn't that right?

21 A. [11:54:42] Mr President, I do not know. I remember having had a meeting with
22 a representative of the prime minister and it was subsequent to that meeting that we
23 raised their concerns further up. We raised their concerns to the attention of the
24 representatives of the prime minister that, namely, those people should be gotten out
25 of there so that peace could be restored.

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- 1 Q. [11:55:22] Okay. Let me ask you about what's on the next page.
- 2 And that's at 1016. If we go down the page you'll see a section called "*Les troupes*
- 3 *françaises favorisent la sécurité*".
- 4 It's up. Up. *Voilà*.
- 5 In this paragraph, that follows the reference to the French troops, there's a further
- 6 discussion with *Monsieur* Flavien Edgar, and in this context they're talking about an
- 7 attack that occurred where somebody was killed, I believe a Muslim, with grenade
- 8 fire. What he says is: (Interpretation)
- 9 "The bodies of three Muslims were picked out of a river on 3 March -- 13 March, and
- 10 two grenades were thrown into their perimeter four days later.
- 11 Mr Flavien denied any involvement of his group in the matter involving the
- 12 grenades."
- 13 (Speaks English) He says: (Interpretation)
- 14 "'We only have knives and machetes. We do not have any grenades or shotguns.'
- 15 He went on to say that his group recognised Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona as being the
- 16 national coordinator of the Anti-Balaka, and not Mr Kokaté."
- 17 (Speaks English) In your trip to Boda, did you hear that, one, Mr Ngaïssona was the
- 18 coordinator of the Anti-Balaka in that group?
- 19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:57:31] Mr Knoops.
- 20 Please wait with the answer.
- 21 Mr Knoops.
- 22 MR KNOOPS: [11:57:38] Your Honours, at this juncture of the examination, we have
- 23 objection to the examination insofar as it concerns Mr Ngaïssona and the alleged
- 24 crimes which took place in Boda. In its ruling of 29 June 2021, paragraphs 214 till
- 25 220, the Pre-Trial Chamber, after hearing the Prosecution theory on Boda in regard to

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1 Mr Ngaïssona, in paragraph 215, clearly rejected the allegations regarding
2 Mr Ngaïssona. Therefore, any examination, let alone putting documents regarding
3 the alleged role of Ngaïssona insofar as it concerns Boda, are outside the scope of the
4 charges and this trial, and, therefore, we object to any question the Prosecution might
5 put by bypassing the Pre-Trial Chamber's ruling, which is utterly clear.

6 We had extensively addressed the Prosecution theory, including the mission
7 requests - you can find it in paragraph 217 of the Pre-Trial Chamber's ruling - and,
8 therefore, it's beyond the scope of the charges and the trial that the Prosecution now
9 uses this witness to ask questions indirectly circumventing this clear ruling.

10 Thank you.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:59:08] Mr Vanderpuye.

12 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:59:11] Thank you, Mr President.

13 There's two things. First, I think that Mr Knoops is confusing the scope of the
14 confirmation decision, the scope of the trial. The scope of the confirmation relates to
15 Mr Ngaïssona's criminal responsibility for the crimes committed in Boda, which is a
16 different question what his intent is and knowledge is with respect to the crimes
17 committed by the group which he was coordinating during the period of time, or
18 during this -- rather, during the scope of the -- of the attack carried out by the
19 Anti-Balaka between September 2013 and December 2014, as the confirmation
20 decision clearly states.

21 What Mr Ngaïssona's knowledge and intent is with respect to the activities of the
22 group is directly relevant to his responsibility for the crimes that are charged in this
23 case. I think, as everyone knows, the crimes committed in Bossangoa continued
24 through at least April 2014, as did the forcible transfer that occurred in Bangui
25 through at least April 2014.

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1 Therefore, Ngaïssona's knowledge and intent with respect to the activities of the
2 group as we've defined it, which entailed groups in different areas of the Central
3 African Republic, is directly relevant to his criminal responsibility for the crimes that
4 are charged under the confirmation decision. And I think this Chamber has actually
5 already ruled on this, maybe some years ago now.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:00:41] Well, Mr Knoops, we don't have to repeat
7 the arguments.

