

Trial Hearing
WITNESS: CAR-OTP-P-2462

(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 Patrice-Edouard
5 Ngaïssona - ICC-01/14-01/18
6 Presiding Judge Bertram Schmitt, Judge Péter Kovács and
7 Judge Chang-ho Chung
8 Trial Hearing - Courtroom 1
9 Monday, 30 August 2021
10 (The hearing starts in open session at 9.32 a.m.)
11 THE COURT USHER: [9:32:13] All rise.
12 The International Criminal Court is now in session.
13 Please be seated.
14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:32:38] Good morning, everyone.
15 Could the court officer please call the case.
16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:32:44] Good morning, Mr President, your
17 Honours.
18 Situation in the Central African Republic II, in the case of The Prosecutor versus
19 Alfred Yekatom and Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona, case reference ICC-01/14-01/18.
20 And for the record, we are in open session.
21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:33:01] Thank you very much.
22 I ask for the appearances of the parties. We start with the Prosecution.
23 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [9:33:06] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours.
24 Today the Prosecution is represented by Ms Olivia Struyven, Kweku Vanderpuye,
25 Yassin Mostfa and myself, Maria Berdennikova. Thank you.

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- 1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:33:16] Thank you.
- 2 And now I turn to the representatives of the victims.
- 3 MS DOUZIMA LAWSON: [9:33:29](Interpretation) Representatives of the victims of
- 4 other crimes are represented today by myself, Mrs Douzima. Thank you.
- 5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: Thank you, Ms Douzima.
- 6 Mr Suprun.
- 7 MR SUPRUN: [9:33:43] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours. The former
- 8 child soldiers are represented by myself, Dmytro Suprun, counsel at the Office of
- 9 Public Counsel for Victims. Thank you.
- 10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:33:51] Thank you.
- 11 And now to the Defence. Ms Dimitri first, please.
- 12 MS DIMITRI: [9:33:57] Good morning, Mr President. Good morning, your
- 13 Honours. Good morning, everyone. Mr Yekatom, who is present in the courtroom,
- 14 is represented today by myself Mylène Dimitri and Léa Benoit, legal intern. Thank
- 15 you very much.
- 16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:09] Thank you.
- 17 Mr Knoops.
- 18 MR KNOOPS: [9:34:11] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours. Good
- 19 morning, everyone. I hope the court has had a good recess, everyone. The Defence
- 20 team of Mr Ngaïssona is today represented by Ms Marie-Hélène Proulx, Sara Pedroso,
- 21 Despoina Eleftheriou and our interns on the left side, Mathilde Couloigner and Eva
- 22 Kalb. Thank you.
- 23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:36] Thank you very much.
- 24 We will now start with the testimony of Prosecution Witness P-2462.
- 25 Court officer, would you please connect us to the witness.

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1 So it was my fault. We are already connected, but I had my screen not adjusted.

2 Madam Witness, good morning. Can you hear and understand me well?

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4 (The witness speaks Sango)

5 (The witness gives evidence via video link)

6 THE WITNESS: [9:35:25](Interpretation) Yes, I can hear you.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:35:29] Thank you. On behalf of the Chamber I
8 would like to welcome you to the courtroom. You are called to testify to assist the
9 Chamber in the case against Mr Ngaïssona and Mr Yekatom.

10 Madam Witness, if you feel more comfortable to wear the mask, I think we would not
11 have a problem with it, but it's also good if we could see you completely, and if there
12 is not a requirement there at the video-link location, you can take the mask off so that
13 we can see you.

14 Thank you, Madam Witness. And of course the protective measures are in place for
15 you to ensure that your identity is not revealed to the public. I explain it to you
16 again, I think it might have been explained to you by the VWU, but we have face
17 distortion, this means that the public cannot see your face, only the judges and the
18 counsel here in the room. And we have voice distortion, so also your voice is
19 disguised so that people cannot identify you by your voice. And we use also a
20 pseudonym, that means we and, as you recognise now, I will only address you as
21 "Madam Witness" and this way the public will also not know your name.

22 We try to talk with you and hear from you as much as possible in open session,
23 meaning that at least the content of what you are saying is public so that the people
24 know what happened. And as long as your answers do not give away your identity,
25 we will do that in open session. But if an answer with regard to the content with

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1 regard to what you are saying might reveal your identity, then we go to private
2 session and people in the public will not hear that.
3 Madam Witness, there should be a card on the desk in front of you with a solemn
4 undertaking to tell the truth. Is that so?
5 Seems not to be the case.
6 THE INTERPRETER: [9:38:23] It doesn't seem to be the case.
7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:38:25] Yes, okay. So then I will read now
8 (Overlapping speakers)
9 THE WITNESS: (No interpretation)
10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:38:32] What did the witness say?
11 THE WITNESS: [9:38:41](Interpretation) I have the document in front of me.
12 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:38:44] Thank you, Madam Witness. Could you
13 please read out aloud the content of this card. And this is the solemn undertaking to
14 tell the truth. Please do that.
15 THE WITNESS: [9:39:11](Interpretation) I solemnly declare that I will speak the
16 truth, the entire truth and nothing but the truth.
17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:39:20] Thank you very much, Madam Witness.
18 You are now under oath. And as you have just sworn, you have to speak the truth.
19 Before we start with your testimony, we have a few practical matters that I want to
20 tell you. Everything we say here in the courtroom is written down and interpreted
21 in various languages. It is, therefore, important to speak clearly into the microphone
22 and to speak at a slow pace. Please only start speaking when the person asking you
23 the question has finished. This pause is essential for the interpreters to translate
24 what you say. I'm telling you that because everyone here in the courtroom,
25 including my person and including all of the judges, do make the mistake to speak

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1 quite often too quickly.

