

Trial Hearing
WITNESS: CAR-D29-P-5012

(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, Judge Chang-ho Chung and
7 Judge Beti Hohler
8 Trial Hearing - Courtroom 1
9 Tuesday, 2 July 2024
10 (The hearing starts in open session at 9.33 a.m.)
11 THE COURT USHER: [9:33:54] All rise.
12 The International Criminal Court is now in session.
13 Please be seated.
14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:16] Good morning, everyone.
15 Court officer, please call the case.
16 THE COURT OFFICER: [9:34:19] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours.
17 This is the situation in the Central African Republic II, in the case of The Prosecutor
18 versus Alfred Rombhot Yekatom and Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona, case reference
19 ICC-01/14-01/18.
20 And for the record, we are in open session.
21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:36] Thank you.
22 I think the composition of the Prosecution is unchanged.
23 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:34:41] It is the same, Mr President.
24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:41] It's the same.
25 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:34:42] Good morning.

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- 1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:43] The same for CLRV1, and 2 also?
- 2 MS RABESANDRATANA: [9:34:44](Interpretation) Yes, your Honour.
- 3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:52] Yes, for 1 and 2 is the same.
- 4 Ms Dimitri, you are too many, so I cannot tell at first sight, so to speak.
- 5 MS DIMITRI: [9:35:06] Good morning, Mr President. The composition is the same.
- 6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:35:10] Surprising.
- 7 Ms Proulx, because you are changing a little bit during the sessions, yes.
- 8 MS PROULX: [9:35:16] We are the same as yesterday in the first session.
- 9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:35:19] Great.
- 10 MS PROULX: Thank you.
- 11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:35:19] Then we continue with the examination.
- 12 Good morning, Mr Witness. I hope you are feeling well, you had a good rest.
- 13 WITNESS: CAR-D29-P-5012 (On former oath)
- 14 (The witness speaks French)
- 15 THE WITNESS: [9:35:30](Interpretation) Good morning, your Honour. I am very
- 16 well, thank you.
- 17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:35:33] We're happy to hear that.
- 18 And, Ms Dimitri, you continue with your examination.
- 19 MS DIMITRI: [9:35:39] Thank you, Mr President.
- 20 QUESTIONED BY MS DIMITRI (Continuing)(Interpretation)
- 21 Q. [9:35:47] Good morning, *Abbé* Antareze.
- 22 A. [9:35:51] Good morning, madam.
- 23 Q. [9:35:53] So I would like to go back to certain points that were mentioned
- 24 yesterday. I have a few questions by way of clarification. And, thereafter, we are
- 25 going to return to the meeting at the cathedral St Jeanne d'Arc. Is that okay for you?

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1 A. [9:36:15] Yes, that's fine for me.

2 Q. [9:36:16] So, yesterday, towards 12:06, you mentioned the importance of
3 medicines for the population of Mbaïki, and you referred to pillagings which really
4 affected you, so there were pharmaceutical stocks with medicines which were cheaper.
5 Could you explain to the extent these cheaper medicines were important for your
6 diocese?

7 A. [9:36:56] Thank you very much.

8 Mr President, your Honours, indeed, before the arrival of the Seleka in Mbaïki -- so,
9 Mbaïki hospital was functioning well. So there were this pharmaceutical stock
10 within the hospital of Mbaïki, and the building belonged to the state, to the town hall.
11 However, the medicines, or medications, they came from the diocese of Mbaïki.
12 They were financed, or the purchase of them, was financed by the diocese of Mbaïki.
13 From time to time there was a team, or a nun, which would look after this medical
14 warehouse. So this medical warehouse, or stock, it was literally pillaged when the
15 Seleka entered - the first group of Seleka, that is - and that was something that really
16 did affect us. We were very sad with the pillaging of our pharmaceutical
17 warehouse.

18 Now, there was also pillaging in the hospital itself, because beds and mattresses were
19 taken away. So we also supposed that those mattresses were used by the Seleka
20 troops, or elements, because where would they sleep? That's it.

21 Q. [9:39:08] Thank you.

22 The next question by way of clarification: We spoke about Monsignor Rino, does he
23 speak Sango?

24 A. [9:39:27] Thank you.

25 Mr President, Monsignor Rino is more than Central African because he has practically

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1 passed all his life as a missionary in the Central African Republic, whereas he's of
2 Italian origin and so he arrived in the Central African Republic as a young priest, and
3 so he worked 75 years in the Central African Republic. He speaks Sango very well,
4 better even. Thank you.

5 Q. [9:40:17] So the next clarification: You spoke about public transport, vehicles,
6 vehicles that were used either by certain Muslims or by the non-Muslims who came
7 from Bangui.

8 Now, my question is: Before the Seleka period, before the Anti-Balaka period, when
9 public transport was used on PK9 road, Mbaïki, and the vehicles would stop at the
10 state roadblock, could you explain to us if there was a certain means of checking at
11 the time by the state authorities, by the domestic security forces, this is before the
12 Seleka and Anti-Balaka period?

13 A. [9:41:29] Thank you.

14 Mr President, before the period of the Seleka and Anti-Balaka, the state was
15 functioning normally, if it can be put in those terms. So these roadblocks, they were
16 roadblocks that were controlled by state officers. They would control and check all
17 vehicles passing on those roadblocks, by those roadblocks, and they would check all
18 the people therein. They would check the inside of the vehicles as well. For this,
19 this was the normal check. But much more with the public transport, because if
20 the -- if it was a private vehicle, it wasn't such an issue, but if it was a public transport
21 vehicle, then they'd have much greater controls. You had to check the identity of
22 each passenger and you could say that was for security reasons. So there was this
23 practice which was carried out before the events with the Seleka and the Anti-Balaka.

24 Q. [9:42:57] Thank you. Another clarification is that yesterday, towards 10:09, we
25 spoke about commercial activities in Mbaïki and you indicated that your Muslim

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1 brothers had a bit of a monopoly on that, but there were certain non-Muslim traders
2 who were collaborating or cooperating with the traders in Mbaïki.

3 Now, my question is very short. When you say that they were collaborating, do
4 I understand from that that a lot of the non-Muslims were working for Muslim
5 traders in Mbaïki?

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:43:48] Mr Vanderpuye.

7 MR VANDERPUYE: [9:43:51] Mr President, I object. It's a leading question. She
8 could simply ask him what does he mean.

9 MS DIMITRI: [9:43:57] I agree. I will rephrase.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:44:00] That was quick, but I would have decided
11 anyway in that way.

12 Thank you, Mr Vanderpuye.

13 Ms Dimitri.

14 MS DIMITRI: [9:44:10](Interpretation)

15 Q. [9:44:11] *Abbé* Antareze, so what did you mean when you said non-Muslims
16 were collaborating with Muslim traders of Mbaïki?

17 A. [9:44:21] Thank you.

18 Mr President, as I said yesterday, before the arrival of the Seleka, and afterwards the
19 Anti-Balaka, the town of Mbaïki was very calm. The two communities - Christians,
20 Muslims - they lived in perfect symbiosis, in harmony. And where it concerns the
21 traders, you know that where it's in the business world, it's the business world. So
22 the Muslim traders and businesspeople who were more advanced in that area, they
23 had partners who were non-Muslims; either they would help them with the sales or
24 they would commission them, or they would give them the possibility to sell items in
25 the small villages.

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1 So, there really was collaboration -- that's the term, "collaboration". They worked
2 together. That's it. Was it the case for all Muslim traders who were collaborating
3 with non-Muslims? That's something that I can't say. But there were cases which
4 could be seen, yes.

5 Q. [9:46:08] Did you have any precise examples with regards to this collaboration
6 with regards to mines or precious stones, diamonds for example, in the community,
7 the exploitation of resources?

8 A. [9:46:35] Thank you.

9 Mr President, so, in the case of Mbaïki, you can't really speak too much about mining
10 resources. That was much more in Boda, Boganangone, Ngotto, in those localities.
11 Those localities are recognised or known as mining areas where there is the
12 exploitation of diamonds and gold in particular.

13 However, where it concerns the town of Mbaïki, it was much more trade, business,
14 sales of materials, food, fuel, for example. I also know that there was the sale of
15 wood. So there was also this trade that would take place. Because of Chad being
16 next to it, there were people who were -- you had public transport as well. So it was
17 all mixed up. There were Muslims, non-Muslims who were working together.
18 And there was also the trade in coffee towards Balimba. There was also that type of
19 coffee trading that was carried out. Thank you very much.

20 Q. [9:48:17] And my last clarification with regard to what was said yesterday.
21 When we speak about Mbaïki, before the Seleka -- Anti-Balaka period, could you
22 make a comparison for us between the size of the Muslim trade and the size of their
23 residences there compared to that of the non-Muslims, if you understand my question?
24 So basically a comparison of the amount of trade and the amount of people in
25 residence in Mbaïki?

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1 A. [9:49:01] Thank you.

2 Mr President, where it concerns residences, what I know is that the construction of a
3 house, of a residence, that's also linked to one's economic power and the financial
4 means that they have. Mbaiki, when you arrive in Mbaiki, you can see it
5 immediately. You have a lot of houses which have corrugated iron, you have other
6 ones which have brick walls. They belong to the Muslims, and with -- with
7 compound walls as well because they like to have compound walls, and they could be
8 in steel, they could be in wood.

9 Now, in the neighbourhoods where it's non-Muslims who live there, you can see the
10 difference, * but that's not to say that all houses of non-Muslims were run down.

11 Not at all. There were non-Muslims who also had quality houses, for example, with
12 iron or steel roofs, those who had positions of responsibility, and in Mbaiki they had
13 good houses. But you could really see this disparity that there was, if I can put it in
14 those terms, between the residences.

15 Now, where it concerns the proportion of trade, I don't really know that I can say too
16 much about that. But what I do know is that a lot of the shopping trade belonged to
17 the Muslims. That's something I know.

18 Q. [9:51:11] And this disparity between certain non-Muslims and the
19 Muslims - I don't want to generalise it for the non-Muslims - but some non-Muslims,
20 was it spoken about, was it felt, did you feel it in the sense that you heard discussions
21 or comments with regards to this disparity?

22 A. [9:51:40] Thank you, Mr President.

23 With regards to this question, the disparity was a fact. As regards feelings, the
24 people had -- I don't know exactly what I can say about that, but nevertheless, from
25 some of the words of the non-Muslims, there would be a feeling of frustration,

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1 perhaps even jealousy -- why not use that word.

2 Why were they progressing? Why did they have a certain level of life? Why not us?

3 Why do they have this economic power, this financial means? There were a lot of

4 interpretations. People would note that certain people -- well, there were certain

5 non-Muslims who thought, or who believed that the Muslims had some kind of

6 mystic power. Why are they progressing in trade? What's their secret? So there

7 were a lot of interpretations in that sense. And perhaps all that fed into a feeling of

8 jealousy, of frustration, but sometimes it wasn't expressed like that.

9 Q. [9:53:21] Thank you. I would now like to present to you two photographs.

10 Just so that you can follow me within the time, *Abbé Antareze*, I would like to go back

11 to the meeting in the cathedral St Jeanne d'Arc 2014. So I'm going present you with

12 two photographs of the meeting 30 January 2014, and I want you to look at -- we're

13 going to look at tab 18 in the Defence binder, that's CAR-D29-0010-0182.

14 So there are two photographs and I would like you to tell me if you recognise certain

15 individuals who are on these photographs.

16 What's of interest to me, *Abbé Antareze*, is the young people that we can see. Do you

17 recognise any of them? I'm not asking you for the names in particular, but what I'm

18 interested in is to know if you recognise certain faces.

19 A. [9:54:51] Thank you.

20 Mr President, on that picture there are young people who I do recognise. The one

21 who is wearing red, a Bordeaux colour, and is wearing red with a -- yeah, a red colour

22 at the top, towards the back. That's the one, yes. I recognise that person.

23 And then also there, a young man -- well, more of a child really, in a blue-sky

24 colour -- yes, there. I recognise that person as well. The young man who is just at

25 the front, just in front of Mr Yekatom, yes. That's right. In that white shirt, blue,

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1 I recognise that young man.

2 These are young men who were practically around the cathedral. There were young
3 men -- oh, yes. The young man who is next to... who's there? Yes, that one.

4 I recognise him.

5 So, there were young men in the area and there were also young men who had come
6 from the town centre because they were curious to see how things were happening or
7 see what was happening.

8 Q. [9:56:38] Thank you very much.

9 Now, at tab 19, CAR-D29-0010-0183. Just if you could tell us as you recognise other
10 people who come from around the cathedral or the town centre.

11 A. [9:57:05] Thank you. Mr President, it's pretty much the same photograph. So
12 there are these young men, the ones who were there, in -- with the blue -- the young
13 man in the blue-sky shirt, sky colour. So I said that I recognised him. I already said
14 that. *And he is the one opposite Mr Yekatom and somebody else just behind whom I
15 recognize. Because these are young people who were around the cathedral, so it's
16 easy for me to mention them, and then there's also this man who is there in the red
17 Bordeaux shirt who I recognise.

18 Q. [9:58:08] That's fine, *Abbé Antareze*.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:58:11] Indeed.

20 MS DIMITRI: [9:58:20](Interpretation)

21 Q. [9:58:20] Now, we spoke about young men who were outside. Yesterday we
22 spoke about a speech at the station.

23 Now, my question is with regards to this meeting in St Jeanne d'Arc church, was there
24 any type of publicity with regards to that meeting?

25 A. [9:58:54] Thank you.

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1 Mr President, well, the term publicity, for me, this is putting it a bit strongly. But
2 I do think that people were informed -- well, firstly, you have the platform. We had
3 meetings at the level of the platform -- you know, the pastors, the imams, and even
4 those who were invited, those who were in the neighbourhood, or the neighbourhood
5 chiefs, the representatives of youth and on the non-Muslim side, the Muslim side.
6 We didn't need to publicise things. People were aware of it. The mayor of Pissa,
7 Mr Roger --

8 Q. [9:59:46] *Abbé Antareze*, I'll stop you there because you're not answering my
9 question. I don't -- my question didn't aim to say who came --

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:59:52] Well, the word "publicity" --

11 MS DIMITRI: [9:59:53] Yes.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:59:54] -- is a little bit difficult to understand what
13 you mean. You have you to word it differently.

14 MS DIMITRI: [9:59:59] I'll rephrase, yeah.

15 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:00:00] Yes, rephrase. Actually I didn't
16 understand what you meant. Do you mean that it was publicised by newspapers or
17 in the radio, is that what you mean?

18 MS DIMITRI: [10:00:08] I will ask it differently. I think I know how to ask.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:00:12] Okay.