8 MR KNOOPS: [12:00:46] No, Mr President, just because the Prosecution's
9 misquoting the Pre-Trial Chamber's decision. The knowledge, the intent, is
10 addressed in paragraph 219 of the Pre-Trial's Chamber's decision where the Chamber,
11 based on the same arguments of the Prosecution, goes into the question whether it's
12 established at the level, mind you, of the Pre-Trial Chamber.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:01:13] Yes, yeah, well --

14 MR KNOOPS: [12:01:14] Intent was also addressed by the judges based on the
15 arguments of the OTP.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:01:21] Well, we have -- I think we have already
17 ruled on that. It is -- the Chamber is very well aware of the confirmation of charges
18 decision and that the Boda part, so to speak, was not confirmed with regard to
19 Mr Ngaïssona.

20 However, with regard to the contextual elements and the whole background,
21 questions can be asked and the information can be used and, therefore, the objection
22 is rejected.

23 Mr Vanderpuye, you may ask your question. However, I think with this witness, it
24 will not --

25 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:01:59] I agree.

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:02:01] I will not say it's showing off. I would
2 never -- I have said it already, unfortunately. But I don't think -- I don't think it will
3 lead to anything here with the witness. So the discussion was -- will be in the end
4 theoretical, but please put your question to the witness.

5 And may I remind you, Mr Vanderpuye, that the witness clearly has said that at the
6 time he was not in Boda, yeah. I think we can -- he much later only came back from
7 Bangui to Boda. So please, Mr Vanderpuye, if you want to put your question to the
8 witness.

9 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:02:38] Thank you, Mr President. I'm just going to
10 find -- sorry.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:02:41] And we have again the background noise
12 which is quite unnerving.

13 I'm having to look for my formulation, which confuses me a bit.

14 Well, there is silence now, which is -- no, it's not a -- Mr Vanderpuye, simply continue,
15 and I take it that you are -- you know, you're in the final stages of this examination.

16 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:03:13] I am, Mr President.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:03:14] Okay, good.

18 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:03:16]

19 Q. [12:03:16] Did you learn either in the course of your visit or before then to Boda
20 that the Anti-Balaka group in Boda recognised Mr Ngaïssona as the national
21 coordinator of the Anti-Balaka?

22 A. [12:03:58] I know nothing about Mr Ngaïssona.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:04:04] Well, that's the expected answer. So,
24 Mr Knoops, there's nothing in it, nothing for you to, let's say, to further ask, I think.
25 And, also, I may say that the witness with all the documents, he didn't know them,

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1 where the name of your client might appear on it. So, Mr Vanderpuye, please
2 continue.

3 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:04:31] Thank you, Mr President.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:04:32] Keep in mind that the witness was not in
5 Boda at the time.

6 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:04:35] No, I understand that.

7 Q. [12:04:44] Although you were not in Boda, you were in contact with people who
8 were in Boda, including a deputy of Boda on a frequent basis. Did he discuss with
9 you the nature of the Boda Anti-Balaka, under whose authority they were and under
10 whose authority they fell?

11 A. [12:05:19] Mr President, I have no information concerning the Balaka.

12 Q. [12:05:30] Now, you mentioned you received a call from Bishop Guerrino. Do
13 you remember when that took place, roughly?

14 A. [12:05:57] Mr President, it was in 2014, but I don't remember exactly when.

15 Q. [12:06:11] And I think you said you went to Mbaïki, correct me if I'm wrong; did
16 you?

17 A. [12:06:32] Mr President, I didn't go alone to Mbaïki. It was the nationals of
18 Boda who went to Mbaïki on the invitation that they had received from Bishop Rino.

19 Q. [12:06:53] Okay, and you don't remember exactly when that was in 2014? Can
20 you say if it was early 2014 or late 2014?

21 A. [12:07:17] Mr President, I don't remember the exact date. It's also my age
22 which means that I cannot remember everything.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:07:33] Mr Witness, you don't have to worry
24 about that. It is -- I repeat what I said earlier. It is remarkable that you have all
25 these recollections about events that lie back -- go back 10 years, so you don't have to

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1 worry. It would be surprising if you knew exactly the date, for example, after

2 10 years.