2 We will then start with your testimony, Madam Witness. You may be questioned by

3 the lawyers from the Prosecution, they will start, the Defence, and the victims

4 representatives. And it's also possible that the judges address you with questions.

5 In that regard, a reminder to the participants: We all know about the issues recently

6 raised by the participants in relation to interpretation and transcripts, and the

7 Chamber reminds not only the witness but everyone here in the courtroom again to

8 speak slowly and to observe the breaks to facilitate the work of the interpreters. Let

9 me put it this way: We do not say for the last time, we give it another try, one of the

10 last tries at least, to solve the problems this way.

11 I will now give the floor to the Prosecution so they can start the questioning.

12 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [9:41:31] Thank you, Mr President, your Honours.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:41:34] And may I say something. I don't know

14 what you have planned, but it is always advisable to let a witness tell her story, in

15 that case, in context and to not fraction it into dozens of questions unnecessarily.

16 So as I see it from the expected testimony, there are three or four big parts that you

17 want to elicit from the witness, so experience tells us first that this has the advantage

18 that we get a direct impression from a witness. Secondly, that the witness also might

19 feel a little bit more comfortable. She is for a reason at the video-link location, wants

20 to tell something. And thirdly, as we have seen I think with the very first witness in

21 this courtroom, it might expedite the examination significantly. Might, not always, it

22 might. And sometimes of course we have to stop witnesses, but we have to adjust to

23 the situation.

24 So excuse me for reminding you of that, but I simply want to flag it already.

25 Please start with the examination.

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1 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [9:42:54] Thank you, your Honours. Of course we'll keep
2 that in mind and address the necessary issues.

3 QUESTIONED BY MS BERDENNIKOVA:

4 Q. [09:43:05] Good morning, Madam Witness. My name is Maria Berdennikova.
5 I'm a lawyer with the office of the Prosecution. I will be asking you a few questions
6 today. You might recall that we had the opportunity to very briefly meet each other
7 last Friday during the courtesy meeting and I'm very pleased to see you again in the
8 courtroom today via video link.

9 As the Presiding Judge has already mentioned, I will be referring to you as
10 "Madam Witness". Of course, this is not out of disrespect, it's to protect your
11 identity, as you've already heard.

12 You also know that we have a mix of different questions -- different languages in the
13 courtroom and I will be asking you questions in English. So let's take our time, let's
14 take a small pause in between a question and answer, and let's not rush.

15 Now I will just ask you to listen to my questions very carefully, but if ever you don't
16 understand something, please tell me and I will repeat or I will rephrase what I've
17 said to you. All right?

18 One other thing is some of the questions I will be asking you might seem obvious, so
19 please be patient with us, these questions I will --

20 A. [09:44:34] (No interpretation)

21 Q. [09:44:44] These questions I will ask just so that we understand better your story
22 and what you experienced and how you know things.

23 And finally, if you need a break at any point during your testimony, please let the
24 judges know. Is that all right?

25 A. [9:45:16] That is fine.

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1 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [9:45:17] Your Honours, I'd like to go into a brief private
2 session.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:45:21] Of course, of course.
4 Private session.

5 (Private session at 9.45 a.m.)

6 THE COURT OFFICER: [9:45:38] We are in private session, Mr President.

7 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [9:45:41]

8 Q. [9:45:42] Madam Witness, as you've just heard, we are in private session now.

9 That means that nobody outside of the courtroom will be able to hear what you say
10 while we're in this private session. And I just want to ask you a little bit about your
11 background first, so don't be worried to say identifying information while we're in
12 this private session.

13 Can you start by confirming that your name is (Redacted)? And I'm sorry if
14 I don't pronounce it well.

15 A. [9:46:31] My name is (Redacted).

16 Q. [9:46:38] Thank you. And can you also confirm that you are sometimes called
17 (Redacted)?

18 A. [9:46:59] That is correct.

19 Q. [9:47:01] And are you a national of the Central African Republic?

20 A. [9:47:17] Yes, I am from the Central African Republic.

21 Q. [9:47:27] Can you tell us what your religion is?

22 A. [9:47:36] I am a Muslim.

23 Q. [9:47:42] And when were you born?

24 A. [9:47:54] (Redacted).

25 Q. [9:48:00] (Redacted)?

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- 1 A. [9:48:11] (Redacted).
- 2 Q. [9:48:16] (Redacted)?
- 3 A. [9:48:21] That is correct. (Redacted).
- 4 Q. [9:48:40] (Redacted)?
- 5 A. [9:49:04] I lived in (Redacted). That was the point when I left
- 6 (Redacted).
- 7 Q. [9:49:17] So (Redacted)?
- 8 A. [9:49:31] That's correct.
- 9 Q. [9:49:33] Can you tell us (Redacted) you lived in?
- 10 A. [9:49:50] I lived in (Redacted).
- 11 Q. [9:49:59] Did (Redacted)?
- 12 A. [9:50:06] That is correct.
- 13 Q. [9:50:11] Did you (Redacted)?
- 14 A. [9:50:26] Yes, it was in (Redacted).
- 15 Q. [9:50:30] Can you tell us if you also worked (Redacted)?
- 16 A. [9:50:47] It was during the events that I started to work (Redacted)
- 17 (Redacted).
- 18 Q. [9:51:02] When you talk about "the events," can you just clarify what you mean?
- 19 A. [9:51:20] I said it was during the events that I started to work (Redacted).
- 20 Q. [9:51:28] Was it during the events of 2013-2014?
- 21 A. [9:51:39] That's correct.
- 22 Q. [9:51:42] What were your duties when you worked (Redacted)?
- 23 A. [9:51:57] I worked (Redacted).
- 24 Q. [9:52:03] Did you have (Redacted)?
- 25 A. [9:52:19] No. I was only there (Redacted).