20 MS DIMITRI: [10:00:14](Interpretation)

21 Q. [10:00:14] So if you know - I don't want speculation from you - do you know
22 how people in Mbaïki found out or knew that there was a meeting? How was it that
23 they came outside the cathedral and how was it that they found you at Mbaïki station?
24 That's my question. So how -- how did they hear people speak about the meeting, if
25 you know?

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1 A. [10:00:50] Thank you.

2 Mr President, now, with regard to that question, well, I don't really recall whether at
3 the level of the platform we would see any letters or correspondence in the mosque
4 et cetera to inform people. I don't recall. But for me, the fact that there was a crowd
5 outside that meeting room was not a surprising fact, because we were in a village and
6 even those who were invited could very well share the information.

7 Q. [10:01:29] Thank you.

8 Now, inside the meeting room, you talked to us about the words uttered by
9 Mr Yekatom inside that meeting room. I don't want you to repeat what you said to
10 us yesterday.

11 My question to you specifically is: How did the -- those in attendance inside that
12 meeting room react to what Mr Yekatom said?

13 A. [10:02:00] Thank you.

14 Mr President, your Honours, we were in that meeting room in that very meeting on
15 30 January 2014, and people addressed the meeting. I think there was also
16 Monsignor Rino, other personalities. So it was quite normal for us to give
17 Mr Yekatom the floor. He was in attendance.

18 We heard what he had to say when he reiterated to us what he had said during the
19 meeting in Pissa. He said that he was not there to do any harm to the Muslim
20 civilians or to the Christians; he was there for a cause that he defined with regard to
21 Mr Djotodia and the Seleka.

22 Now, during that meeting, from what he said, we understood that there was more
23 fear than harm, and his speech reassured us somewhat. It gave us confidence that
24 we had someone in front of us who could help us in terms of security. Our concern
25 was to avoid any clashes within the population, because everyone was fearful,

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1 whether it be the Muslims or the non-Muslims, there really was a sense of fear.

2 So that's what I can tell you with regard to what Mr Yekatom had to say.

3 Q. [10:04:11] After his speech, did you, yourself, address those in attendance?

4 And, if you did, what did you say?

5 A. [10:04:26] Thank you.

6 Mr President, well, I don't really remember things in detail because it's 10 years ago
7 now, so, you know, age also intervenes. And I don't really remember details very
8 well. I know that I was the one who was coordinating the discussion, and we should
9 not forget that in that room there were also personalities in attendance. There was
10 the bishop of Mbaïki, there was the *préfet* of Mbaïki, there was the international NGOs,
11 there was Sangaris.

12 So, we wanted people to discuss matters; we didn't want to stray very far from our
13 objective, which was to ascertain how we could provide security for the town of
14 Mbaïki at that specific moment in time. There we are.

15 Q. [10:05:45] You indicated to us that there was a speech at the Mbaïki bus station.
16 Now, can you tell us how you went with Mr Yekatom to that bus station, and why
17 did the platform deem that it was necessary for such a speech to be given at that bus
18 station?

19 A. [10:06:26] Thank you.

20 Mr President, well, I believe that during that Jeanne d'Arc meeting, it is true that the
21 platform was there, but one should not think that during that meeting it was the
22 platform taking the decisions. No, it was a consensus that was being reached. So,
23 throughout the discussions it transpired that it was necessary to go and report back to
24 the population in order to calm their spirits. And that is how, together, we deemed
25 that it was a good thing for Mr Yekatom, and maybe those who had negative

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1 thoughts or fears, it was a good thing for them to discuss matters too, and he needed
2 to go and tell the population what he had told us during that meeting.

3 Q. [10:07:48] Now, during that meeting, Father Antareze, did somebody reproach
4 Mr Yekatom in any way whatsoever?

5 A. [10:08:01] Thank you.

6 Mr President, I do not remember anyone reproaching Mr Yekatom in any way, or
7 saying anything that might feed -- or someone getting angry in any way. You know,
8 it was our responsibility to coordinate discussions, and it is true that we would grant
9 everyone the floor, but one should not say that people were hiding things as such.
10 But there was a -- a climate of serenity and, as we had said at the outset of the meeting
11 that the objective of said meeting was to ascertain how we could provide security for
12 the town of Mbaïki and how we could retain cohesion between the two communities,
13 everyone understood what the objective was, and discussions were held in that vein.

14 Q. [10:09:39] I'm going to put a question to you that might seem somewhat strange
15 to you, but I'm going to put it to you anyway.

16 Now, according to your recollection, did Monsignor Rino utter any warning
17 whatsoever to Mr Yekatom?

18 A. [10:10:03] No, I don't remember that.

19 Sorry, Mr President. Well, are we talking about this meeting itself, or outside of that
20 meeting, because when we talk about a warning, well, during that meeting I didn't
21 hear Mr Rino addressing the meeting and warning anyone at all. I don't remember
22 that. But it would surprise me, unless it was in other circumstances. I don't know.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:10:56] May I, shortly.

24 And later, during the day, you know, outside, did you hear anything like that?

25 THE WITNESS: [10:11:08](Interpretation) Thank you, Mr President.

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1 When we finished the meeting at Jeanne d'Arc it was a little bit late in the day, so we
2 needed to go to Mbaïki station in order to report back to the population, and we went
3 together with Mr Yekatom. But Monsignor Rino did not go with us, and as his vicar
4 was there, he delegated to *Abbé* Maximin who was his general vicar.

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:11:51] Thank you, Mr Witness.

6 Ms Dimitri.

7 MS DIMITRI: [10:11:57] Thank you.

8 Mr President, please.

9 (Counsel confers)

10 MS DIMITRI: [10:12:31](Interpretation)

11 Q. [10:12:32] Another question that might seem strange to you but can elicit a rapid
12 answer: *Abbé* Antareze, to your knowledge at any moment in time whatsoever did
13 Monsignor Rino warn Mr Yekatom that what he was doing would bring him before
14 the International Criminal Court one day?

15 A. [10:12:57] Thank you.

16 Mr President, I don't remember that. I am not aware. I do not know.

17 Q. [10:13:19] And last question in this subject and then I'll move on to something
18 else.

19 Did Monsignor Rino at any moment in time accuse Mr Yekatom of being responsible
20 via his men of destroying mosques, of bad behaviour, of men acting under his order,
21 under his orders, behaving badly and destroying mosques? Do you remember?

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:13:53] Before you answer, Mr Vanderpuye,
23 please.

24 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:13:57] First, Mr President, it's an extraordinarily compound
25 question. The second thing is whether Mr Yekatom said something or didn't say

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1 something in the witness's presence is one thing. Outside of his presence is another,
2 and the question conflates the two.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:14:14] You're right in both ways, I think. It is
4 compound. It's a lot of information that you put to the witness and, also, you have
5 to make clear that you only -- of course, you can only ask the witness if, in his
6 presence, something was said like this. But please break it down.

7 MS DIMITRI: [10:14:33] Mr President, if I just -- if I may clarify. I'm not talking
8 about Mr Yekatom. I'm talking about what Monsignor Rino would have -- would
9 have said.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:14:43] Yeah, but again, in the presence of the
11 witness.

12 MS DIMITRI: [10:14:45] Yes, that was my question.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:14:46] Okay.

14 MS DIMITRI: [10:14:47] During the meeting, did he hear -- if he doesn't, then the
15 Prosecution can always --

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:14:51] No, we don't -- we don't discuss this.

17 MS DIMITRI: [10:14:54] But I'll --

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:14:55] Break it down. It was -- at least it was a
19 very compound question. I think there were five or six informations in a row. And,
20 actually, if you had put the question to me, I wouldn't -- you cannot answer it
21 meaningfully then. So break it down if you want to have the information, please.

22 MS DIMITRI: [10:15:14](Interpretation)

23 Q. [10:15:15] I'm going to repeat my question to you, Father Antareze.

24 To your knowledge, to your knowledge, at any given moment in time, did

25 Monsignor Rino allegedly say the following things to Mr Yekatom: Elements are

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1 passing themselves as Anti-Balaka, destroying mosques, behaving badly, and they are
2 acting under your orders?

3 A. [10:15:54] Thank you, Mr President.

4 I -- I'm not aware of that. That's all I can say to you. I am not aware of that.

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:16:05] Mr Vanderpuye, it's clear that the witness
6 has understood that it's only matters if he has heard something like that, when he
7 says he's not aware of that.

8 Please, continue, Ms Dimitri. It's okay this way.

9 MS DIMITRI: [10:16:43](Interpretation)

10 Q. [10:16:45] A very specific question, Father Antareze.

11 At the station when the speech was given, was there any equipment used to broadcast
12 that speech?

13 A. [10:17:07] Thank you.

14 Mr President, with regard to the equipment that was used to broadcast the speech,
15 well, there was a -- an empty space where the population had gathered, and we - that
16 is to say, the leaders together with Mr Yekatom, those in charge - we were at the -- on
17 the terrace. Well, it was in fact a cellar, a bar, where drinks are sold, and generally
18 speaking, I don't really remember. Maybe we used the loudspeakers from that bar
19 in order to broadcast what we were saying, or we might have used megaphones.
20 But we did use equipment, whatever the case may be, so that what we had to say
21 could go far.

22 Q. [10:18:49] On 30 January, that was the meeting at the St Jeanne d'Arc cathedral
23 and then the Muslims left. Do you remember -- do you remember the date of their
24 departure?

25 A. [10:19:18] The lorries that had come to pick up most of the Muslims in Mbaïki

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1 came around the 4th, 5th and 6th of February, in the month of February, that is.

2 Around the 4th, 5th, or 6th.

3 Q. [10:19:47] Thank you.

4 A. [10:19:49] Or maybe the 7th, I don't know. Around then.

5 Q. [10:20:00] Between the time when the meeting was held on 30 January and the
6 day when the Muslims left in their lorries, during that period of a few days, did you
7 have any meetings with Mr Yekatom in person, or did you have any contact with
8 him?

9 A. [10:20:27] Thank you.

10 Mr President, the truth be told, I don't really remember. What is certain is that
11 I didn't see Mr Yekatom every day, and I didn't call him every day. I don't
12 remember whether I talked to him on the telephone or whether we met each other;
13 I can't recall.

14 Q. [10:21:16] Do you remember whether, at any given moment in time, men who
15 were part of Mr Yekatom's group arrived in Mbaïki?

16 A. [10:21:40] Thank you.

17 Mr President, what I know is that during the meeting, Mr Yekatom had come with
18 people. Now, if my memory serves me correctly, I talked about two pickups. So
19 after the repeat run of the meeting at Mbaïki station, it was virtually nightfall on
20 30 January 2014, and when Mr Yekatom asked everyone to go home, we also went
21 back to the cathedral.

22 Now, as to whether, subsequently, other people came to join Mr Yekatom's elements
23 who were in attendance, I think it is possible. It is possible, however, if I were to be
24 asked to provide an estimation of the elements that were present there in Mbaïki,
25 I would say between 25 and 30 individuals. But there weren't that many of them.

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1 If there were that many, we would have noticed it, but they were there. I think
2 others came to join them afterwards, unless I'm mistaken.

3 Q. [10:23:49] You're talking about approximately 25, 30 elements, and this being an
4 estimation.

5 My question to you is whether in Mbaïki there was at any time a thousand men
6 present?

7 A. [10:24:10] Thank you.

8 Mr President, a thousand men -- no -- well, that's a lot of men. I don't believe so.
9 I don't believe so.

10 Q. [10:24:28] And these 25 to 30 elements were dressed in what manner?

11 A. [10:24:44] Thank you.

12 Mr President, well, from what I saw when we held that meeting at Jeanne d'Arc,
13 Mr Yekatom and his elements were wearing military garb. They were
14 wearing -- they had also Kalashnikovs on their person. I don't -- or I'm not familiar
15 with all weapons, but they had Kalashnikovs, and I -- when they were there in Mbaïki,
16 and when I went out and about and I would see an individual in military garb
17 holding a Kalashnikov, that, to me, was an indicia that these are Mr Yekatom's men.
18 Now, as to whether on occasion they would wear civilian attire, that is possible, but it
19 was their uniform that enabled me to recognise them.

20 Q. [10:26:10] After the meeting at the St Jeanne d'Arc church on 30 January, did you
21 at any given moment in time have telephone discussions with Mr Yekatom?

22 A. [10:26:30] Thank you.

23 Mr President, well, after the St Jeanne d'Arc meeting, after the rerun at Mbaïki station,
24 with regard to Mr Yekatom's men in Mbaïki, well, I do believe that I did have
25 Mr Yekatom on the telephone. I didn't talk to him on a daily basis, no. But it is

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1 possible that I did speak to him on the telephone and even that I met him in person.
2 There were times where I chanced upon him in the centre of the town, on the road.
3 I remember that I bumped into him once on the road from the cathedral to the town
4 centre. I was driving my motorbike, and he was with his elements in his white
5 pickup. So there we are. We stopped. He stopped, I stopped, and we talked, and
6 then I went on my way. So that's how I can answer that question.

7 Q. [10:28:07] And I understand that you did not speak to him on a daily basis nor
8 did you see him on a daily basis, but during those telephone calls, or whenever you
9 bumped into him and he was in his pickup and you were on your motorbike, did
10 Mr Yekatom ask you anything in particular?

11 A. [10:28:34] Thank you.

12 Mr President, well, I'm not able to recall the details, but what is certain is that on each
13 occasion when we met, I remember that Mr Yekatom would nearly always ask me the
14 same question. He would say, "Father, how are you? Are you all right? Things
15 are calm?" He would always put that question to me in Sango, in his language.
16 And, well...

17 THE INTERPRETER: [10:29:24] The witness trails off.

18 MS DIMITRI: [10:29:27](Interpretation)

19 Q. [10:29:27] Thank you. I would like to have you listen to a video at tab 38 of the
20 Defence, CAR-OTP-2042-3036, from 06:59 to 08:12. It's at tab 39,
21 CAR-OTP-2135-1631, at page 1636, from lines 88 to 89 -- sorry, 88 to 99.

22 THE INTERPRETER: [10:30:27] Corrects counsel.

23 MS DIMITRI: [10:30:29](Interpretation) And can we have a sign to show that are you
24 ready, please.

25 THE COURT OFFICER: [10:30:56] If it assists the interpreters, we also have the

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1 transcript on evidence channel 1.