3 Mr Vanderpuye.

4 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:07:59]

5 Q. [12:07:59] Would you have any reason to be in contact with an individual in

6 Mbaïki on 31 January 2014, to your recollection?

7 A. [12:08:27] Mr President, I don't remember having called anyone on that date.

8 Q. [12:08:34] Okay.

9 When you went on mission with Ouilidane and others, did anybody at that point

10 alert your attention to the Anti-Balaka leadership under Mr Ngaïssona? Anybody

11 say to you or mention Mr Ngaïssona in the course of that meeting or that mission?

12 A. [12:09:44] Mr President, nobody spoke to us about Ngaïssona.

13 Q. [12:09:54] Okay, and you say that when you went there you actually didn't

14 speak to the Anti-Balaka on your mission; is that right?

15 A. [12:10:17] Mr President, we work with both communities. We had meetings

16 with the Christian community as well as the Muslim community. We didn't make a

17 discrimination between the different communities. We worked with both

18 communities, the Muslim community and the Christian community as well.

19 Q. [12:10:40] Within the Christian community did you speak to members of the

20 Anti-Balaka? That's my question.

21 A. [12:11:05] We didn't meet the Anti-Balaka as such. We met the communities,

22 the Christian community and the Muslim community. We worked with both of

23 those communities -- the Christian community and the Muslim community.

24 Q. [12:11:26] Do you know somebody by the name of Nicaise Willikondi?

25 A. [12:11:47] Nicaise Willikondi, I know.

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1 Q. [12:11:53] And what do you know about him?

2 A. [12:12:09] I don't know exactly what he did at that time, but he's in prison.

3 THE INTERPRETER: [12:12:19] He's in prison at the moment, corrects the
4 interpreter.

5 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:12:22]

6 Q. [12:12:22] Do you know that he became a *délégué* of the *sous-préfecture* of Boda?

7 A. [12:12:38] Mr President, I don't have that information.

8 Q. [12:12:45] Do you know his son Songolet?

9 A. [12:13:01] Yes, I know Songolet. He's currently in prison.

10 Q. [12:13:07] Do you know if Songolet took part in the Boda attack in February 2014
11 by the Anti-Balaka?

12 A. [12:13:35] Mr President, I wasn't present at the time of the attack, and I don't
13 know anything about what they did in Boda at the time.

14 Q. [12:13:46] When was the last time you were in contact with your son Habib?

15 A. [12:14:09] Mr President, I -- I didn't call him when I was in Boda. In Boda,
16 I didn't call him.

17 THE INTERPRETER: [12:14:27] Correction: I didn't call him when he was in Boda.

18 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:14:33]

19 Q. [12:14:33] I understand that, Mr Soussou, my question is a bit more specific than
20 that, and perhaps let me go about it in a different way.

21 You've seen what the sanctions have alleged concerning the conduct of your son.

22 And you've said you've not discussed any of that with him. You are aware that
23 what he is alleged to have done is a very serious crime; right?

24 A. [12:15:13] Mr President, my son is an adult. He can decide on the behaviour
25 that -- he can freely decide on what he does. It doesn't concern me.

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1 Q. [12:15:42] Except you were on mission to bring peace to the area under his
2 control in mid-2014; isn't that right?

3 A. [12:16:05] Mr President, I went to Boda, but I didn't meet him. I was in the
4 delegation, but the activities that we carried out were delegation activities.

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:16:18] Mr Vanderpuye, I think, when you
6 further insist on the role of Mr Soussou, I would have to tell the witness that he can
7 refuse answers in that regard. No -- well, it's his son. Well, yeah, so I think we
8 should move on now.

9 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:16:37] Okay, Mr President.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:16:38] Yeah.

11 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:16:39]

12 Q. [12:16:40] Just -- I was going to show a video but maybe I won't. Let me just
13 ask you, though, do you know somebody by the name of Brice Kamba?