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1 Q. [9:52:26] And when approximately did you stop (Redacted)?

2 A. [9:52:56] It was after a threat I received.

3 Q. What kind of threat?

4 A. [9:53:22] There was a problem with security or, rather, insecurity (Redacted)
5 and that's why I decided to stop working.

6 Q. [9:53:35] All right. Thank you. And we'll talk about that a little bit more later
7 on.

8 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [9:53:46] Your Honours, I believe we can go back into public
9 session for now.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:53:56] Yes, then we do that.

11 Public session.

12 (Open session at 9.54 a.m.)

13 THE COURT OFFICER: [9:54:07] We are back in open session, Mr President.

14 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [9:54:14]

15 Q. [9:54:14] So Madam Witness, the public can hear us again, and I would just like
16 to ask you a few questions about Bossangoa so that we get a general sense of the town,
17 you know, its neighbourhoods, of the people who lived there. So, for example,
18 could you tell us the names of the main neighbourhoods in Bossangoa?

19 A. [9:54:52] I didn't live in all the neighbourhoods. I only lived in the Muslim area
20 and it's only those areas which I know, those neighbourhoods which I know.

21 Q. [9:55:05] Thank you. Well, let's then talk about the Muslim neighbourhoods.
22 Can you tell us the name -- the names of the predominantly Muslim neighbourhoods
23 in Bossangoa?

24 A. [9:55:41] Bornou, Aran (phon), Sembe, Sembe Garsola (phon). There was the
25 Arab area, Fulbe, Sembe and Bornou. Those are the neighbourhoods which I know.

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1 Q. [9:56:02] Did any Christians live in these neighbourhoods?

2 A. [9:56:17] Yes, there were Christians in those neighbourhoods.

3 Q. [9:56:25] And living in Bossangoa, how was the relationship between the
4 Muslim and the Christian communities in these neighbourhoods you just mentioned?

5 A. [9:56:45] Before, we lived peacefully together. We went together to school, we
6 had fun together, we did things together.

7 Q. [9:57:08] Now, you mentioned the word "before." Before what? When did
8 this change?

9 A. [9:57:40] It was after the Séléka entered that things began to change.

10 Q. [9:57:50] Let's talk a little bit about the Séléka. You say that they entered.
11 When did this happen, approximately?

12 A. [9:58:16] The Séléka entered, arrived on 23 March 2013.

13 Q. [9:58:32] What happened when the Séléka entered on that day?

14 A. [9:58:55] I don't remember exactly what happened because I was at school, but
15 people started to run in the streets in all directions. I saw parents come to the school
16 to look for their children, and then I understood that the Séléka had arrived. That's
17 the answer I can give you to your question.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:59:24] May I shortly?

19 How did the Christian population that you lived with in Bossangoa at the time react
20 to the arrival of the Séléka?

21 THE WITNESS: [10:00:00](Interpretation) They also were scared. They didn't have
22 any respect anymore for Muslims.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:00:19] No, I mean when the Séléka arrived, what
24 was the reaction -- perhaps we split it up a little bit. What was the reaction of the
25 population towards the arrival of the Séléka? Did they welcome them?

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1 THE WITNESS: [10:00:50](Interpretation) No. Everybody fled and we took refuge
2 in the bush.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:00:55] So with "everyone", you mean the Muslim
4 population and the Christian population?

5 THE WITNESS: [10:01:10] Yes. Those who fled included Muslims as well.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:01:20] Please continue.

7 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [10:01:22]

8 Q. [10:01:24] You mentioned that the population, Muslim and Christian, fled when
9 the Séléka arrived in Bossangoa. Did the population return at some point?

10 A. [10:01:52] Yes, after that, they returned.

11 Q. [10:02:02] When did the Muslim population return? Was it shortly after or
12 much later, approximately?

13 A. [10:02:30] Those who had fled in three vehicles returned two days later.

14 Q. [10:02:44] And what about the Christian population, did they also return, and
15 when?

16 A. [10:03:04] Well, I don't know.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:03:08] Perhaps you might ask her in that regard
18 about the one person that she mentions in her statement, that might jog sort of a
19 narrative.

20 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [10:03:23] I just have a couple of other questions before that,
21 before we get to that.

22 Q. [10:03:29] Could you just tell us where was the Séléka based while they were in
23 Bossangoa?

24 A. [10:03:53] Well, I did not see them, but I learned that they had set up their base
25 at the residence of the *préfet*.

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1 Q. [10:04:09] Can you tell us whether there was any opposition to the Séléka?

2 A. [10:04:32] It is not everyone who loved them.

3 Q. [10:04:42] Can you tell us a little bit more maybe about the people who didn't
4 love them, as you say?

5 A. [10:05:14] Christians and Muslims alike did not love them.

6 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [10:05:24] Your Honours, I think we should go into a private
7 session just briefly.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:05:29] Yeah, private session.

9 (Private session at 10.05 a.m.)

10 THE COURT OFFICER: [10:05:45] We are in private session, Mr President.

11 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [10:05:50]

12 Q. [10:05:51] Madam Witness, (Redacted) tell you
13 anything?

14 A. [10:06:21] Which (Redacted) are you talking about?

15 Q. [10:06:25] Do you know of a (Redacted) who would also be called (Redacted)?

16 A. [10:06:46] Yes, I know him.

17 Q. [10:06:49] Can you tell us a little bit about this person?

18 A. [10:07:07] (Redacted)

19 (Redacted).