2 THE INTERPRETER: [10:31:02] Much obliged, thank you.

3 MS DIMITRI: [10:31:04] But the interpreters should have a personal binder
4 provided.

5 THE INTERPRETER: [10:31:05] Thank you, we have got it now. Thank you.

6 MS DIMITRI: [10:31:08] Thank you. Let's start then.

7 (Playing of the audio excerpt)

8 THE INTERPRETER: [10:31:14](Interpretation of the audio excerpt)

9 "So in the margins of the missions of the minister responsible for rural development
10 carried out on the 6th and 7th of March last, in Mbaïki in the prefecture of Lobaye,
11 given the official launching of the agricultural campaign 2014-2015, our reporter
12 Lucienne Beram [phon] was interested in the burning subjects such as security, health
13 and education. In order to do so, she met different authorities on the ground
14 concerning the security situation in Mbaïki. Mr Alexandre Kouroupe-Awo, the
15 prefect of the said prefecture, declared that there was calm in the area. He,
16 furthermore, called upon the government and questioned it to provide the gendarmes
17 who were assuring security in Lobaye with the materials they needed for work to
18 follow.

19 [...] Since the departure of the Seleka from the town of Mbaïki, there is remarkable
20 calm. The population who were in the bush and who managed to get back to the
21 churches, they've gone back to their usual domicile. That's a sign that calm has
22 really come back even if there are some things that fall apart. Nevertheless,
23 everything is going well and this is despite the presence of the Anti-Balaka the last
24 time here, they've come and there's no concerns among the population."

25 MS DIMITRI: [10:32:50](Interpretation)

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1 Q. [10:32:50] *Abbé* Antareze, you heard *Préfet* Alexandre Kouroupe-Awo speaking
2 about an audio. Well, this is 10 March 2014, and it's indicated that despite the
3 presence of the Anti-Balaka, they did not worry the population and they speak about
4 remarkable calm.

5 Do you have a commentary to make with regards to this point that was noted with
6 regards to what was happening in Mbaïki at the time, because you were also there?

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:33:27] Mr Vanderpuye.

8 MR VANDERPUYE: [10:33:28] Yes, Mr President. I don't think it's reasonable for
9 him to comment on someone else's observations. If she wants to ask about his
10 observations during the same period, that's appropriate.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:33:39] Yes. Ms Dimitri, Mr Vanderpuye is
12 right. You laid the foundation for that. Yes. You can ask the witness what his
13 impression at the time was.

14 MS DIMITRI: [10:33:55] Thank you, Mr President.

15 Q. [10:33:57](Interpretation) *Abbé* Antareze, you -- at the time, what was it that you
16 noted? What were your observations?

17 A. [10:34:17] Thank you.

18 Mr President, well, at the time, there was the departure of the Muslims on 5,
19 6 February, and it also has to be said that when it is said that it was calm, I think, well,
20 that it was calm in the sense that there weren't really attacks taking place. We
21 mustn't forget the event in Boda, because Mbaïki's close to Boda. So if you make a
22 comparison with Boda, if the *préfet* says that it was calm and that he didn't see the
23 situation -- same situation in Boda, that's it. But there was still this feeling of fear.
24 It must not be forgotten because when somebody is afraid, you cannot say that it's
25 calm, so --

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:35:37] Mr Witness, since you mention that there
2 was still fear, who feared what? So, was the whole population in fear and what did
3 the population fear?

4 THE WITNESS: [10:35:52](Interpretation) Thank you, your Honour.

5 In order to answer your question, you have to take into account the different phases
6 that there were. When Mr Yekatom and his elements arrived in Mbaïki, there was
7 still the Muslims, the majority of Muslims who hadn't left. But I can't say here that
8 people were no longer afraid, no. There was still this feeling of concern. That's it.
9 And afterwards, the Muslims left, most of them. So, it wasn't all the Muslims and all
10 of them who practised the Muslim religion who left. It was particularly those who
11 were originally from Mbaïki or the women who were married to Muslims of a foreign
12 descent, they decided to stay with some of their children. They stayed in Mbaïki.
13 Now, afterwards, perhaps we'll speak about that, there was the murder of Mr Saleh
14 Djido, deputy mayor of Mbaïki. He was a Muslim of Chadian origin, if my memory
15 serves me well. And his case occurred around the end of February, towards the end
16 of February. During the month of February, a lot of things - January,
17 February - there was the visit of Madam President. So that's it. So what we can say,
18 what can be said, is that, indeed, in general, there was this calm climate, but
19 nevertheless there was still this feeling of fear.

20 There was the case of Mr Djido which made us very sad.

21 I don't know if I've answered your question.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:38:35] Well, in a way, yes, I think.

23 You mentioned that most of the Muslim population of Mbaïki left during the month
24 of February. Do we have information why they left?

25 THE WITNESS: [10:38:57](Interpretation) Thank you.

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1 Your Honour, do I know why they left? To tell you the truth, I can't know
2 everything. I can't know everything in depth because there was some things that
3 were perhaps decided at a higher level, at governmental level, or perhaps by those
4 who wanted to intervene. But the information that we received with regards to the
5 departure of these Muslims from Mbaïki was that there was a -- there were lorries
6 that were sent by the Chadian government and that was the information that -- that
7 we received. These lorries sent by the Chadian government, I presume, that was
8 linked to the Central African government. So that was the interpretation that we
9 had within the platform. We tried to do what we could with *Abbé* Maximin. Now,
10 was it linked to the situation in Boda? Was it the Muslims?

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:40:20] No, it's fine. You don't have to speculate.
12 We have your answer, and now I give the floor -- excuse me for -- but I was just
13 interested because the witness had just mentioned it. I was interested if he knows, if
14 he has information why the Muslims left. Yeah, please continue.

15 MS DIMITRI: [10:40:38] Thank you, Mr President.

16 Q. [10:40:40](Interpretation) So, I'm going to go a bit quicker through everything,
17 *Abbé* Antareze. Just a very precise question I want to put to you. During the period
18 which followed the meeting in St Jeanne d'Arc church right at the departure of the
19 Muslims by lorry, so I understand that you spoke about fear. But if we put the fear
20 aside, how would you describe the situation in Mbaïki? Were there incidents? Yes?
21 No? How would you describe the situation in the field in Mbaïki during this period
22 until the departure of the Muslims?

23 A. [10:41:22] Thank you.

24 Mr President, during this period between the meeting of Jeanne d'Arc and the
25 departure of the Muslims, the town of Mbaïki was calm.

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1 Q. [10:41:37] Thank you, I'm going to change subject, *Abbé Antareze*.

2 Is there an abattoir in Mbaïki?

3 A. [10:41:49] Thank you.

4 Mr President, Mbaïki, as a town, has an abattoir for cattle, but this abattoir, if my
5 memory serves me well, is situated at the exit of Mbaïki, exit from the town of Mbaïki
6 to Boda. So that exit, there is a river with a bridge and, so, when you cross that
7 bridge from Mbaïki, there is a road that goes towards the left -- or a path that goes
8 towards the left. I wasn't there to see, but I was told that the slaughterhouse was
9 perhaps 500 metres from the inside -- it was a bit -- in -- in the forest. There's a
10 pathway which goes to it. And that is where the cattle are killed.

11 Q. [10:42:58] And to the best of your knowledge, this path, is it also used -- was it
12 also used at the time -- time of the events?

13 A. [10:43:08] Thank you.

14 Mr President, well, what I know is that there's a path which is used, because, you
15 know, that from Mbaïki, in order to go into the villages -- in Bagandou or Scad, or in
16 order to go to Belou, et cetera, the people knew that there was this road, the national
17 road or the regional road -- or the regional road. But there was also the pathway, so
18 people knew that there were shortcuts because generally people walk on foot, so they
19 take shortcuts in order to quickly get to Mbaïki and to get to the villages. That is the
20 reality in our country.

21 Q. [10:44:20] And if you used these shortcuts -- at the time before the Seleka, if you
22 used these shortcuts, would you go through the roadblock towards Boda or would
23 you avoid that roadblock?

24 A. [10:44:41] Thank you.

25 Mr President, they're speaking about Mbaïki, but I was speaking about Boda.

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1 Q. [10:44:43] I'm sorry. I'm sorry, I'm going to reformulate my question.

2 If you used these shortcuts -- if you take these shortcuts that you've just referred to,
3 would you go through the roadblock on the national road or would you avoid it?

4 A. [10:45:08] Thank you.

5 Mr President, * well, firstly, this shortcut, this is a lot more practicable for people who
6 are on foot. For those farmers who are walking, it's a lot cooler. In the forest you're
7 protected by the trees, so it's faster as well. I think that there are people who prefer
8 to use it to avoid the hassle of going through the roadblocks as well.

9 Q. [10:45:45] Thank you. And my question, last question on that subject:
10 Personally, at any time did you see an Anti-Balaka base at the slaughterhouse or
11 abattoir?

12 A. [10:46:06] Thank you.

13 Mr President, personally, I didn't see an Anti-Balaka base at the slaughterhouse.

14 Q. [10:46:18] Thank you. Now we're moving forward. I'm now going to speak
15 about Boda. I'm changing subject now.

16 You spoke yesterday, towards 15:07 you -- *Abbé* Antareze, you mentioned having
17 gone on two occasions, July and June, to Boda. What took you to Boda? Why did
18 you go to Boda in June and July?

19 A. [10:46:53] Thank you.

20 Mr President, your Honours, our two trips to Boda in the month of June and July 2014
21 were linked to the conflict in Boda, this conflict in Boda which I believe took place
22 in January 2014. And so the information that had come to us was that the town was
23 divided, there was no communication, the town was dead, and the two communities
24 were looking at each other with a view of defiance as if they were enemies, so there
25 was this risk that the conflict could start again, or that it could get worse, and the

1 climate was really not good.

2 Now, we within the platform, with Monsignor Rino, we decided, with his support, to
3 take a trip to Boda. And I think it was Monsignor Rino who made a proposal for us
4 to add the prefect, Mr Alexandre. And there, I think the first trip, the first trip in the
5 month of June, if my memory serves me well, I was with Monsignor Rino. There
6 was the prefect of Lobaye, Alexandre Kouroupe-Awo, and there was myself. And
7 we left, but fortunately, at the time, there were Sangaris elements who were there and
8 they ensured security, because just after the conflict, I think that the Sangaris who
9 were based in Jeanne d'Arc, at a certain time, they left for Boda. So they left for Boda
10 and they went to give place to the MINUSCA who were going to take over Mbaïki.
11 So, thanks to these Sangaris elements, because our security had been assured, we
12 were able to take measures -- well, they took measures to accompany us and they
13 came to wait for us at the entry of Boda and they accompanied us to inside Boda.
14 The meeting took place at the town hall, at the town hall in Boda. That was it.
15 Boda town hall -- both parties were there. The Muslims who were represented, and
16 the non-Muslim parties were represented by the -- the vicar of the parish. It was an
17 Italian priest, Comboni, from -- so it was the priest from the parish of Boda at the time.
18 He was an Italian priest, Daniel Comboni. And there was Claude Bernard
19 Wakouzou. There was a nun who was there, Marguerite Kikine (phon) from
20 Guadeloupe, so a missionary from St Paul de Chartres who was in Boda. And so we
21 were there with the people who had to be there with the Sangaris for this meeting.
22 And afterwards, we went to the Muslim neighbourhood to meet the imams and the
23 Muslim leaders to speak to them. And there was also a meeting with the
24 non-Muslims, and I think that was in the parish, and we also spoke to them and we
25 tried to carry out mediation.

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1 THE INTERPRETER: [10:51:39] And the witness also mentioned the name

2 *Père Claude Bernard.*

3 MS DIMITRI: [10:51:47](Interpretation)

4 Q. [10:51:48] You spoke about mediation, what was the mission? How did the
5 non-Muslim population, how were they with regards to Muslims? I don't want to
6 generalise, but how was the part of the non-Muslim population towards the other
7 population in Boda?

8 A. [10:52:07] Thank you.

9 Mr President, during these two meetings there, June and July 2014, in Boda, to tell
10 you the truth, * there were a lot of hurting people on both sides. I remember at the
11 first meeting, it was the first time that both parties met each other again physically
12 after this conflict. * So it was really heated. If I remember the atmosphere, there
13 were people who were speaking with a lot of emotion. It wasn't easy. It was not
14 easy.

15 Fortunately, with regards to the security, there were the Sangaris there, so when
16 people went into the room, they weren't armed. So they made sure they weren't
17 armed. So somebody could speak, they could be angry, they could say things, and
18 we, too, we had our way of calming things down, and to give the floor to each and
19 every person.

20 Q. [10:53:29] *Abbé Antareze*, you haven't answered my question. Precisely the
21 non-Muslim community, without generalising, what was it asking for? What did it
22 want from the Muslims? What was their position?

23 A. [10:53:45] Thank you.

24 Mr President, well, I wasn't following all the details. What I would say here is that
25 we gave each and every person the floor. And on the non-Muslim side, there were

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1 people who wanted the Muslims to leave Boda. They didn't want them to be
2 welcomed by us as our brothers and sisters. And afterwards, they came to an
3 agreement with the Seleka. So there was this story of the Seleka -- they came to an
4 agreement with the Seleka when the Seleka came, and they were seen with the Seleka
5 and it was thought that it wasn't normal, they're not serious. Not everybody said
6 that, but there were also people on the non-Muslim side who attested to the fact that
7 there were cases of marriage between them, so they had common nephews and nieces,
8 they had --

9 Q. [10:54:57] Thank you. So this position, *Abbé Antareze*, that you've just
10 expressed that some non-Muslims asked the Muslims to leave, did you take it into
11 account before going to Boda? When you decide -- when you decided to go for this
12 mediation, did you take into account this position that there would be these
13 discussions?

14 A. [10:55:33] Thank you.

15 Mr President, with regards to this question, before going to Boda, because I said that
16 I was with the bishop, there was information that we received, because in Boda there
17 was this priest and the nuns -- because you can't just leave like that. You need to
18 have some information in order to prepare what can be said or what people could say
19 to us there in Boda. So we were trying to get information about that.

20 Q. [10:56:11] Now, you spoke about the fact that you had visited the Muslim
21 neighbourhoods in Boda. In the Muslim neighbourhoods was there -- were there
22 only Muslims from Boda in the Muslim neighbourhood?

23 A. [10:56:36] Well, before this conflict in Boda there was a rally of all Muslims who
24 were in the surrounding areas, carried out by the Seleka. So they did pretty much
25 the same thing in Mbaïki, when they brought all the Muslims together who were in

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1 the surrounding villages and they brought them to the centre under their umbrella,
2 under their protection.