14 A. [12:17:06] Mr President, I don't know him.

15 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:17:18] Just bear with me one second. Just a moment,
16 Mr President.

17 (Counsel confers)

18 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:17:38]

19 Q. [12:17:39] You mentioned earlier that when you completed your mission you
20 conveyed the concerns about the Christian population, and I think you said that the
21 Muslims -- you said that they said that the Muslims should leave and that was not
22 negotiable. But having spoken also to the Muslim population, did you convey their
23 position as well when you returned from your mission?

24 MR SUZUKI: [12:18:22] Mr President.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:18:23] Yes.

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1 MR SUZUKI: [12:18:24] I apologise for interrupting. It's not clear to me that this
2 witness spoke to the Muslim population before this meeting took place in Bangui. I
3 don't think that's been established on this witness's evidence.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:18:39] So, Mr Vanderpuye, please allow me.
5 Mr Soussou, the Presiding Judge is speaking. So when you were on this mission
6 I think in September 2014, you did speak also with members of the Muslim
7 population; is that correct?

8 THE WITNESS: [12:19:09](Interpretation) Presiding Judge, I wasn't the only person
9 on that mission. We went in a delegation and we spoke to the Muslim community in
10 order to inform them of the visit of the President of the transition. We informed the
11 Muslim community about that before informing the Christian community about it
12 because for us it was a matter of addressing both communities, and personally I went
13 to the Muslim community because I have family in both communities, both in the
14 Christian community and in the Muslim community.

15 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:19:56] And those from the Muslim community
16 with whom you spoke, what did they say? What were their views?

17 THE WITNESS: [12:20:19](Interpretation) Presiding Judge, we did raise this
18 awareness-raising with the community on the visit of the head of state. And after
19 the meeting, she received the representatives of all the communities, Christians and
20 Muslims as well. And after -- afterwards, we gave advice to both communities
21 before returning to Bangui.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:20:55] I have to apologise, my question was not
23 clear enough. We have understood that. But when you said you spoke with
24 members of the Muslim community, I assume they have also made clear their views
25 on the matter, and what did they tell you? Not what you did tell them, but what did

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1 they tell you?

2 THE WITNESS: [12:21:41](Interpretation) I think that their concern - was a
3 feeling - was about the restoration of peace. They wanted peace to be re-established
4 such that they could live as they did previously with the Christian community.
5 I think that is what their main concern and feeling was.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:21:59] Thank you. Exactly. This is exactly
7 what I wanted to know. Mr Soussou, thank you for the answer.
8 And did this view, and this concern of the Muslim population, did you also
9 incorporate that in your reports of the mission?

10 THE WITNESS: [12:22:39](Interpretation) Mr President, it was the president who
11 presided over the mission after the -- it was that -- it was the president's responsibility
12 to do so after the mission.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:23:07] I think this -- we can take this as an
14 answer, please, Mr Vanderpuye.

15 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:23:14] Thank you, Mr President.

16 Q. [12:23:18] You know, Mr Soussou, earlier on, I showed you this *compte rendu*,
17 about this meeting about this meeting, about Boda *ressortissants*, residents, and it's
18 very particular in saying that you transmitted this message of the non-Muslim
19 population of Boda. It doesn't say anything about you transmitting the message of
20 the Muslim population of Boda, although you say that that was part of the discourse
21 you had when you went on mission.

22 MR SUZUKI: [12:23:58] Mr President?

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:24:02] Mr Suzuki.

24 MR SUZUKI: [12:24:09] Again, the same objection. The order hasn't been
25 established, Mr President. It's not -- it hasn't been established that this meeting in

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1 Boda occurred before the meeting for which we have the notes or the minutes in
2 Bangui. That hasn't been established, your Honour, so I don't think the question's
3 fair.

4 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:24:24] I can just pull up the *compte rendu* and we can -- we
5 can --

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:24:28] Yes, yes. Indeed, Mr Suzuki is right.
7 So when we -- we have established that there had been the talks with the
8 Muslim -- members of the Muslim population before, then this is correct, yes, okay.