20 Q. [10:07:19] What is his religious background? Is he Christian? Is he Muslim?

21 A. [10:07:36] He is a Christian.

22 Q. [10:07:43] And what did he do after Séléka entered Bossangoa?

23 A. [10:08:07] He also fled and sought refuge in the bush. He did not remain in
24 town.

25 Q. [10:08:20] How long was he away?

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1 A. [10:08:39] I don't have an idea.

2 Q. [10:08:48] Did he come back two days later or was it long -- did it take a longer
3 time?

4 A. [10:09:16] When the Séléka arrived?

5 Q. [10:09:22] Sorry, maybe my question was not clear enough. You mentioned
6 earlier that some of the population that fled when the Séléka entered came back about
7 two days later. Did he come back two days or did he come back to Bossangoa later
8 than that?

9 A. [10:09:55] Ah, okay. I get it now. He came back two days later.

10 Q. [10:10:07] Did you speak to him when he came back?

11 A. [10:10:29] No. Since we too had fled, I did not ask him any questions. I did
12 not talk with him.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:10:37] May I shortly?

14 Madam Witness, later on, did he again leave the town?

15 THE WITNESS: [10:11:05](Interpretation) After he came back, after two days, I did
16 not see him again. He left.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:11:15] Madam Witness, I have a written
18 statement of you in front of me and I'm reading out what is recorded here. Perhaps
19 this might jog your memory. It's on paragraph 21. It's CAR-OTP-2111-0452 at 0456,
20 as I said, at paragraph 21. Please listen what is recorded as your testimony at the
21 time of your statement.

22 "(Redacted)" was one of my Christian neighbours, he is a (Redacted)

23 (Redacted). At some point I noticed he had left

24 Bossangoa so I went to see his mother to inquire what happened to him and she told
25 me he had gone to Bangui. Later when he came back, he looked different, like he

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1 had lost weight. He told me he had gone to attend a training to prepare the revenge
2 against the Séléka because they were foreigners who had come to destroy the country.
3 (Redacted) came back to Bossangoa (Redacted)."

4 So this was what is recorded here. So do you remember?

5 THE WITNESS: [10:13:31](Interpretation) Yes, that is what I said.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:13:34] And is it also what you recall today now
7 that I have read it out to you, that it is your recollection also today? Is this correct?

8 THE WITNESS: [10:13:56](Interpretation) Yes, that is true. I narrated what
9 happened.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:14:01] Please continue.

11 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [10:14:09] Your Honours, we may be able to go back into
12 open session.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:14:14] Yes, I think so too.

14 Open session.

15 (Open session at 10.14 a.m.)

16 THE COURT OFFICER: [10:14:28] We are back in open session, Mr President.

17 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [10:14:33]

18 Q. [10:14:33] Now, Madam Witness, we just spoke about someone, I won't mention
19 the name, that left to train after the Séléka entered Bossangoa. Do you know, and
20 without telling us how you know these people, can you tell us whether anyone else
21 left Bossangoa to train?

22 A. [10:15:17] No, I don't know.

23 Q. [10:15:28] Did the -- did the people who went away to train, the person who
24 went away to train and came back, was there a name to -- to that group?

25 A. [10:15:59] He did not explain that to me. He simply told me that he had gone

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1 for some training and I did not ask him what type of training he was talking about.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:16:20] I think you can be more direct here

3 because I think -- not with regard to the person, because she said she doesn't know if

4 he belonged to the group, as I understand it, but can you simply ask when she heard

5 from the group and you can start now going over, I would say, I would word it this

6 way, to the first incidents in September 2013, I think. And perhaps we can try -- it's a

7 little bit more difficult with this witness, we can try to induce, perhaps, a narrative.

8 But it might be difficult with this witness, but it's not a problem.

9 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [10:16:59] All right. We'll see what we -- where we get.

10 Q. [10:17:05] Madam Witness, was there any active opposition to the Séléka?

11 A. [10:17:33] When they arrived, there was no resistance from anybody.

12 Q. [10:17:40] And as time went on, was there resistance?

13 A. [10:18:00] Yes, later on, we learnt and heard mention of the Anti-Balaka. There

14 was fighting and people said it was fighting between the Anti-Balaka and the Séléka.

15 Q. [10:18:23] When did this fighting start?

16 A. [10:18:45] Around 17 September.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:18:51] Madam Witness, what happened there on

18 17 September 2013 or around 17 September? Do you recall it? And if so, please tell

19 us, and if we have additional question in that regard, we will put it to you.

20 THE WITNESS: [10:19:30](Interpretation) On that day, very early in the morning

21 around 5 a.m., I heard gunshots, war gunshots, and when I came out of the house, I

22 learnt that the Séléka were fighting the Anti-Balaka. There was sustained shooting,

23 sustained gunfire, and so the Muslims sought refuge at the imam's place, whereas the

24 Christians sought refuge at the Catholic Church. On that day, I fled to the imam's

25 house for refuge.

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:20:21] Did, on that day, anything happen to one
2 of your family members?

3 And I think we can -- we should perhaps discuss this in private session. We go to
4 private session for that.

5 (Private session at 10.20 a.m.)

6 THE COURT OFFICER: [10:20:44] We are in private session, Mr President.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:20:47] Thank you.

8 Madam Witness, I repeat my question. On that day that you mentioned when you
9 flew to the -- to the imam's house and you mention also I think the Red Cross,
10 happened anything to one of your family members? And, if so, please call -- tell us
11 what happened.