3 And that was the same situation in Boda. So, before this conflict broke out, so both
4 the Seleka and the Muslims from the town of Ngotto, 65 kilometres away from Boda,
5 they were taken away, and they went to Ngotto. They were taken to Yawa, Boganda
6 village. When it comes to Boganangone, I don't think so. Perhaps some of them,
7 but I don't think so. Because as Boganangone was independent, with regards to
8 Boda there were villages on the Boganangone road, and Budjala, for example, they
9 were also taken to Boda.

10 So before the conflict there were, nevertheless, or there was a large concentration of
11 Muslims in Boda.

12 Q. [10:58:21] Did you observe the state of their houses, the residences in Boda when
13 you went there?

14 A. [10:58:34] Thank you.

15 Mr President, when you arrive in Boda, I mean it -- it sticks out. You have the
16 neighbourhoods, the Muslim neighbourhoods which are at the entry of Boda, because
17 from Boda to Mbaïki, that's 85 kilometres, approximately.

18 So when you enter into the town, first of all, you have the Muslim neighbourhood,
19 and there you can see well-built houses. You can see there semi-durable materials
20 and with corrugated iron.

21 And they are in the diamond trade, most of them, and they are major businesspeople.
22 Perhaps they're involved in gold as well. But it was the economic -- so Mbaïki's the
23 political capital, but Boda is the commercial capital, so it was practically -- well, you
24 had the Muslims for the most part who were ahead in that field.

25 Q. [10:59:49] Well, my question was a bit more precise, *Abbé Antareze*.

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1 Did you observe certain damages or damage to houses that were residences in Boda
2 when you went there? Were there -- were there houses that had been damaged?

3 A. [11:00:13] Thank you, Mr President.

4 Yes, I think it's important. It's always important because when a question is put, you
5 have to put it in context, because if you just -- when I go to Boda, it's a bit different.

6 But anyway, when on our two trips in June and July, after the conflict -- well, after the
7 conflict, so obviously, obviously, during the conflict there were people who were
8 killed. There were dozens of people killed. There were hundreds of houses that
9 were destroyed, but the most part of these houses were in the non-Muslim area for
10 the most part. It was on the non-Muslim side for the most part.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:01:04] Yes, break.

12 THE COURT USHER: [11:01:05] All rise.

13 (Recess taken at 11.01 a.m.)

14 (Upon resuming in open session at 11.39 a.m.)

15 THE COURT USHER: [11:39:48] All rise.

16 Please be seated.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:40:09] Ms Dimitri.

18 MS DIMITRI: [11:40:12] Thank you, Mr President.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:40:13] I assume you don't finish before the break,
20 next break.

21 MS DIMITRI: [11:40:17] No.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:40:17] No. But before the end of this day.

23 MS DIMITRI: [11:40:20] That's the goal.

24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:49:22] Okay. Good.

25 MS DIMITRI: [10:49:23] But I'm -- I'm ready, your Honours, to, if -- if your -- if this is

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1 a good proposal, to continue until 1.30 and shorten the lunch break.
2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:40:36] And what would that mean then?
3 MS DIMITRI: [11:40:39] It would mean that I would cover more.
4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:40:42] Yeah.
5 MS DIMITRI: [11:40:44] And that you would increase my chances --
6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:40:48] That you finish today.
7 MS DIMITRI: [11:40:50] Yes.
8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:40:51] Okay. Then let's see how far we get.
9 Or we stop at 1 o'clock, and I would prefer that actually, and then shorten the lunch
10 break and continue at 2 o'clock. So let's try to do it this way.
11 Yeah, please continue.
12 MS DIMITRI: [11:41:06](Interpretation)
13 Q. [11:41:10] Good morning again, Father Antareze.
14 Please excuse me when I interrupt you on occasion. There's a clock just behind you
15 and sometimes that clock pushes me to move forward a little bit faster. But I will
16 take your advice and give you a little bit more context when I put questions to you.
17 So my next question is still pertaining to Boda. Do you have any information
18 whatsoever that would enable you to tell us whether, yes or no, the population of
19 Mbaïki, the population to whom you spoke, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, were
20 frightened of the situation of the crisis in Boda?
21 A. [11:42:15] Thank you.
22 Mr President, with regard to the Boda crisis, and as to whether the population of
23 Mbaïki was in the know or not, I could say that they were aware, even if they weren't
24 aware of the details. Because, first and foremost, there was the telephone, and one
25 can communicate and receive news anywhere and everywhere, even if there were

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1 telephone line cuts in Mbaïki at the time and it was difficult on occasion to -- to
2 communicate via telephone. But in Mbaïki there were people who were aware of
3 what had happened in Boda, whether it be on the non-Muslim side or the Muslim
4 side.

5 Q. [11:43:29] What impact, if you are aware, did this have on the population of
6 Mbaïki? Namely, the fact that they were aware of this crisis in Boda and between
7 the two communities and the deaths.

8 A. [11:43:56] Thank you.

9 Mr President, I believe that I have always underscored, when speaking here, the fact
10 that there was a feeling of fear in Mbaïki. This was a reality that one cannot leave to
11 one side. This was linked with the situation of Boda, the sense that there was not
12 really a feeling of serenity.

13 Q. [11:44:44] Do you know a person by the name of Willybiro-Sako?

14 A. [11:44:52] Thank you.

15 Mr President, I know -- well, I mean by that -- I believe that I have seen him and I
16 have -- hear people speak about him. Mr Willybiro-Sako, he hails from Boda and I
17 have seen his house. I know his house because it is located in Boda on the road to
18 the Catholic mission. When you leave the centre of the town to go to the Catholic
19 mission, it's right by the side of the road and it's easy to see. I believe that he was
20 based in Bangui, hailing from Boda, who was a minister of a number of different
21 governments. And I believe that even during the conflict he was either an MP -- or
22 a member of the government, or he was an adviser in the president's office.

23 Q. [11:46:01] I'm going to be presenting a video to you.

24 This is tab 29, CAR-OTP-2023-2764.

25 And I'm going to be presenting to you from 28 seconds to 03:33.

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1 And the transcript can be found at tab 30, CAR-D29-0006-0103, at page 0103, line 13,
2 until page 0104, line 21. Are we all right? Thank you.

3 I'm going to be presenting a video to you, Mr Witness, and then I have a few
4 questions of clarification to put to you on this video.

5 (Viewing of the video excerpt)

6 THE INTERPRETER: [11:47:32](Interpretation of the video excerpt)

7 "... and as you have mentioned, the situation in Boda has been of concern since -- for
8 a number of months now. And the situation has become even worse, with killings in
9 the town. But you know that Boda today is a particular -- is particularly affected, to
10 the sense -- in the sense that a number of houses have been burnt to the ground,
11 destroyed. And a lot of people have had to leave. At the same time, a lot of people
12 have left, but a lot of Muslims have been fleeing exactions in other localities of
13 the country and they have all concentrated in Boda, which means that it has become
14 an enclave housing 2,000, 3,000 individuals, and today we have more than 8,000 to
15 10,000 people here.

16 You know that there have been so many exactions after the departure of the Seleka
17 from the town of Boda that the two communities, Muslim and non-Muslim, really
18 have become enemies, because one should use these terms, because from time to time
19 acts of violence are -- are set off, acts of hostility, whether it be amongst the Muslims
20 or the non-Muslims. And this has created a great deal of frustration, a great deal of
21 hatred within a population.

22 The town, which was a very beautiful town in the past, has practically been half
23 destroyed. And the population of non-Muslim origin, for the most part, are living
24 out in the plantations or in the surroundings or in the fields. And that tells you
25 exactly that living like that in such conditions, with bad weather and other such

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1 things, in many cases gives rise to disease, to -- to diarrhoea, et cetera, and to malaria.

2 So the situation in Boda is particularly difficult. To such degree that the local
3 authorities, particularly the *préfet* and the bishop of Mbaïki, after all the attempts of
4 reconciliation that have taken place and that have not been conclusive, thought that
5 this time they would call upon the inhabitants of Boda and resource individuals
6 hailing from Boda to such a degree that with them they would put their heads
7 together and come up with a proposition for the government.

8 So this is the aim of this meeting that you held here in Mbaïki, that we -- which enable
9 us to submit to the president of the Republic a memorandum on the main positions
10 that we are coming up with within the government, to find solutions to get out of
11 the crisis. And, luckily, the president has welcomed us, has welcomed this
12 undertaking and has immediately put in place a platform, a number of -- several
13 members of the government, advisers to the president of the Republic, for us together,
14 to be able to think about and find proposals for Boda, for the town of Boda. And
15 that is what has been done."

16 End of sight translation.

17 MS DIMITRI: [11:51:07] Thank you, thanks.

18 Q. [11:51:09](Interpretation) Mr Witness, now, you've seen Mr Willybiro-Sako on
19 this video. Now, he was referring to the fact that the situation in Boda was difficult
20 and that the *préfet* and the bishop of Mbaïki, Monsignor Rino, made attempts at
21 reconciliation. There was a meeting in Mbaïki, and my question to you is whether
22 you were in attendance during that meeting in Mbaïki with Willybiro-Sako and
23 the Mbaïki bishop?

24 A. [11:51:57] Thank you.

25 Mr President, now with regard to that meeting with those people from Boda and

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1 the bishop, I was aware of that meeting. I remember it was coming back from
2 the Boda meeting, coming back to Mbaïki, I was with the bishop and the *préfet* and
3 myself, we were in the bishop's car, he was driving, and it was during that trip that
4 we came up with the idea of that meeting. We thought that it could be of assistance.
5 We prepared that meeting, but I am not certain that I was in attendance at that
6 meeting. I was moving around. I had been asked to go to Bangui. And, at a given
7 moment in time, in addition to the platform, I was also taking care of other things
8 such as the Catholic schools of the Mbaïki diocese. So there was that level of
9 responsibility. I was moving around, I was going to Bangui. So I don't remember
10 whether I was in attendance at that meeting.

11 Q. [11:53:24] Do you have any information whatsoever with regard to a meeting
12 between Monsignor Rino and Willybiro-Sako?

13 A. [11:53:42] Thank you.

14 Mr President, well, I know, because monsignor told me, he did meet
15 Mr Willybiro-Sako. It might have been in Bangui. Was it before that meeting?
16 Was it a prelude to that meeting? The Mbaïki meeting took place with those people
17 from Boda and there were other meetings that were held in Bangui. There we are.

18 Q. [11:54:17] I'm going to have you listen to an audio of a few seconds dated
19 25 May 2014. It is a -- an interview with the prime minister at the time talking about
20 the situation in Boda.

21 It's tab 31, CAR-OTP-2023-2049. I'm going to have you listen from 31:39 to 31:59.

22 A very brief excerpt.

23 It can be found at tab 32, CAR-OTP-2127-6298, at 6307. And these are lines 311 to
24 314.

25 Are you ready? Thank you.

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1 (Playing of the audio excerpt)

2 THE INTERPRETER: [11:55:22](Interpretation of the audio excerpt)

3 "In the evening, we visited Monsignor Rino in Mbaïki, who received us in his
4 presbytery and -- and the discussions lasted approximately 30 minutes, and from
5 these suggestions was gleaned the -- the fact that we needed to act urgently because
6 the government has waited far too long with regard to the crisis in Boda."

7 MS DIMITRI: [11:55:59](Interpretation)

8 Q. [11:56:00] Now, you've just heard somebody who was a chief of the delegation
9 at that time who's talking about a meeting at the presbytery with Monsignor Rino
10 about the crisis in Boda. Now, did you hear talk of this meeting and were you in
11 attendance at that meeting?

12 A. [11:56:30] Thank you.

13 Mr President, it would seem to me that Mr Moloto was talking about this very same
14 meeting of the inhabitants of Boda with Monsignor Rino. I do not have any
15 recollection of a number of different meetings with Mr Monsignor Rino and
16 the inhabitants of Boda. I think that they're talking about this meeting in Mbaïki and
17 that's the meeting that they're talking about.

18 Q. [11:57:10] I'm going to be presenting another document to you. It is to be
19 found at tab 26 of the Defence file, CAR-D29-0005-0392, dated 23 May 2014,
20 Mr Witness.

21 And, in fact, this document is a report subsequent to a mission order, a parliamentary
22 sensitisation mission order for peace. And Mr Moloto, the *chef de mission*, is referring
23 to the fact that during the second phase of the mission, there
24 were -- the parliamentary mission for peace and reconciliation was divided into two
25 phases and it went throughout all the villages, the communes and the sub-prefectures

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1 of la Lobaye and that in addition to the ministerial delegation comprising five
2 ministers, there were the correspondent of Radio Ndeke Luka, Marcel Boboya, who
3 accompanied the mission during its time in la Lobaye. Now, did you hear speak of
4 that mission? Did you meet some of the members of the mission? Or did you meet
5 or hear speak of Marcel Boboya, the correspondent at Radio Ndeke Luka?

6 A. [11:59:02] Thank you.

7 Mr President, I know Marcel Boboya, who is a correspondent at Radio Ndeke Luka,
8 based in Mbaïki, because in Mbaïki, when there are meetings and organisations
9 present, he is there with his colleague from Radio Centrafrique. He is somebody
10 that I know well.

11 Now, as far as these various missions are concerned, I don't really have any specific
12 recollections. But I do know that there were missions, missions that came from Bangui,
13 and we should say that we were not always invited. These were missions that came
14 from Bangui, they have their mission order, they know how to do things. I am
15 aware that there were such missions, yes.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:00:12] But, yeah, he does not have further
17 knowledge, so please, I don't know if you had planned --

18 MS DIMITRI: [12:00:19] No.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:00:20] Okay, good.

20 MS DIMITRI: [12:00:21](Interpretation)

21 Q. [12:00:22] We talked about the inhabitants of Boda. Do you know - and when I
22 use the word "know", I mean have you heard speak of - do you know somebody by
23 the name of Fidèle Soussou?

24 A. [12:00:37] Thank you.

25 Mr President, I know Mr Fidèle Soussou from Boda. That's somebody that I know,

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1 because he's a Catholic Christian. So he is quite committed in this parish,
2 *Saint-Michel de Boda*, and his family is a known family, he works in the services of
3 the church in Boda, and he is a man who at a socio-political level is known because he
4 was mayor of Boda at a particular time. That was before the Seleka events. And he
5 was also a member of parliament, an MP of Boda parliament. So that family was one
6 of the major families, the family Soussou was one of the major families known in
7 Boda.

8 Q. [12:01:54] Did you have any information with regard to where he was during
9 the events at the time?

10 A. [12:02:04] During the crisis in Boda, I don't know. I don't know whether he
11 was in Boda itself, whether he was in Bangui, but what I do know is that, at
12 a particular time, as there were concerns with regard to his health, he was in Bangui.
13 But during the crisis itself, during the conflict itself, whether he was present in Boda,
14 that's something I don't remember.