9 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:24:40]

10 Q. [12:24:40] Okay. So we're at tab 18 then. And it's CAR-OTP-2101-2916. I'm
11 just going to pull this up, Mr Soussou, so you can see exactly what I'm referring to
12 here. And it's in the middle of the page underlined.

13 And there it refers to you, where it says: (Interpretation) "He also conveyed the
14 message of the non-Muslim population of Boda, 'localisation of all the Muslims of
15 Boda is not negotiable'."

16 (Speaks English) End quote.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:25:28] So, Mr Soussou, again the Presiding
18 Judge. I think we have to expedite this a bit.

19 Mr Soussou, this is a report from 1 September 2014, if I'm not mistaken. When you
20 wrote this and you said you conveyed the view of the Christian community with that
21 phrase, you obviously had spoken with the Christian community. Had you already
22 spoken with the Muslim community at the same -- before this was written, during the
23 mission you took -- you went to Boda?

24 THE WITNESS: [12:26:25](Interpretation) We didn't discuss with the Muslim
25 community. When we went on a mission, we had awareness raising for both

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1 communities, but the meeting of which the report, the *compte rendu*, is written gives
2 the feelings of the homeless, the population who lost their property. They are the
3 ones who expressed their feelings, and we conveyed that in a report, because in this
4 report there were recommendations that were made and we asked that the state
5 authority be restored, the gendarmerie and the army, that they take over control and
6 we establish peace in Boda. Because there are only the authorities, the state forces
7 that can reestablish peace in Boda. And it's the same discourse that we had with
8 both communities.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:27:33] So, to be clear, Mr Soussou, you had
10 spoken with both communities before that; is that correct?

11 THE WITNESS: [12:27:53](Interpretation) That's correct. We spoke with both of the
12 communities.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:27:58] Please move on, Mr Vanderpuye.

14 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:28:01]

15 Q. [12:28:01] Mr Soussou, according to you, when did peace return to Boda after
16 your visit?

17 A. [12:28:33] Mr President, I don't remember. But after the visit of the president of
18 the transition and after our awareness raising, there was the deployment of different
19 forces in Boda as well as the humanitarian organisations. They started to support
20 the homeless persons. And I think that was from 2015 until 2016 and peace had
21 started to come back, because whenever the NGOs were working, there was this
22 mixing between the two communities. And this made it possible -- well, they
23 recognised it and they stated that it was the foreigners who had come to create
24 division between the two communities. But in substance, they were still together.
25 So this was around the 15th, 16th, 17th, peace started to progressively come back.

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1 Q. [12:30:06] Was your son involved in those efforts of peace?

2 A. [12:30:26] Mr President, I didn't have any contact with him at all, and he did not
3 approach me, nor did he ask me for any advice.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:30:34] Mr Vanderpuye, please. We have heard
5 that, yes.

6 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:30:38] I have nothing further. That was my last question,
7 thank you, Mr President.

8 Q. [12:30:42] Thank you, Mr Witness.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:30:43] Thank you, Mr Vanderpuye. I think
10 there will be no further questions to the witness. Then --

11 MR SUZUKI: [12:30:51] I apologise. Could I just have one minute to confer. I
12 might just have one or two questions (Overlapping speakers)

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:30:54] Well, I would be surprised, but please.
14 (Counsel confers)

15 MR SUZUKI: Thank you, Mr President, just one question (Overlapping speakers)

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:32:06] Of course, of course.

17 QUESTIONED BY MR SUZUKI:

18 Q. [12:32:16] Hello again, Mr Soussou.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:32:19] Perhaps you simply because it's
20 translated -- perhaps you simply say, again, who you are and whom you are speaking
21 for.

22 MR SUZUKI: [12:32:25] Thank you, Mr President.

23 Q. [12:32:27] Mr Soussou, hello again. My name is Gyo Suzuki and we've met
24 before. I asked you a few questions on behalf of Mr Yekatom during your last
25 appearance and I've just got a handful of questions, or even less rather, following on

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1 from my friend's examination. Is that clear? Can you hear me?