12 THE WITNESS: [10:21:33](Interpretation) Yes, my (Redacted) brother was inside the
13 house, whereas we had left the house. He came out of the house after us. And I
14 want to specify that the evening before he was not feeling well, (Redacted).
15 So he came out of the house in the company of one of our neighbours, and the
16 neighbour did not believe that we had already gone to the imam's house. So she had
17 come to take care of my (Redacted) brother while I was going towards the imam's
18 house -- rather, they were going towards the imam's house when they happened
19 upon an ambush and were both shot. He was shot and the neighbour was also shot.

20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:22:39] Did they both survive or did they die in
21 the aftermath of this when they were shot?

22 THE WITNESS: [10:23:03](Interpretation) He did not die on the spot, but later on
23 passed on.

24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:23:11] Could you be -- could you be with him
25 when he died?

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1 THE WITNESS: [10:23:34](Interpretation) I was present, (Redacted)

2 (Redacted), but it is when I came back that I found that he was already dead.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:23:48] Yeah, I think we are sorry for your loss.

4 Please continue.

5 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [10:23:57]

6 Q. [10:23:57] Madam Witness, when you just described what happened to your

7 brother, how do you know that? Is it something he told you?

8 A. [10:24:28] Yes, he is the one who told me what had happened.

9 Q. [10:24:35] Can you please give us the name of your brother and the name of the
10 neighbour who was with him?

11 A. [10:24:49] My brother's name was (Redacted). And the neighbour's name was
12 (Redacted).

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:25:18] Madam Witness, you see already that
14 perhaps issues that we touch upon during this examination might be very painful for
15 you to remember. What I want to tell you is that you, as a witness, have an
16 important task in these proceedings. The judges or the participants have not been
17 there, therefore, we need witnesses to know what happened. So it's very important
18 that you tell us this and we are very much aware of the fact that this is painful to tell
19 you -- to tell to us. Thank you very much for your assistance.

20 You can continue with the examination.

21 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [10:26:24]

22 Q. [10:26:26] And I'm also very sorry to have to ask you these things, but we'll take
23 it slowly, okay? If you need a break again at any point, you know, let us know.

24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:26:36] Perhaps we will make a short break. I
25 think I have the impression when I look at the screen.

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1 Short break, five minutes, let's say.

2 THE COURT USHER: All rise.

3 (Recess taken at 10.26 a.m.)

4 (Upon resuming in private session at 11.03 a.m.)

5 THE COURT USHER: [11:03:40] All rise.

6 Please be seated.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:04:11] Madam Witness, welcome back. Before
8 we had the break I told you, and I want to repeat it, that we fully understand that for
9 you to testify about what happened is difficult, might be very painful. I would also
10 want to repeat that we do not only understand that but, as I said, it is very important
11 that we have witnesses that assist us in establishing the truth that tell us what
12 happened.

13 So we want to continue now with the examination, and I give, again, the Prosecution
14 the floor. Can we go to open session, or would you like to stay in private session?

15 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:05:19] Maybe just for a moment, if we can stay in private
16 session.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:05:24] Of course. Of course. We should.
18 Thank you, Madam Witness.

19 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:05:30]

20 Q. [11:05:31] Madam Witness, are you feeling okay now?

21 A. [11:05:47] Yes, a bit better now.

22 Q. [11:05:52] Would it be all right with you if I ask you just a couple more
23 follow-up questions on the topic that we discussed before the break, or would you
24 rather I move away from it and come back to it later?

25 A. [11:06:31] Please proceed, please.

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1 Q. [11:06:34] All right. And I'm not going to dwell on this. Okay? So
2 just -- we'll -- we'll keep it brief.
3 Just before the break you, when you described what happened, you said, and I'm
4 quoting from the transcript, "They were going to the imam's house when they
5 happened upon an ambush and were both shot." You then mention that you had the
6 chance to speak to your brother after this happened.

7 Did he tell you who shot them?

8 A. [11:07:37] According to what he said, he said that it was the Anti-Balaka.

9 Q. [11:07:46] And just if he provided you with any description of these people, can
10 you tell us?

11 A. [11:08:09] No, he did not say anything on that topic.

12 Q. [11:08:17] All right. And just one last question on this before we move on to
13 something else. What happened to your neighbour (Redacted)?

14 A. [11:08:49] She was lying down and was losing some blood since she had been
15 shot (Redacted).

16 Q. [11:09:05] Did she die as a result of these injuries?

17 A. [11:09:19] Yes, she too died.

18 Q. [11:09:27] All right. We're going to move away from this topic now, so thank
19 you for giving us your answers.

20 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:09:35] Your Honours, I think we can go into open session
21 again.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:09:39] Perhaps one question I have.

23 Madam Witness, how old was -- was your brother when he died?

24 THE WITNESS: [11:10:10](Interpretation) (Redacted) years old. He was my
25 (Redacted) brother.

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:10:16] And his name was (Redacted); is that correct?

2 THE WITNESS: [11:10:29](Interpretation) Yes, that is correct.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:10:31] We go back to open session. You can

4 with the examination -- may I shortly. You can -- I know you want to elicit

5 information also about events early in September, but you can always come back to

6 that or decide if you really need it. But this is up to you, absolutely. Otherwise,

7 perhaps you proceed with the December events.

8 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:11:07] That was in fact the plan.

9 Q. [11:11:12] So, Madam Witness, we just spoke about an attack -- oh, sorry.

10 (Open session at 11.11 a.m.)

11 THE COURT OFFICER: [11:11:21] We are back in open session, Mr President.

12 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:11:32]

13 Q. [11:11:33] Madam Witness, we just spoke about an attack on Bossangoa on

14 17 September 2013. I would now like to move on to December and talk about the

15 following attack on Bossangoa.