15 Q. [12:02:34] And do you know somebody by the name of Habib Soussou, or have
16 you heard anyone speak about that person?

17 A. [12:02:48] Thank you.

18 Mr President, I know some children of Soussou, but, Habib, perhaps I know another
19 first name. If it's Habib, no, I have never heard anybody speak about a certain
20 Habib Soussou, no.

21 Q. [12:03:14] Do you have any information of any kind with regards to a visit,
22 a first visit from the -- Catherine Samba-Panza, the first vice-president of Boda?

23 A. [12:03:33] Thank you.

24 Mr President, Madam and Gentlemen, the Judges, the visit of Madam Samba-Panza,
25 Catherine Samba-Panza, as president of the transition in Boda was 10 January, I think,

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1 if my memory serves me well, 10 January 2015 in Boda. So, after her visit to Mbaïki
2 in 2014. So it was following all these meetings with the inhabitants of Boda, with
3 Monsignor Rino, with the prefect in Bangui, et cetera. They spoke about
4 Mr Nzagedok (phon) and it was decided to make the visit in Boda.

5 Q. [12:04:50] Perhaps there was a personal reason, but why do you specifically
6 remember this first visit of Catherine Samba-Panza to Boda?

7 A. [12:05:01] Thank you.

8 Mr President, that was her decision with the government, but on one day we were
9 told that, we were told that the president was going to go to Boda. The date was
10 announced, and at that particular time, personally, I wasn't present for the visit, but
11 the bishop was presented by *Abbé* Rodrigue Kongbingba (phon) who was
12 the chancellor of the diocese, so the bishop was represented by that abbot, but he left
13 for that visit because we considered that it was important that there be
14 a representative from the bishopric and he was there and he had to go to meet
15 the priest from Boda to be together. And the priest at the time was Father Claude
16 Bernard Wakouzou, who replaced *Père* Adelino, who -- the Italian who was there, and
17 afterwards -- so it was *Père* Claude Bernard, Father Claude Bernard, who replaced
18 him as priest.

19 Q. [12:06:47] Thank you. I'm now going to change subject once again and I would
20 now like to speak about Muslims from the surrounding villages, the ones
21 surrounding Mbaïki.

22 Now, you mentioned that, saying that a moment ago, speaking about the fact that
23 the Seleka were going to the Muslim village and surrounding village.

24 A. [12:07:22] Thank you for the question. It's true that taking into account
25 the surrounding villages, that they -- or, people from the surrounding villages had

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1 gone to -- or they were brought to Boda -- Mbaïki, sorry. So the number of Muslims
2 in Mbaïki increased.

3 Q. [12:07:47] And, to the best of your memory, did the number of Muslims increase
4 before or after the meeting of 30 January 2014 at the St Jeanne d'Arc cathedral?

5 A. [12:08:08] Thank you.

6 Mr President, the numbers increased, in particular at the time when these Muslims
7 were taken to Mbaïki by the Seleka and so it was before the meeting of 30 January,
8 because the meeting of 30 January, the Seleka didn't take part in that.

9 Q. [12:08:30] And --

10 A. [12:08:31] Or, the Seleka had already left.

11 Q. [12:08:34] And when they were taken by the Seleka, did you see -- or, did you
12 see that with your own eyes when you say that they were taken there by the Seleka?

13 A. [12:08:49] Thank you.

14 Mr President, well, I didn't directly see that trip. That's information that we received,
15 that they were taken to Mbaïki by the Seleka. Was that done at night? And at what
16 time? It was difficult to know.

17 Q. [12:09:28] Now, without seeing this event, did you see certain vehicles come
18 with certain Muslims, with your own eyes?

19 A. [12:09:44] Thank you.

20 Mr President, as I was saying earlier, I wasn't a witness of such a scene with my own
21 eyes. I didn't see vehicles, Seleka vehicles with my own eyes bringing Muslims. It
22 was information that we received, because we were faced with a fact and we wanted
23 to find out how these people had left the villages. Well, I don't know if all these
24 Muslims who were in Mbaïki. Was it everybody who had been brought by
25 the Seleka, whether they had all been brought by the Seleka personally, I don't think

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1 so. Perhaps some of them had come themselves.

2 Q. [12:10:37] And when you say that it was among the information that you had
3 received, because you were trying to know -- who were you trying to know this
4 information from?

5 A. [12:10:57] Thank you.

6 Mr President, you know, when you are in such a situation, there are things that are
7 said, there's information that you receive. So, there were people I knew in Mbaïki,
8 and Mbaïki is a village of my father, my father comes from Mbaïki. So it's my
9 father's village. So I also have an extended family in Mbaïki and the father of
10 my -- family of my father in Mbaïki. And what I was saying was that I am
11 somebody who leaves. I go out. I spoke about Mbaïki market, young people in
12 Mbaïki, where fuel is sold, that's a place where you can get a lot of information. You
13 turn up there, you park your motorbike and you speak to people and certain things
14 are said. I think there's not a lot of difficulties when it comes to getting such
15 information.

16 Q. [12:12:17] Did you have any information when this was discussed, when you
17 learnt about this information, when you got that information? Were you told why
18 the Seleka would -- or, why the Seleka had brought Muslims from the surrounding
19 villages to Mbaïki?

20 A. [12:12:45] Thank you.

21 Mr President, before the Seleka brought the Muslims from the surrounding villages,
22 or villages surrounding Mbaïki, there were facts or events that occurred. There was
23 Mbata, the case of Mbata, there had been an incident in Mbata. So there were things
24 that happened in these villages. There was an attack on the Muslims, and in
25 Bangui-Bouchia, in Bouchia, Belou, in Belou, which is between Mbaïki and Mbata,

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1 and between Mbata and Mbaïki and Bouchia, it's 10 to 15 kilometres. So I was
2 informed -- or, we were informed of reprisals as well by the Seleka, so in these
3 villages that I have just mentioned and named. And then there was this feeling of
4 fear, fear and concern. So I think it was all that that motivated or gave a reason for
5 these Muslims to be brought to Mbaïki, because Mbaïki was perhaps better for
6 the Seleka if these Muslims were there in order for their protection. But it also had to
7 be pointed out that this policy of bringing together the Muslims and bringing them to
8 the centre, that also happened in Boda. So in Boda, and perhaps in other locations in
9 the Central African Republic, so perhaps it was their policy.

10 Q. [12:15:05] And when you speak about the incidents, the attacks in Mbata,
11 Bangui-Bouchia, Belou, according to the information that you got, were these attacks,
12 or these attacks, who were they carried out by, the attacks on the villages of Mbata,
13 Bangui-Bouchia?

14 A. [12:15:27] Thank you.

15 Mr President, according to the information that we received with regard to
16 these incidents which occurred in these villages of Mbata, it wasn't -- or, Mbata is not
17 really a village, it's a small town, but -- it's a commune, rather. And then
18 Bangui-Bouchia, Begou, et cetera, well, people spoke about groups, non-identified
19 groups. So the information wasn't clear. Non-identified groups. Did these
20 groups come from elsewhere? Were they young non-Muslim men from the locality?
21 So there were groups of individuals, non-Muslim groups of individuals who would
22 attack the Muslims. They attacked Muslims. So there really was a climate of
23 insecurity. In particular, for the Muslims. And I think all of that motivated
24 the decision of the Seleka to bring these Muslims together to Mbaïki.

25 Q. [12:17:05] So we spoke about the departure of the Muslims who were in Mbaïki

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1 with the lorries that came to get them. And you get 4, 5, 6 February 2014. But I'm
2 not interested in the date. My question, my particular question is after they left.
3 Do you know if the houses of Muslims in Mbaïki were occupied?

4 A. [12:17:37] Thank you.

5 Mr President, Madam, and Gentleman Judges, what I do know is that after
6 the Muslims, after our Muslim brothers and sisters left, well, it wasn't everybody, but
7 after the most part had left, when they left Mbaïki, their houses were occupied by
8 the non-Muslims. That's something I can say.

9 Now, here we have to state that there were houses that the Muslims themselves had
10 entrusted to non-Muslims because there was friendship, there was trust between
11 them. So, in the hope that they would return one day. You're my neighbour, I
12 know you, we are on good terms, could you occupy my house in order to protect it.
13 And there were services like that that were asked for. And even myself, I, I was
14 asked myself, *Abbé Antareze*, I was asked to guard the house of a Muslim. And I
15 accepted. I did so. There were Muslims, individuals, who would ask for that and
16 there were also people who came, either for their own part to ask for their house to be
17 occupied, there were people who did that, because, as I said, if a Muslim -- a Muslim's
18 house, they had metal roofing and there were people who would come on their own
19 behalf, whether neighbourhood chiefs who would ask certain people to occupy
20 Muslim houses in order to protect them. That's something I don't know. That's it.

21 Q. [12:19:57] And these people who occupied houses of Muslims, you spoke
22 about -- well, who -- who are you talking about? What type -- which people are you
23 talking about here?

24 A. [12:20:15] Thank you.

25 Your Honour, well, the people, they didn't have houses which were in a good state.

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1 And the owners had left, for example. They'd been left and then they would take
2 over them. And I think it's important to stress the fact that there were people who
3 entrusted their houses to individuals.

4 Q. [12:20:56] I understand. But without generalising, Witness, the people who on
5 their own initiative, of their own accord, would take over houses of Muslims because
6 they had dilapidated houses or which were of poor quality, these people, where
7 would they come from? Were they from Mbaïki, or were they from elsewhere?
8 Who are you referring to?

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: Mr Vanderpuye.

10 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:21:31] I think the question might have been saved by
11 the very, very tail of it, but I would submit that it is quite a leading proposition.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:21:38] Well, I -- I think this is borderline. I let it
13 pass. Because the witness is not easy to be influenced. He only tells us what he
14 really knows, and if he doesn't know he tells us also. So we have gotten to know
15 also this witness.

16 Mr Witness, no speculation obviously, what do you know about the matter?

17 THE WITNESS: [12:22:06](Interpretation) Thank you, your Honour.

18 With regards to the occupation of Muslim houses, Muslims who had left, these
19 houses were occupied by locals, by local people, people from Mbaïki. I don't know if
20 in addition to what I've said there's anything else I can add, because I was asked to
21 guard a house of a Muslim, and I accepted, so there were cases such as that. I don't
22 know if there are perhaps other things that I don't know, but ...

23 MS DIMITRI: [12:22:58](Interpretation)

24 Q. [12:23:02] You spoke about or you made reference to the fact that -- well, I don't
25 want to -- to form what you said, but what you stated was certain Muslims did

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indeed entrust their houses. They had a friendly relationship with or a trust relationship with these people. They hoped to return to Mbaïki one day.

Now, my question is now, to the best of your knowledge, were there difficulties, or not, in a possible return of Muslims to Mbaïki?

A. [12:24:03] Well, when they left, I said here that it was the most part who left, so there were certain Muslims who stayed, for other reasons. That's it. Because at the time there were women, so indigenous women from Mbaïki, they had children born in Mbaïki. They had the hope of returning to Mbaïki and, there, before I left Mbaïki in order to come, before leaving Mbaïki there were already Muslims who had already returned to Mbaïki. So it wasn't that all of them, but I think it was progressive, happened progressively. If I say that they left with the hope of returning, the fact that -- the fact is that some of them did return. They recovered the mosques in Mbaïki, Baguirmi mosque, Yerima, its operation, so they re-established these mosques, they became in use again and there were Muslims who came back.

MS DIMITRI: [12:25:40] Mr President, with your permission, could I have a very short closed session.

PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:25:41] Let's go shortly to private session, yes.

MS DIMITRI: [12:25:45] Thank you.

(Private session at 12.25 p.m.)

THE COURT OFFICER: [12:25:49] We're in private session, Mr President.

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8 (Open session at 12.40 p.m.)

9 THE COURT OFFICER: [12:40:18] We're back in open session, Mr President.

10 MS DIMITRI: [12:40:22](Interpretation)

11 Q. [12:40:25] Mr Witness, the incident in Fatima where Father Nzale was killed, did
12 it have an impact on the return of Muslims to Mbaïki or on the willingness of
13 the population of Mbaïki to once again welcome those Muslims back; did it have any
14 impact?

15 A. [12:40:52] Thank you.

16 Mr President, as to whether it had an impact or not, in response to your question, I do
17 not believe it did. I do not believe so. This is my opinion, I believe it had far more
18 to do with the crisis in Boda. This crisis had a true impact. There might have been
19 other decisions that were taken at a higher level with regard to the departure of these
20 Muslims from Mbaïki.

21 Q. [12:41:40] Thank you.

22 Do you have any information whatsoever to the effect that the houses of the Muslims
23 in Mbaïki were occupied by Mr Yekatom's elements?

24 A. [12:41:58] Thank you.

25 Mr President, I do not have any information in that regard.

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1 Q. [12:42:23] Without speaking in general terms, do you have any information
2 whatsoever, or without generalising, do you have any information with regard to
3 the satisfaction or lack of satisfaction --

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: Mr Vanderpuye.

5 MR VANDERPUYE: [12:42:52] I understood the preface to be, to the witness, not to
6 generalise, but the question clearly calls for generalisation. So maybe Ms Dimitri can
7 be more specific in the question that she wants to put to the witness.

8 MS DIMITRI: [12:43:06] If I am more specific, I'm leading, and that's why I phrased
9 it very generally.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:43:11] Well, that, that -- that is then on
11 Mr Vanderpuye, so -- so be a little bit more leading, yes.

12 MS DIMITRI: [12:43:18] Thank you. I'll grab --

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: (Overlapping speakers)

14 MS DIMITRI: [12:43:22] -- the opportunity.

15 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:43:27] Yeah, absolutely.

16 MS DIMITRI: [12:43:28](Interpretation)

17 Q. [12:43:30] Did some non-Muslims of Mbaïki express or mutter any levels of lack
18 of satisfaction at the idea that some Muslims were coming back to Mbaïki.

19 A. [12:43:55] Thank you.

20 Mr President, I was not a witness, nor did I hear directly from the mouths of anybody.
21 You know, this is information, the fact that within the non-Muslim population there
22 are people who were not in favour of the return of Muslims to Mbaïki, well, we did
23 hear information to that effect.

24 Q. [12:44:44] With regard to the departure of the Muslims by lorry, two questions:
25 Do you know what became of their possessions? I'm not talking about houses,

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1 because we've talked about houses, I'm talking about their actual possessions. What
2 did they do with their possessions before they left, or what happened with
3 the possessions when the lorries turned up to take them away on 4, 5, or 6 February?