2 A. [12:33:02] Things are clear, counsel.

3 Q. [12:33:08] Thank you, Mr Soussou.

4 You referred to a visit by President Samba-Panza to Boda, and you referred to having
5 been involved in the *sensibilisation* outreach just prior to that mission, or to that visit
6 by the president.

7 And my question is: Was your meeting with the Muslim community, ahead of the
8 visit of president Samba-Panza, was that first time that had you met the Boda Muslim
9 population since the violence broke out in January 2014?

10 THE INTERPRETER: [12:34:20] The Sango both has not heard the witness's answer.

11 MR SUZUKI: [12:34:29]

12 Q. [12:34:30] Sorry, Mr Soussou. Could you just repeat your answer, please?

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:34:38] Please repeat your question, simply.

14 I have the impression that it makes sense to repeat the question.

15 MR SUZUKI: [12:34:47] Thank you, Mr President.

16 Q. [12:34:50] Mr Soussou, I will repeat my question. You referred to a visit by the
17 president -- President Samba-Panza to Boda, and you referred to having been
18 involved in *sensibilisation* meetings, outreach meetings just prior to that visit.

19 And my question is: Was that the first time that you had met the Muslim population
20 of Boda since the outbreak of violence in January 2014?

21 A. [12:35:43] Mr President, the first time I met the Muslim community was during
22 the visit with the President Samba-Panza. We had conducted a precursor mission
23 with a view to conducting outreach activities prior to the visit of the president. She
24 arrived after we had carried out our outreach work. I was part of the precursor
25 mission, and it was on that occasion that we conducted outreach activities with both

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1 communities.

2 Q. [12:36:26] Thank you for that answer, Mr Soussou.

3 And the precursor mission, can you give us an idea how long before the visit, or the
4 arrival of President Samba-Panza this mission occurred? Are we talking days, are
5 we talking -- can you just give us an idea of time, please?

6 A. [12:37:01] We held -- she arrived two days after the meeting that we held.

7 Q. [12:37:21] Thank you, Mr Soussou. And my last topic for you. Just in relation
8 to the Anti-Balaka in Boda, are you aware of where the Anti-Balaka in Boda were
9 based around the time when you -- when you went to -- when you did this precursor
10 mission in Boda?

11 A. [12:38:02] Mr President, there was an entire mixture. There was the Christians
12 who were in their enclave, and so were the Muslims. They were all at church, at the
13 church -- either at church or others were out in the bush.

14 Q. [12:38:35] Thank you for your answers, Mr Soussou.

15 MR SUZUKI: [12:38:40] Those are my questions, your Honour.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:38:44] Thank you very much, Mr Suzuki.

17 Mr Soussou, this concludes your testimony. On behalf the Chamber I would like to
18 thank you that you have made yourself available as a witness in these proceedings
19 and, let me put it this way, have patiently waited and returned after these couple of
20 weeks of interruption we have had.

21 We wish you a safe trip back home, Mr Soussou.

22 THE WITNESS: [12:39:21](Interpretation) Thank you for having taken such good
23 care of me. I'd like to thank you infinitely.

24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:39:30] Thank you very much, Mr Soussou.

25 (The witness is excused)

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- 1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:39:35] This completes also the hearing for today.
- 2 A remark on behalf of the Chamber: It's unfortunate that we don't have another
- 3 witness this week. And we cannot but notice, the Chamber, that the estimates of the
- 4 time needed for examination seem to be a little bit exaggerated in the recent past. So
- 5 perhaps you can, let's say -- what I fully understand is that you don't want in advance
- 6 to cut yourself or to put yourself under pressure. But it appears at least, if we look at
- 7 the estimates, that, for example, three days for the current witness seemed to be, even
- 8 in advance, not only in hindsight, a bit too long. So just think about it.
- 9 And the Chamber would appreciate it if we also had from the Defence perhaps when
- 10 something happens like the witness this week, that was planned for this week, that
- 11 we have a possibility of a substitute.
- 12 The Court is adjourned.
- 13 THE COURT USHER: [12:40:48] All rise.
- 14 (The hearing ends in open session at 12.40 p.m.)