16 Do you remember the day of that attack?

17 A. [11:12:14] Yes, it was on 5 December 2013.

18 Q. [11:12:21] Can you just tell us about that day, you know, maybe starting in the

19 morning. Tell us what happened.

20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:12:55] I think we lost connection.

21 And, of course, with regard to 5 December, there would be a large part that would

22 have to be elicited in private session. Okay, let's wait how the witness starts with

23 her testimony -- her testimony, and then we could -- can intervene if it goes over to

24 parts of her expected testimony that might have to be elicited in private session.

25 (Pause in proceedings)

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:14:22] Is there hope to establish the connection
2 soon?

3 So the answer is there is hope.

4 (Pause in proceedings)

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:16:12] Thank you.

6 So it seems to be fixed.

7 Madam Witness, the connection had broken, so I have to apologise for that, but we

8 always think it's a small wonder that we can hear and see witnesses so well that are so

9 far away from this courtroom. So we can continue now.

10 Madam Prosecutor, you have the floor again. Perhaps you repeat simply the

11 question.

12 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:18:12]

13 Q. [11:18:13] Madam Witness, just before we had the technical issues we changed

14 topic and started discussing about the 5 December attack on Bossangoa. So my

15 question to you was whether you can tell us about that day and, you know, maybe we

16 can take it step by step and you start by telling us what happened in the morning of

17 that day.

18 I remind you we're in open session for now so, you know, we'll be vigilant, but you

19 can just give an answer. Perhaps we start there.

20 A. [11:19:14] Okay.

21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:19:15] So perhaps, may I -- may I shortly?

22 So, Madam Witness, we are now, let's say, back in time at 5 December 2013, and

23 please tell us in context what you recall what happened that day. Perhaps you start

24 in the morning when you went to work.

25 THE WITNESS: [11:20:18](Interpretation) On the 5th, in the morning, I was at work.

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1 When I went to work, I was told that a staff meeting had been convened. At that
2 meeting, the white person who was in charge told us that there had been an attack in
3 Bangui and that we all had to return to our homes while waiting to see how things
4 would evolve and then return to work the next day. So I went back home.
5 When I got home, my parents asked me why I had come back so early and I explained
6 to them that there had been gunshots in Bangui, that there had been an attack, and we
7 had been instructed to go back home and to remain at home. And that's how I
8 remained at home.
9 I cooked something for the children to eat and, around 2 p.m., we heard some
10 detonations. Some of our neighbours, our neighbours who were rivals, told us that
11 we needed to go to the imam's house. All the children at home were crying and I
12 decided to take them to the imam's house. There were many people at the imam's
13 residence, including women and children. I saw the imam. He was there, he had
14 his *chapelet*, and he called on all of us to pray, so we prayed.
15 And as I turned around I saw my brother, but I did not see my mother, so I decided to
16 go back. When I went back I found my mother and members of their -- of my family
17 sitting there. And so I told them that everybody was already gathered at the imam's
18 residence and that we should also go to the imam's residence.
19 As we were going to the imam's residence, the people who had gathered previously
20 at the imam's residence had fled, including the imam himself, but we did not know
21 about it, so the house was surrounded by the Anti-Balaka.
22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:23:29] Madam Witness, if you -- if you need -- if
23 you need time, we can make a break, but if you can continue, please do that. As we
24 said, we completely understand this is very, very difficult for you. If you want, you
25 can continue, but if you say it's good to have a break then we will do that, too.

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1 THE WITNESS: [11:24:15](Interpretation) I can continue.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:24:18] Thank you very much. Please do that.

3 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:24:27]

4 Q. [11:24:28] Madam Witness, without giving the names of the people who were
5 with you at this point, as you left your, you know, the house and were going towards
6 the imam's house, can you tell us what the women in that group were wearing?

7 A. [11:25:12] They were all dressed up like Muslims would do, and they had
8 scarves on their head.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:25:22] I think we now, come now to a point
10 where any further question would trigger an answer that would have to be in private
11 session.

12 So we go to private session, I suggest.

13 (Private session at 11.25 a.m.)

14 THE COURT OFFICER: [11:25:49] We are in private session, Mr President.

15 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:25:52] Thank you.

16 Madam Witness, we are now in private session, so the public cannot hear you, and we
17 continue from -- from there. I think we left that you went with some other people
18 from your house to the imam's house. What happened then?

19 THE WITNESS: [11:26:46](Interpretation) (Redacted)

20 (Redacted)

21 (Redacted)

22 (Redacted)

23 (Redacted)

24 (Redacted). My parents, I don't know in which direction they fled, (Redacted)

25 (Redacted). And when I felt that it was a bit calm, I thought I could come out,

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1 but a group of (Redacted) Balaka came in, threatened me with their weapons, but one
2 of them said not to kill me. (Redacted)

3 (Redacted)

4 (Redacted)

5 Then they said that we must leave, because if we remained there the Séléka might
6 show up. (Redacted)

7 (Redacted)

8 (Redacted) So he undressed me,

9 he removed my skirt and my underpants and he slept with me.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:29:32] We give you time, Madam Witness. We
11 give you time.

12 THE WITNESS: [11:30:08](Interpretation) After he raped me, (Redacted)

13 (Redacted).

14 So he left and I don't know where they went (Redacted)

15 (Redacted).

16 (Redacted)

17 (Redacted)

18 (Redacted)

19 (Redacted)

20 (Redacted)

21 (Redacted), I found my mother who was crying, so I asked for my brothers

22 and sisters and she said she didn't know where they were. She went on to say she

23 thought I was dead. She asked me what had happened to me and I didn't tell her

24 anything. I hid the story from her. It is only the next day in the morning that I told

25 her the entire story.