4 A. [12:45:18] Thank you.

5 Mr President, we saw people selling their possessions. Our Muslim brothers and
6 sisters were selling their possessions from their homes. And, you know, we are still
7 within that context and we, at the level of the platform, me as Father Antareze and
8 the bishop, well, we weren't really able to ascertain whether those lorries were going
9 to turn up and pick up those Muslims. There were Muslims who were also leaving
10 under their own steam, because before those lorries arrived, there were people who
11 were leaving voluntarily and selling goods. We could see that they were selling
12 their possessions, we could see Muslims selling their possessions.

13 Q. [12:46:46] We talked about Mr Deba yesterday. Do you know what happened
14 to Mr Deba's or the Deba's home?

15 A. [12:46:59] Thank you.

16 Mr President, the truth be told, I do not have any information regarding Mr Deba.

17 Q. [12:47:20] On the day of the departure, when the lorries left, do you have any
18 information whatsoever pertaining to the manner in which the lorries were loaded
19 and the conditions under which this occurred? Do you have any information?

20 A. [12:47:52] Thank you.

21 Mr President, I believe that what we need to clarify from the very outset is that I,
22 Father Antareze, did not see the scene unfolding directly, namely these Muslims
23 being loaded into the lorries that had arrived. But information reached me, to
24 the effect that the loading took place swiftly. The lorries showed up and people got
25 in fast, and they needed to act fast because the lorries had to leave. They had

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1 a window of time to observe. So people were doing it fast, firstly.

2 And I also heard that the family of Mr Djido Saleh, who was deputy mayor of Mbaïki
3 at the time, Mr Djido chose not to leave.

4 He chose not to leave because he is a Chadian, or was of Chadian origin, and it was
5 said that that father was sent by the Chadian government. He chose not to leave.

6 And according to the information that I received, he also stopped his wife and
7 children from leaving. There we are.

8 Q. [12:50:02] You spoke about your Muslim counterparts within the inter-religious
9 platform. You talked about your motorbike and that you would go to the heart of
10 where the information was to be found during the period after the meeting at the
11 St Jeanne d'Arc cathedral on 30 January. Did you have any contact? Did you go
12 and see your Muslim counterparts, to talk to them?

13 A. [12:50:45] After the meeting of 30 January 2014, we were in contact, I was in
14 contact with my imam colleagues or counterparts. I do not recall whether we held
15 another meeting, I do not believe that was the case. It was about 5 or 6 February. It
16 was just after that. And, you know, we didn't hold a meeting because people had
17 other things to do, but when I went past on my motorbike, when I saw the imam
18 standing in front of his house, I can't go by without being seen and I would stop and
19 say, "Hello, how are you?"

20 So, we didn't really broach that matter, the departure of the Muslims. It was
21 afterwards that I understood. As to whether they knew about it and didn't want to
22 tell me, I can't really say that today, because we worked in a climate of sincerity, of
23 trust, and they trusted me. But, of course, I am not god to know what his innermost
24 thoughts were, whether he was aware of it and didn't want to say so. But they -- or
25 had been instructed not to say so. But what I can say is that they did not officially

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1 inform me that they were going to leave.

2 Q. [12:52:48] I'm going to be changing subject once again.

3 We've seen a number of video excerpts of the visit of Madam Samba-Panza and
4 the minister of defence, Jean-Jacques Le Drian, on 12 February 2014. You told us
5 yesterday that you were present during that meeting.

6 So my question, my first question is: How was she welcomed on that day when she
7 came to Mbaïki? Can you describe to us the context of that visit and the speech that
8 she gave, please.

9 A. [12:53:40] Thank you.

10 Mr President, your Honours, what I can say with regard to the context of that visit of
11 Madam President Catherine Samba-Panza on 12 February 2014 is that the meeting
12 took place at the prefecture of Mbaïki. It was in the place between the *sous-préfecture*
13 and the *préfecture*, out in the open. There was some grass there, and
14 madam president and the minister of defence, Mr Le Drian, they were there on
15 the veranda. We had set out some chairs and the population had gathered in order
16 to welcome the president and her entourage. Figures of authority were in
17 attendance; there was Monsignor Rino, there was his vicar, Father Maximin. And
18 speeches were made. As to whether it was the mayor who took the floor to welcome
19 people, I know that the *préfet* spoke, *préfet* Alexander Kouroupe-Awo, he spoke.
20 Monsignor Rino, I believe also took the floor. And -- and the minister, too, I believe
21 that he spoke. And madam president, I believe that she was the one who closed the
22 meeting.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:55:53] There was one part of the question of
24 Ms Dimitri that you have not answered.

25 So you said the last speaker was the then president, Madam Samba-Panza. How

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1 was her speech received by the population, if you recall it?

2 THE WITNESS: [12:56:21](Interpretation) Thank you.

3 Mr President, well, I don't really remember all the details, but when the president
4 spoke, she spoke about the situation prevailing in the country. She talked about
5 the Seleka, she talked about the Anti-Balaka. She used that term. And she
6 hammered home that she wanted the various exactions and what was happening, she
7 wanted this to come to an end. There we are.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:57:09] But, still, Mr Witness. So when she had
9 ended -- also during -- perhaps also during the speech, was she applauded, was she
10 booed? You know what I mean. Do you have any recollection to that effect?

11 THE WITNESS: [12:57:34](Interpretation) Thank you.

12 Well, I don't recall. During her speech there were times when people were
13 muttering. We understood -- when people are happy, people will applaud, back
14 home. And we know that they're happy. But when people mutter, murmur, it's
15 not a good sign. It's as if they are not in agreement. But as they can't say so openly,
16 they mutter away. There we are. I remember that.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:58:17] Very nicely described.

18 I think you would -- will go into the substance of the speech, so perhaps we have now
19 the lunch break that we shorten until -- only until 2 o'clock.

20 THE COURT USHER: [12:58:32] All rise.

21 (Recess taken at 12.58 p.m.)

22 (Upon resuming in open session at 2.05 p.m.)

23 THE COURT USHER: [14:05:35] All rise.

24 Please be seated.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:05:57] Good afternoon.

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1 I don't want to say more in open session, but we appreciate it, as a Chamber, a lot that
2 the two accused are present and that we can continue.

3 Ms Dimitri, without further ado, I would say.

4 MS DIMITRI: [14:06:11] Thank you, Mr President.

5 Q. [14:06:14](Interpretation) Good afternoon, Father Antareze.

6 Now, once again regarding the visit by Ms Samba-Panza in February 2014 to Mbaïki,
7 now you mentioned some murmuring going on. Who was murmuring?

8 A. [14:06:34] Thank you, Mr President, your Honours.

9 During a number of passages of the President's speech, people were murmuring and
10 these -- this murmuring came from the population, in particular.

11 Q. [14:07:07] You also said that she mentioned the situation in the country and she
12 talked about the Seleka, the Anti-Balaka. As best you understand -- because this was
13 a speech in Mbaïki, was she talking about Mbaïki or was she talking about the
14 situation throughout the entire country?

15 A. [14:07:38] Thank you. Mr President, after -- well, especially during the
16 ceremony -- well, we tried amongst ourselves, the various people who were in charge,
17 particularly the people from the platform, and also with the people at the church
18 compound, we tried to have a discussion about this murmuring and the speech that
19 had led to this murmuring. So we said that the pressure that we had had -- well,
20 that the speech was rather general in nature, as if Madam President had not taken
21 into account the specific nature of Mbaïki.

22 Q. [14:08:59] Now that day -- and I realise that you might find my question a being
23 a bit strange, but in any event I'm asking you, according to you and the information
24 you had, was a Muslim person killed?

25 A. [14:09:12] Thank you. Mr President, that day, 12 February, no. How could

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1 a Muslim person be killed?

2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:09:26] After the fact, it's a bit late, but

3 Mr Vanderpuye, I still give you the floor.

4 MR VANDERPUYE: [14:09:31] If we could have a clarification as to where.

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:09:35] Well, the witness has obviously no

6 knowledge of a killing on that particular day, so --

7 MR VANDERPUYE: [14:09:45](Microphone not activated)

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:09:49] Yes, okay.

9 Then to shorten the whole thing, Mr Witness, we are talking about the whole of

10 Mbaïki. Do you have any information that anywhere in Mbaïki on that day,

11 a Muslim was killed?

12 THE WITNESS: [14:10:02](Interpretation) Thank you, Mr President.

13 When Madam President was visiting Mbaïki on 12 February 2014, I myself, was not

14 informed of any crime or of any Muslim person being killed.

15 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:10:34] Thank you very much for this very

16 differentiated answer again.

17 Ms Dimitri.

18 MS DIMITRI: [14:10:41](Interpretation)

19 Q. [14:10:44] If you know, do you know why Madam President chose Mbaïki for

20 her first visit to the provinces?

21 A. [14:11:01] Thank you, Mr President.

22 To answer that question, well, there might be some things that I don't know about, I

23 really can't -- but what I do know is that she appreciated -- if one takes into account

24 her speech, she appreciated the efforts made by the people of Mbaïki to live together.

25 Mbaïki did not go through the kinds of things that happened in Boda.

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1 Q. [14:11:59] I'd like to show you an article taken from the press, and in this article
2 we read about the visit.

3 Tab 35, CAR-OTP-200 -- CAR-OTP-2001-4333. I'd like to draw your attention to the
4 bottom of the page, where we see:

5 "In order to show that nothing has been lost, Catherine Samba-Panza, the transitional
6 president, and Jean-Yves Le Drian, French Minister of Defence, travelled to Mbaïki on
7 12 February. In this sub-prefecture located 80 kilometres south-west of Bangui,
8 French troops were able to avoid the worst. Early in February, after the former
9 Seleka combatants had left, the Anti-Balaka wanted to kill Muslim civilians.

10 A column of Sangaris forces arrived just in time to prevent the massacre. But some
11 3,000 Muslims of the town had to flee." End of quote.

12 So my question, Father Antareze, is this: You've told us about the situation in Mbaïki
13 at the time and the visit by Samba-Panza, the departure of the Muslims. To your
14 knowledge, this passage from this article, is this information correct or not?

15 MR VANDERPUYE: [14:14:25] Again, counsel is asking the witness to comment on
16 the veracity of the article in front of him. She could ask him about the accuracy or
17 what his recollection of the events are, but whether it's correct or incorrect, or right or
18 wrong, is not the point.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:14:40] Well, it's in the middle.

20 Ms Dimitri, let me.

21 Does what you have heard, Mr Witness, does this accord with your recollection of the
22 events?

23 I think nobody will complain against this one.

24 And, Ms Dimitri, it's the same, effectively.

25 I repeat it, Mr Witness, because there was this exchange that is confusing for you.

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1 Does this -- what Ms Dimitri has read out, this part of the article, what is described
2 there, does this accord with your recollection of the events?

3 THE WITNESS: [14:15:27](Interpretation) Thank you, Mr President.

4 Mr President, as I read this passage from the article, well, there are some things. It
5 says here that the president was in Mbaïki on 12 February - that's true - with the
6 French minister of Defence. That's true as well.

7 But Mbaïki is not 80 kilometres from Bangui. It's more than that; it's 107 kilometres
8 away. The troops were able to avoid the worst. I know that the French troops were
9 in Mbaïki because -- well, already with the meeting of 30 January they were there.
10 That is true.

11 So -- but -- well, they wanted -- the Anti-Balaka wanted to kill the Muslim civilians.
12 I'm not in the place of god, so I can't tell you about that, what they wanted to do. But
13 I can say there was no massacre in Mbaïki. There were no massacres in Mbaïki, so
14 there you have it. There were no massacres in Mbaïki.

15 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:17:07] Ms Dimitri.

16 MS DIMITRI: [14:17:10](Interpretation)

17 Q. [14:17:10] Last question. Now according to the information that you had, did
18 a column of Sangaris forces arrive just in time to keep the massacre from occurring?

19 A. [14:17:25] Thank you. Mr President, as I was saying, the Sangaris forces were
20 in Mbaïki. They -- their presence was linked to the presence of Seleka forces. When
21 the Seleka were there, the Sangaris forces were there. They were based at the
22 St Jeanne d'Arc church right -- school --

23 THE INTERPRETER: [14:18:00] Correction --

24 THE WITNESS: [14:18:02](Interpretation) -- right by the cathedral, they were based
25 there. And you could see them with their tanks and they patrolled. We would see

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1 them. They were there.

2 Did they prevent a massacre from occurring? Well, their presence was well
3 intentioned. They meant well. We appreciated their presence.

4 MS DIMITRI: [14:18:44](Interpretation)

5 Q. [14:18:44] And you mentioned the Sangaris patrols. After the departure of the
6 Seleka, to your knowledge did the Sangaris forces move about the neighbourhoods
7 and on the side roads of Mbaïki, the less -- the minor roads of Mbaïki?

8 A. [14:19:11] Thank you. Mr President, what I can say here -- and what I
9 remember is, I remember Sangaris forces patrolling on the major roads, the main
10 thoroughfares. The road that goes to Boda, the road -- the large road that goes by
11 Bagandou -- because once you exit Mbaïki, three or four kilometres on, heading
12 towards Boda, there is a crossroads. And one way left, you --

13 THE INTERPRETER: [14:19:57] Correction --

14 THE WITNESS: [14:19:58](Interpretation) To the right, there's the Boda road, and to
15 the left, there is a road that goes to N'Dolobé. There's also a road for Mbata. So I saw
16 them several times patrolling.

17 MS DIMITRI: [14:20:23](Interpretation)

18 Q. [14:20:23] More specifically, Father Antareze, you said yesterday at 15:27 that
19 during the meeting at the cathedral on 30 January, all the people present at this
20 meeting thought it was a good thing for Mr Yekatom and his elements to go -- invade
21 Mbaïki -- or enter Mbaïki for matters of security.

22 My question is this: Why? Because the Sangaris forces were present in Mbaïki.
23 Why them, despite the presence of the Sangaris forces?

24 A. [14:21:10] Thank you.

25 Mr President, during that meeting of 30 January, 30 January 2014, at the Mbaïki

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1 cathedral, it emerged -- well, this idea emerged of -- of not opposing us, rather to give
2 Mr Yekatom and his elements the opportunity. And it was out of a concern for
3 security. People were saying, "Well, the Sangaris were there". They were patrolling,
4 but they didn't go into the neighbourhoods very much where the population was
5 living, because the risk that we had, the fear we had was the risk of clashes between
6 the two communities, and that -- that would have happened in the neighbourhoods.
7 So that's -- that's what I can tell you.