26

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:32:05] How did your mother react when you
2 told her the story?

3 THE WITNESS: [11:32:26](Interpretation) My mother also started crying and said
4 that I mustn't kill myself. She suggested things so that I would get a bit more
5 confidence in myself.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:32:46] Okay.

7 THE WITNESS: [11:32:49](Interpretation) She decided to take me to the hospital.
8 If you have any other questions, go ahead.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:33:18] Do you know the person who did that to
10 you?

11 THE WITNESS: [11:33:40](Interpretation) (Redacted), I didn't know
12 him. (Redacted).

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:34:01] (Redacted)?

14 THE WITNESS: [11:34:17](Interpretation) (Redacted)
15 (Redacted)

16 MS BERDENNIKOVA:

17 Q. [11:34:40] Thank you, Madam. I'd like to ask you a few questions about what
18 happened when you went to the hospital the next -- to get treated. Can you tell us
19 what -- what happened?

20 A. [11:35:25] (Redacted)

21 (Redacted)

22 (Redacted)

23 (Redacted)

24 Q. [11:35:55] Did you keep any records of these medical tests and examination?

25 A. [11:36:27] Yes. I got the first results, but I've lost the later results.

26

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- 1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:36:39] I think we have a document here, so ...
- 2 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:36:41] Indeed, your Honours. I would now like to
- 3 show it to the witness. It's a confidential document. It's at tab 3 on our list.
- 4 And for the record, the ERN number is CAR-OTP-2127-9467. If it can be displayed
- 5 for the witness to look at.
- 6 Q. [11:37:38] Madam Witness, are you able to see a document yet?
- 7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:38:21] Do you see it on the screen,
- 8 Madam Witness, the document? And if so, do you recognise it?
- 9 THE WITNESS: [11:38:46] Yes, I can see the document and I recognise it.
- 10 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:38:53] Is --
- 11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:38:53] It's okay.
- 12 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:38:54]
- 13 Q. [11:38:55] Is this one of the documents that -- that you mentioned to us now?
- 14 A. [11:39:18] That is correct.
- 15 Q. [11:39:21] Could you tell us who drafted this?
- 16 A. [11:39:47] You know, on that day, I lost my memory completely. I was
- 17 completely shaken. I think it was a man who saw me. I don't remember if it was a
- 18 lady or a man who drafted the document. I can't tell you. But this is the document
- 19 that was given to me after my consultation.
- 20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:40:16] I think that's enough.
- 21 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:40:22]
- 22 Q. [11:40:22] Now, the handwriting is -- is a little bit -- is a little bit unclear, but I
- 23 think we can make out what it says. So with the Court's leave, I'll read out in French
- 24 into the record what the document says.
- 25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:40:40] Yes.

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1 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:40:44]

2 Q. [11:40:44] I'll quote in French. (Interpretation)

3 "A young woman, (Redacted), came to the (Redacted).

4 She has been raped by an Anti-Balaka during the events which took place on

5 05/12/2013 during the day."

6 (Speaks English) I understand it's a correct reflection of what you have just described

7 to us.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:41:22] And I think you can also continue what's

9 written down here. You know, it also says something about the injury.

10 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:41:35] And it indeed clarifies *traumatisme vaginal*.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:41:40] Yes.

12 THE INTERPRETER: [11:41:46] And it says traumatic vaginal injury, vaginal

13 trauma.

14 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:41:54] Your Honours, I would now like to show a second

15 document.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:41:57] Yes, of course.

17 MS BERDENNIKOVA: And it's also confidential. It's at tab 4 on our list. The

18 ERN, CAR-OTP-2127-9468.

19 Q. [11:42:30] Madam Witness, take the time to look at this document and then tell

20 us whether it was drafted under the same circumstances as the first document we just

21 looked at.

22 A. [11:43:11] Yes, this document was drafted under the same circumstances on the

23 same day.

24 Q. [11:43:17] And I will do the same as with the first document. I'll -- I'll read it

25 out into the record, again in French: (Interpretation)

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1 "The patient was bleeding a lot and there was also the hymen that had been broken.

2 After that, the patient was treated for (Redacted)

3 (Redacted)."

4 (Speaks English) Is -- is this an accurate description of -- of what happened?

5 A. [11:44:15] Well, they gave me this document. It is a document drafted by a
6 doctor.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:44:22] I think that that's okay and that's enough,
8 because we have -- we have this -- these documents and she said what happened to
9 her, and we have enough knowledge and imagination what is behind this document.

10 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:44:43] Thank you. We'll move on to another topic.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:44:46] Yeah. And this topic can be in public, or
12 do you think we should stay in private session?

13 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:44:52] Could I have just one moment to confer?

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:44:55] Of course. Of course.

15 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:45:15] Your Honours, we'll have one more topic in
16 private session, and then ...

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:45:20] Of course. Please continue.

18 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:45:22]

19 Q. [11:45:22] Madam Witness, does the name (Redacted) mean anything to
20 you?

21 A. [11:45:51] (Redacted)
22 (Redacted).

23 Q. [11:46:13] And how do you know each other?

24 A. [11:46:24] We were in the same town and we were also in Bossangoa together.
25 She was married to a man (Redacted)

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1 (Redacted).

2 Q. [11:46:41] When you mention that "(Redacted),"

3 (Redacted)?