8 Q. [14:22:27] Thank you. I'd like to move on to another topic. You made
9 mention of this briefly when you talked about the restoral of a number of mosques in
10 Mbaïki.

11 * After the Muslims left, were the two mosques Baguirmi and Yerima looted and
12 destroyed? What happened to the two mosques?

13 A. [14:22:59] Thank you.

14 Mr President, after the Muslims left Mbaïki, the two mosques - Baguirmi mosque and
15 Yerima mosque - were not destroyed, because when you talk about destruction, to me,
16 that means breaking down the walls and nothing left. But, no, I do know that those
17 mosques were not in very good condition after. Windows had been removed.
18 There were no doors anymore. The roofs, no. If I remember, there still was roofing.
19 It's not easy to remove sheet-metal roofing.

20 If I remember correctly, those buildings, those places of prayers were not in good
21 condition when it comes to the doors and the windows. At one point, the context in
22 Mbaïki was such that there was a lack of wood. The sawmill had shut down, and so,
23 to get wood for coffins even, if someone died, it was difficult to get wood for coffins.
24 I remember that very well.

25 And many times at the bishop's compound in Mbaïki there was a carpentry shop and

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1 there was some wood kept there, and I remember so many times we intervened and
2 we provided coffins for people who had died.

3 I'm telling you all of this so that you understand that in some cases, the doors and
4 windows of buildings had been removed.

5 Q. [14:25:29] And my last question about this before I move on to another topic is
6 as follows: Do you have any information about Mr Yekatom's elements taking part in
7 looting or the destruction or looting of mosques or homes of Muslim people, or
8 destroying their homes?

9 A. [14:25:58] Thank you.

10 Mr President, in response to that question, I believe that judging by the context, I
11 didn't see that. I didn't see any of that, and I think that if we were aware of
12 Mr Yekatom's elements doing that, that they had removed things, I believe we would
13 have reacted. We would have reacted.

14 Perhaps -- perhaps he did that at night. I don't know. Maybe -- I don't have some
15 information, but we are not aware of that.

16 Q. [14:26:43] Thank you.

17 Do you -- I'm going to switch to an entirely different topic.

18 Do you know a place called Baboua?

19 A. [14:27:00] Thank you.

20 Mr President, I do know that village. It's on the road to Boda, between Mbaïki
21 and -- well, 40 or 50 kilometres away on the way to Boda.

22 Q. [14:27:22] And in 2014, were you aware of an unfortunate incident that occurred
23 there in the village of Baboua?

24 A. [14:27:35] Thank you.

25 Mr President, we were informed of an incident that occurred in Baboua. There was

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1 an attack upon the Muslims there in Baboua. We were informed of that.

2 THE INTERPRETER: [14:27:59] Interpreter correction: Incident in Boda.

3 MS DIMITRI: [14:28:07](Interpretation)

4 Q. [14:28:07] Could you tell us what you remember? I realise you're not an
5 eyewitness or a direct witness to what happened, but what do you know? What
6 information do you have about that attack upon Baboua?

7 A. [14:28:30] Well, what I do know is that we did receive information, but it was
8 after the attack. It was related to the information to the effect that a group of
9 Muslims from Boda had fled. They fled their -- the village of Baboua. I'm talking
10 about Baboua, and apparently they took shelter in the forest, in the forest between
11 Baboua and Mbaïki.

12 So we did receive that information. They were in a -- they were in distress,
13 a situation of distress, and at the bishop's compound we received that information
14 from Caritas at the --

15 THE INTERPRETER: [14:29:38] Correction --

16 THE WITNESS: [14:29:39](Interpretation) The Caritas NGO decided to travel there
17 to see what the situation was and to see what was going on with our Muslim brothers
18 and sisters. *Abbé* Maximin, who was the director of Caritas at the time,
19 Father Maxime and I, he wanted me to go as well as part of the platform, so perhaps
20 with some other people from Caritas, I no longer recall, because Caritas had
21 a team -- a team.

22 So we left with some supplies. We decided that we were not going to head there
23 empty-handed, so we left and we had sardines and other foodstuffs.

24 We didn't get to the village of -- we got to the spot that we were told about, and, there,
25 I no longer recall, truth be told, whether we met the people or whether we had an

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1 opportunity to meet with them that day. I really don't remember.

2 But after, we were able to meet them within the MISCA compound in Mbaïki and we
3 were told that they had had an opportunity to be taken back to Mbaïki by the
4 MINUSCA.

5 Q. [14:31:29] You have talked about the attack on -- in Baboua against Muslims.
6 Do you remember whether any Muslims were killed, and, if so, do you remember
7 who?

8 A. [14:31:48] Thank you, Mr President. According to the information that we
9 received from Baboua in relation to that attack, the Muslims of Baboua were attacked,
10 and if I remember correctly, the imam of Baboua was killed alongside his son or his
11 nephew. In any case, alongside two or three members of the family.
12 So I think there were three or four people who were killed in front of the mosque.
13 These people were killed in front of the mosque, it appears, or perhaps they were
14 killed in their home, but people were talking more about the mosque.
15 So it was from that moment that the other Muslims took flight.

16 Q. [14:33:08] Do you have any recollection of having discussed specifically about
17 Baboua with anyone? Do you remember any name?

18 A. [14:33:24] Thank you. Mr President, as I was saying a short while ago,
19 subsequently * we had the possibility of meeting a few Muslim people from Baboua
20 in the premises of MINUSCA in Mbaïki -- or, rather, MISCA in Mbaïki. And when
21 we arrived, we identified someone called Youssouf or Youssoufa. He was sort of
22 like their leader, but in any case, he was courageous. He was like the spokesperson
23 of those Muslims. That is what I can say.

24 Q. [14:34:29] You stated that the Muslims of Baboua took refuge in the forest
25 between Baboua and Mbaïki. We are going to come back to that. You also said that

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1 at some point, some of them were within the premises of MISCA in Mbaïki, but did
2 they move around? Either Youssouf or members of his family or other Muslims,
3 were they moving about in Mbaïki?

4 A. [14:35:12] Thank you.

5 Mr President, in answer to that question, I think that when we went to visit them, of
6 course, we went with foodstuffs, we didn't go empty-handed, even though we had
7 the impression that MISCA was taking care of them because they were living in their
8 premises on the spot.

9 I think they were not moving around. Things were still hot and they had just
10 arrived the MISCA premises, so they were not moving about. But progressively, I
11 think some months or some weeks afterwards, people could see them. I myself
12 was -- I could see them. I met Mr Youssouf, for example, in the market and we had
13 a conversation.

14 Afterwards, those who had relatives in the neighbourhoods of Mbaïki, started visiting
15 their relatives or people that they were familiar with. There was a family in -- from
16 Baboua who were living in a house near the Mbaïki cathedral. There is a small road
17 from Mbaïki centre to the cathedral. So I saw that family with my own eyes. I
18 greeted them and recognised them as some of the people we had seen at the MISCA.
19 They also recognised me.

20 So all the time that I passed by there, I made a point of greeting them, so I understood
21 that this was the family of Mr Youssouf. But whether it was members of their
22 family -- of his family or they were simply coming to visit him because they had been
23 together in Baboua, I cannot tell.

24 Q. [14:37:52] And at the time that they started moving about, were you still
25 stationed at the Mbaïki cathedral or had you already been moved to the St Augustin

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1 parish in the central town?

2 A. [14:38:11] Thank you, Mr President. In answer to that question, I was
3 transferred to St Augustin around the month of July, I believe. The end of July, that
4 is when I went to St Augustin, from then, right up to September 2015, when I left St
5 Augustin to return once again to Ngotto.

6 Q. [14:38:54] You didn't answer my question. When they started moving about
7 and going about the MISCA, were you still at the cathedral or you had already been
8 transferred to St Augustin?

9 A. [14:39:17] Thank you. Mr President, if I remember correctly, I had already been
10 transferred to St Augustin.

11 Q. [14:39:30] I will show you a media article, tab 20, CAR-OTP-2001-2248, dated 18
12 February 2014, page 2249. And I will read it in English, I will read the title, and then
13 after that, we will move to something else.

14 (Speaks English) "The following day, as we drove south to the village of Baboua, we
15 found three bodies lying in front of a mosque. They were the village's Muslim
16 mayor, Adamou Dewa, his son Abu Bakr and another Muslim resident named
17 Abdou."

18 "They said that there were only 200 Muslims left and they were under serious threat."

19 (Interpretation) In this article, mention is being made of the village of Baboua and,
20 specifically, about the three people who were killed in front of a mosque.

21 Now, the names of the victims, do they refresh your memory? You talked about the
22 imam, that is Adamou Dewa, his son Abu Bakr and another Muslim named Abdou.

23 A. [14:41:27] Thank you. Mr President, according to the information that we
24 received, people talked about the imam of Baboua with one of his sons as well as
25 another Muslim. I don't know whether he was related to them or just another

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1 Muslim, but in any case, when I was telling you about this, I said three or four dead.

2 Here, they say three people were killed. Mr Abdou, I don't know whether he was
3 the mayor of Baboua. That, I cannot tell.

4 Q. [14:42:16] I will show you another video, tab 23, CAR-OTP-2055-1915 from zero
5 seconds to 45 seconds.

6 The interpretation is not necessary.

7 What is of interest to me is for you to look at the images and tell me whether you
8 recognise anyone at all.

9 (Viewing of the video excerpt)

10 MS DIMITRI: [14:43:24] Can you put -- we don't have a sound.

11 (Viewing of the video excerpt)

12 MS DIMITRI: [14:45:02](Interpretation)

13 Q. [14:45:05] Do you recognise the person on the video?

14 A. [14:45:11] Thank you, Mr President. I recognise him, I believe it is Mr Youssef
15 or Yousseoufa.

16 Q. [14:45:32] Now during the conversations that you had with Youssef and the
17 people from Baboua, as well as the information that you received, now do you know
18 where the group came from that attacked those three Muslims, including the
19 information that you received from Father Maximin?

20 A. [14:46:09] Thank you. Mr President, we met with them. * The objective of our
21 visit was to give them foodstuffs and supplies at Caritas. They were already in the
22 premises of MISCA but, to tell you the truth, we didn't really want to ask them that
23 question directly, to ask them who attacked you, who killed whom. We didn't adopt
24 that approach.

25 As far as we were concerned, it was not appropriate. We knew that the MISCA were

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1 there, so we limited ourselves to visiting them and we prayed together and we gave
2 them what we had to give them.

3 If you allow me, it should be noted that Baboua is a locality that we know fairly well.

4 In relation to its geographical location, it is a village, which is not -- well, I wouldn't
5 say really isolated, but it is far away from Boda and Mbaïki. It's somewhere in the
6 middle, so there are no security forces, there is no gendarmerie, there is no brigade.

7 So Baboua is also a locality which had not been stable because there were localities in
8 Lobaye which had never been stable from the point of view of security. So, if you
9 allow me, I would like to emphasise that.

10 So even before the arrival of the Seleka, and the Anti-Balaka, and so on, the locality of
11 Baboua had always been visited by highway robbers, bandits, and so even the stretch
12 from Baboua to Boda, it was not very safe.

13 So we took into account all those parameters so as not to go and ask those people,
14 "Who attacked you", and so on. We simply went there for humanitarian assistance.

15 Q. [14:49:24] I will show you an article. It is actually a video.

16 Just one question before that video.

17 I understand that you did not discuss directly with them who attacked them, but in
18 light of all the information that you received at the time on Baboua, irrespective of the
19 provenance of that information --

20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:50:12] Well, if a deed has been done, it has not
21 been done yet.

22 MS DIMITRI: [14:50:20] Thank you.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:50:21] To put it this way, Mr Vanderpuye, but
24 you may give a warning, let me put it this way, yes.

25 MS DIMITRI: [14:50:29](Interpretation)

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1 Q. [14:50:29] Now, based on all the information that you had at the time in your
2 possession, did you receive any information at all to the effect that those responsible
3 for that attack were elements of Mr Yekatom?

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:50:55] Mr Vanderpuye.

5 MR VANDERPUYE: [14:50:57] I was right; (a), it's leading and, (b), it calls for
6 speculation. He has answered the question already about what he knows about the
7 attack.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:51:16] Ms Dimitri, can you make a little change
9 to the wording and concentrate on the information that he has concretely so we
10 have -- of course, it has been largely covered, I would also say.

11 For everyone, it's already a long day, I see.

12 Ms Dimitri, do you see a chance to finish this afternoon?

13 MS DIMITRI: [14:51:47] I'm trying, I'm trying, but I --

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:51:50] But, you know, we don't have to.

15 MS DIMITRI: [14:51:52] I know.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:51:53] We won't force you.

17 And, Mr Vanderpuye, do you have already an idea of how long your examination?
18 You already indicated yesterday it will not be too long but this is, of course, a very
19 vague expression.

20 MR VANDERPUYE: [14:52:05] As I mentioned, I think, to Ms Dimitri earlier, I think
21 a session, but probably less than that.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:52:13] Okay, then I think, Ms Dimitri, you don't
23 have to put yourself under too much pressure.

24 MS DIMITRI: [14:52:19] Thank you. Thank you.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:52:20] You don't have to finish the examination

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1 today. Let's say at 3.30 we finish and then we continue tomorrow. Yes.

2 MS DIMITRI: [14:52:29] Thank you.

3 Q. [14:52:30](Interpretation) Father Antareze, I will rephrase the question.

4 Did you have any information -- I'm not asking for the identities, but about
5 information about the perpetrators of that crime? Do you -- or their provenance?

6 Now, do you any information in relation to where these attackers came from?

7 A. [14:53:03] Thank you, Mr President. I do not have any information about that.

8 But I have already stated here that in relation to the locality of Baboua, I think that

9 one can place this attack against the Muslims of Baboua in the context of the fact that

10 there had been a crisis in Boda, and, according to the information that we -- we

11 received, I have to talk about Boda a little bit because, based on the information that

12 we received, during the conflict in Boda, between the Muslims and non-Muslims,

13 there was -- there had been collaboration of a group said to be of the Anti-Balaka from

14 the direction of Lambi, that is beyond Boda.

15 According to the information, the Anti-Balaka of Lambi had come to support those of

16 Boda. Now, Baboua is not very far from Boda, so we tried to take into account that

17 entire context. So those Muslims of Baboua were attacked, but I have no evidence at

18 all to say that it was such a group, they came from such-and-such a place, and so on.

19 I'm not in a position to say that.

20 Q. [14:55:15] Thank you. I will talk about something that you already talked

21 about yesterday, line 50. You said that you had gone to Boganangone -- or, rather, at

22 12:50, you said that you gone to Boganangone. You said that you had gone to

23 Boganangone with Monsignor Rino, and you also mentioned yesterday that the

24 Seleka commanding the area of Boganangone appeared - that is, in appearance - was

25 Sudanese.

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1 Now my question: At what time did you go to Boganangone? Does that correspond
2 to any particular event, any particular celebration?

3 A. [14:56:35] Thank you, Mr President. If I remember correctly, alongside
4 Monsignor Rino, the bishop of Mbaïki, we went to Boganangone in October 2013.
5 And why the month of October? Because it is linked to the celebration of the saint,
6 Comboni. Daniel Comboni, that is, St Comboni who is the patron saint of the
7 Boganangone parish.

8 So it was on 5 or 10 October, so it was at the beginning of the week. We went there
9 because the bishop had received information that was not so good on the situation of
10 Boganangone. In Boganangone, many Christians had fled that locality of
11 Boganangone because of the presence of the Seleka, who were there.

12 So there was a Seleka chief living in Boguere and Boguere is located 27 kilometres
13 away -- *25 kilometres away to the north of Boganangone-Centre. There was also a
14 Seleka base at Boganangone centre, that is at the gendarmerie brigade, which is at the
15 entrance to the town and there was a checkpoint there at that entry into the village.
16 So the bishop had gone there to see whether he could say a special mass there to
17 reassure the population, the Christians of Boganangone who were in a difficult
18 situation.

19 He chose me because I was the parish priest responsible for Boganangone, also, and
20 as part of my religious duties, also. So he asked me whether we could go together.
21 The bishop was using his vehicle, and once we arrived Boda we went and had a meal
22 in the parish. And there, Sister Marguerite, that I have talked about, who was
23 a missionary from Guadeloupe, I think, and who was a nurse, she volunteered to
24 accompany us, so we went together to Boganangone.

25 Q. [15:00:00] Was there a priest in Boganangone?

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1 A. [15:00:03] In Boganangone, there was Father Antoine Berti -- Berti. He was an
2 Italian priest who was responsible for the parish of Boganangone, but he was also
3 based in Boda. There is a community of priests from his community who are living
4 there, but he, since he was one of them, he went there and was residing in
5 Boganangone.

6 Q. [15:00:57] Do you remember the name of the Seleka?

7 A. [15:01:05] I think it was Songolawa (phon), or something like that. It was
8 a nickname, he had a nickname which was well known. He was the chief of the
9 Seleka of Boganangone, but he was based in Boguere, 25 kilometres away, but he had
10 a base in Boganangone. And when we arrived Boganangone, we met a group of
11 Seleka with a leader, but who was not the person that I have mentioned, but
12 a different one who appeared or who looked like a Sudanese. But even the members
13 of the population that we questioned, they told us that he was Sudanese. We could
14 actually see from his appearance.

15 And there I discovered a Peuhl Muslim who had been a young boy when I had been
16 a parish priest there in 2005, up to 2009. I recognised him because his house -- their
17 house was just behind the parish building. I really liked him a little -- a lot, because
18 he was a nice boy. His name was Yaya, and then he had become a big boy now.
19 He was the one -- * interestingly, he was at the checkpoint with his weapon and he
20 came and opened the checkpoint and he recognised me. And since he had grown up,
21 he introduced himself as Yaya. And I also recognised him.

22 Q. [15:03:24] Now, at any point in time after October 2013, did you have any
23 discussions with Father Antoine Berti about what had happened in Boganangone in
24 2014? Any discussion about the Peuhls from Boganangone?

25 A. [15:03:50] Thank you. Father Berti told us in January, I believe it was, 2014,

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1 that there had been a clash between the Anti-Balaka from Lambi. And the
2 Anti-Balaka from Lambi had a leader and his nickname was 8-8. Lambi is a place I
3 know, actually, because from Boganangone you can head towards Boali to get to
4 Bangui, and you have to go by way of that village, the village of Lambi.
5 It's a village that it's well known, because there's a self -- there was a self-defence
6 group there. Well, they've always existed to fight the highway robbers.
7 This area, you see, was one of the localities of the Lobaye that was not really stable
8 over the years. There were people who would rob people along the road. They
9 would hold people up. So there always was this self-defence group there in Lambi.
10 So this self-defence group, they were the ones who attacked this Seleka leader and,
11 apparently, they killed him. Was it them who killed him or -- well, people said it
12 was them who killed him.
13 So, from that point onward, the Peuhl people in Boganangone were also being
14 attacked. There was confusion. So the Peuhls in that location, the Muslim Peuhls
15 were being attacked, and this priest, Father Berti told us. Well, he did all he did
16 to -- he did all he could to protect these Peuhl people from this group of young people.
17 He did all he could to protect these Peuhl people. That is what the priest told us.
18 Q. [15:06:29] Thank you.
19 I'd like to show you something now. And this is from the Peace and Reconciliation
20 Committee.
21 And this is tab 26. Tab 26, CAR-D29-0005-0392. Report of the Peace and
22 Reconciliation Parliamentary Mission in Lobaye.
23 I'd like to read something to you, Father, from the second paragraph. Mention is
24 made of this mission to Boganangone by this parliamentary group. They went to the
25 location in May, well before the events that we've discussed and he said -- they said,

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1 quote:

2 "In this town, the situation is rather special: the Peuhl populations which have been
3 massacred have taken shelter with the Catholic priests from St Daniel Comboni
4 church. The Peuhl people are being protected by the Anti-Balaka of Boganangone
5 against the Anti-Balaka coming from LA Mbi and Yaloké who have a reputation of
6 being more violent."

7 Now, a few questions: These people took shelter with the Catholic priests at the
8 church. Is this a reference to the church where Father Berti celebrated mass?

9 A. [15:08:30] Thank you.

10 Q. [13:53:35] My apologies for interrupting, but the church where you worked in
11 the past?

12 A. [15:08:44] In Boganangone centre, there's only one Catholic church. There are
13 some Protestant churches, but there's only one Catholic church in the centre of that
14 town. And that is where I worked, and Father Berti worked there as well.

15 So I believe in this article reference is being made to what the priest told us, what
16 Father Berti told us about Peuhl people being massacred. I think there were some
17 deaths, but I don't remember -- what I do remember is that the priest told us that
18 some Peuhl people took shelter at the Catholic mission, St Daniel Comboni parish,
19 and he, along with some young people from Boganangone, they protected these
20 Peuhl people.

21 I think that's what happened.

22 Q. [15:10:01] Father Antareze, one last question about this topic. You have used
23 the expression "self-defence group", and you've mentioned young people protecting
24 the Peuhl people, along with the priest.

25 Now the article uses the expression "Anti-Balaka from Boganangone". Do you know

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1 why these different terms are being used?

2 A. [15:10:34] Thank you.

3 Mr President, I believe that during the event between the Seleka and the Anti-Balaka,
4 and then -- that expression was also used, but quite often there was confusion. Quite
5 often, let's say, there was a self-defence group that was not Muslim, they would be
6 called Anti-Balaka. People would say, "Anti-Balaka".

7 So the term Anti-Balaka was given to any organisation, any self -- any self-defence
8 group made up of young people in a village or at a particular location, be it for the
9 purposes of attacking Muslims, as what occurred in some villages, or set up to protect,
10 as was the case in Boganangone.

11 So, I would go by the report from Father Berti. I set great store by his report. These
12 self-defence groups from Boganangone rose up to protect the Peuhl people. They
13 were also called Anti-Balaka. If it was a Muslim self-defence group, they would be
14 called Seleka.

15 So, to my mind, this is -- this is not strange, "Anti-Balaka who protected the Peuhl".

16 So it was a term or expression that was used in many different situations.

17 Q. [15:12:57] Thank you.

18 I'd like to show some video footage to you, very short. And this is the prefect, when
19 he gave a speech and he made mention of Boganangone.

20 Tab 1, CAR-OTP-2023-1636. And this is at tab 2 of your binder, CAR-D29-0006-0107,
21 0110, lines 15 to 21.

22 Please listen carefully to what the prefect said and yes, please drink some water.

23 (Viewing of the video excerpt)

24 THE INTERPRETER: [15:14:42](Interpretation of the video excerpt)

25 "Let us return to the case of Boganangone and Mbaïki.

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1 The sub-prefecture of Boganangone suffered the most from the cruelty of a warlord
2 that I will not mention here because the reprisals by the Anti-Balaka claimed more
3 than 40 lives between 24 and 26 January 2014, reprisals were -- that were fatal. The
4 raids and the punitive expeditions by this warlord led to many casualties and human
5 lives as well as --"

6 MS DIMITRI: [15:15:28](Interpretation)

7 Q. [15:15:28] Before I put my question to you, I'd like to show you something else,
8 tab 20, tab 20, CAR-OTP-2001-2248. I'll read it out to you in English and --

9 (Speaks English) "We arrived in Bouguere on 13 February to investigate a massacre
10 that had taken place some three weeks earlier. More than 40 people had been killed
11 by anti-balaka militias and most of the town's Muslim residents had fled.

12 But on arrival in the town nothing prepared us for what we found."

13 (Interpretation) The article can be taken off the screen.

14 My question: The prefect mentioned the Boganangone sub-prefecture and the
15 cruelty of a warlord who was responsible for the loss of several lives, and he said that
16 because of the fear of reprisals, reprisals that were fatal. The -- actually, the warlord
17 died. And you said in your testimony that the Seleka were based in Boguere but
18 there was a team in Boganangone.

19 So according to the information and your knowledge, Father, do you understand or is
20 your information to the effect that this Seleka leader was killed in January 2014?

21 And are these two articles talking about the same incident, Boguere -- although we
22 are talking about Boguere on the one side and Boganangone on the other?

23 A. [15:18:13] Thank you. Mr President, before answering the question, I'm trying
24 to remember the name or the nickname of this Seleka warlord, this leader. I believe
25 Songolawa (phon) was his name, Songolawa. That was his name or his nickname.

1 Now we were informed of that attack, the Boguere attack by -- by Anti-Balaka
2 members from Yaloké. We heard more mention made of Lambi, but in this article
3 they talk about another location. * I don't know if the two are related.
4 And they also made mention of a leader called Huit Huit (8 8). According to the
5 information, they were the ones who ultimately killed this Seleka leader who was
6 greatly feared. He frightened everyone because when we got to Boganangone with
7 Monsignor Rino and when we had a meeting with the Christians in the parish hall to
8 comfort them and to celebrate a mass, we sensed, we felt this climate of fear.
9 Some people were afraid that he might come out of nowhere. They might hear
10 about our presence and come all the way to Boganangone, because he could move
11 about quite easily on a motorbike, even though the roads were difficult. You see, in
12 less than an hour, he could travel to Boganangone. So, to tell you the truth, I too,
13 was afraid, because people said that he was truly someone to fear, to dread.
14 So apparently he was killed by the Anti-Balaka from Lambi. We did get that
15 information.

16 Q. [15:21:17] One last question on this topic, but more specifically about 8-8, the
17 nickname that you mentioned. Do you know whether 8-8 was alone? Or did he
18 have a group of people with him, at the time when 8-8 -- well, during the events?

19 A. [15:21:46] Thank you. Mr President, each time we were told about 8-8; he was
20 the leader of the group. He was with his group. And they were called the
21 Anti-Balaka during the event -- the events.

22 It must be said that as for Lambi, Lambi is a location that was well known for its
23 self-defence group because before the Anti-Balaka, probably that group already
24 existed and they've fought against the highway robbers. They weren't called
25 Anti-Balaka then. They were called self-defence group. But with the advent of the

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1 Anti-Balaka and the Seleka, that self-defence group was also referred to as

2 Anti-Balaka. They were referred to as the Anti-Balaka from Lambi.

3 Q. [15:23:07] Thank you, I'll move on to something else now.

4 I'd like us to hark back to Mr Rombhot Yekatom. You made mention of a white van.

5 Did you ever see him on a red motorcycle going amongst the various roadblocks at
6 the time to get goats or to get money?

7 A. [15:23:52] Thank you. Mr President, in response to this question, I would say,
8 when I met Mr Yekatom from time to time, he was always in his white pickup truck
9 with his elements. Did he travel about on a motorbike? I don't know. I didn't see
10 that.

11 MS DIMITRI: [15:24:28] Mr President, just on that point, it's P-1838,
12 CAR-OTP-2107-6303, paragraph 54.

13 Q. [15:24:42](Interpretation) Was a single Muslim from Mbaïki tell you that he had
14 fled, he had fled because he had heard talk about Mr Rombhot Yekatom giving an
15 order to shoot and kill all the civilians of the Muslim faith?

16 A. [15:25:17] Thank you. Mr President, I'm not aware of that information.

17 Q. [15:25:32] Have you ever heard any talk about Mr Rombhot Yekatom launching
18 offensives from one village to another in Lobaye targeting Muslim civilians?

19 A. [15:25:50] Thank you, Mr President. If I recall correctly, I did not have that
20 information.

21 Q. [15:26:09] Have you ever heard from anyone that Mr Rombhot Yekatom had
22 killed many Muslim civilians and he had taken them as targets along the road
23 between Mbaïki and PK9?

24 A. [15:26:31] No, thank you, Mr President. Truth be told, I should mention that I
25 was not aware of everything that was going on, that is the truth. But I'm -- I'm

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1 telling you what I know about and I'm not aware of all the information, so it's difficult
2 for me to answer that question.

3 Q. [15:27:05] I reassure you, Father Antareze, I don't expect you to know
4 everything that was going on, but to be more specific, did you receive any such
5 information?

6 A. [15:27:21] No, no.

7 Q. [15:27:55] I'd like to move on to something else. Do you know --

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [15:27:59] Ms Dimitri, do you want to continue until
9 4 o'clock, or if you don't make it until 4 o'clock, I think it's enough if we have
10 a one-and-a-half-hour session.

11 MS DIMITRI: [15:28:13] I'm not going to make it until 4, but I can do a lot of
12 progress until 4.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [15:28:19] But if you say you need tomorrow one
14 session, that would be fine, I think, maximum.

15 MS DIMITRI: [15:28:32] There's a -- there's a request on the Transcend that I should
16 stop.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [15:28:39] Is it, yes? Well, that's a sign from --

18 MS DIMITRI: [15:28:40] For me --

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [15:28:41] Oh, for you. Is it a sign from above?
20 No. Then let's do it this way, yes.

21 Thank you very much, Mr Witness, specifically again for answering so many
22 questions patiently for such a long time with only short breaks today. But you're
23 still not finished with your testimony. we continue tomorrow at 9.30.

24 THE COURT USHER: [15:29:09] All rise.

25 (The hearing ends in open session at 3.29 p.m.)