4 A. [11:47:14] I haven't quite understood your question. You're talking about
5 which woman?

6 Q. [11:47:23] Sorry, maybe my question was not entirely clear. When -- when you
7 responded to my question about how you know (Redacted), you said - and I
8 see it in the transcript -- (Redacted)

9 (Redacted)

10 A. [11:47:59] (Redacted)

11 Q. [11:48:05] And while we're in private session, could you (Redacted)
12 (Redacted).

13 A. [11:48:38] There was my (Redacted)

14 (Redacted)

15 (Redacted)

16 THE INTERPRETER: [11:49:24] (Redacted), says the interpreter. Correction:
17 (Redacted).

18 THE WITNESS: [11:49:30](Interpretation) And (Redacted)

19 (Redacted)

20 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:49:47]

21 Q. [11:49:49] Was (Redacted)?

22 A. [11:50:04] Yes, that is him.

23 Q. [11:50:11] And was (Redacted)?

24 A. [11:50:33] Yes, (Redacted).

25 Q. [11:50:39] And just to clarify, (Redacted)

26

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1 (Redacted)

2 A. [11:51:07] That is correct.

3 Q. [11:51:13] So I'd just like to ask you a couple more questions about (Redacted)

4 (Redacted)?

5 A. [11:51:41] (Redacted).

6 Q. [11:51:48] (Redacted)?

7 A. [11:52:06] (Redacted)

8 (Redacted)

9 Q. [11:52:24] (Redacted)

10 (Redacted)?

11 A. [11:52:41] That is correct.

12 Q. [11:52:43] (Redacted)?

13 A. [11:53:00] No, she didn't tell me.

14 Q. [11:53:01] Did she tell you what group the -- they belonged to?

15 A. [11:53:25] She told me that it was the Anti-Balaka. She didn't give me more
16 details, but she did say it was the Anti-Balaka.

17 Q. [11:53:35] Okay. Thank you. I would now like to -- I would like to move on
18 now to what happened after (Redacted)

19 (Redacted)

20 (Redacted) Now I would like to talk about what happened after that
21 and I think we could try to do this in open session.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:54:05] Yes, I also think so.

23 The names that -- from the family that would reveal the identity of the witness have
24 already been mentioned, so the interrogation could circle, so to speak, in a more

25 generic manner about potential victims and the number of victims and so on. So you

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1 can give it a try, but yeah, I think we can -- we can do that in public session.

2 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:54:33] Perhaps I might ask to just jump back into private
3 session for maybe one or two questions.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:54:39] If -- if you think so, yes, of course, of
5 course. But we give it a try with open session.

6 (Open session at 11.55 a.m.)

7 THE COURT OFFICER: [11:55:02] We are in open session, Mr President.

8 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [11:55:08]

9 Q. [11:55:09] Madam Witness, so following the events we just described, where
10 did -- where did you end up? Where did you go?

11 A. [11:55:34] After that we went to the school where the other people were, those
12 who had fled.

13 Q. [11:55:46] Can you tell us the name of that school.

14 A. [11:55:59] It was called *École de la Liberté*.

15 Q. [11:56:04] And the other people who were there, who also fled, you mentioned,
16 how many of them were there at the time that you arrived?

17 A. [11:56:33] There were many people. Many people fled. And there were lots
18 of people from the outskirts who came, in addition to the people who were in the
19 centre. There were many, many people, but I can't give you an exact number.

20 Q. [11:56:56] Why were people in addition -- you mentioned that people came from
21 the outskirts in addition to the people who came from the centre. Which outskirts
22 are you talking about?

23 A. [11:57:29] Villages like Benzambe, Zere, Koro-M'poko, Ouham-Bac. The event
24 took them by surprise before 5 December. So they came to the school. They
25 already fled before the events of 5 December and sought refuge in the *École de la*

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1 *Liberté.*

2 Q. [11:58:04] And are the places you just mentioned, are they villages or towns
3 surrounding Bossangoa?

4 A. [11:58:31] These are areas close to Bossangoa, some are about 60 kilometres
5 away. I can't really judge the distance because I've never been there. But in those
6 villages there were weekly markets and people from the centre of Bossangoa went
7 there to sell their products.

8 Q. [11:58:57] All right. You mention that people from those villages, they fled to
9 *École de la Liberté* prior to the 5 December attack. Can you give us an idea of when
10 would they have fled to the -- to that school.

11 A. [11:59:39] I think it was during the month of September. I'm not exactly sure of
12 the date.

13 Q. [11:59:48] And why did they flee? Who were they fleeing from?

14 A. [12:00:06] I wasn't there, but as far as I know, what I heard, they were fleeing
15 from the Anti-Balaka.

16 Q. [12:00:18] Is this what you heard from the people who fled?

17 A. [12:00:33] Yes.

18 Q. [12:00:33] All right. So I'd like to -- I'd like to return now to events after the
19 5 December attack, and we know that you are now at the *École de la Liberté*. Can you
20 tell us what happened next at that school.

21 A. [12:00:57] On the 6th we went for a medical exam at the hospital, and then
22 shortly thereafter the Red Cross took out the bodies of persons who had died in the
23 various neighbourhoods.

24 Q. [12:01:43] All right. Let's -- let's -- let's not talk about specific names. So
25 without giving specific names, can you tell us a little bit more about these victims.

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1 A. [12:02:20] I do not see them myself, but from where we were I was able to see
2 {PFR: (Redacted)}. Those were some of
3 the bodies that were brought.

4 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [12:02:45] Maybe we could go into private --

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:02:47] No, no. This -- we have to redact this,
6 perhaps, anyway.

7 Madam Witness, do you recall how many dead people they brought, if you recall it.

8 THE WITNESS: [12:03:19](Interpretation) I did not see the dead bodies with my own
9 eyes, but according to what was being said, there were around 16 corpses.

10 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [12:03:37]

11 Q. [12:03:38] And of these 16 corpses, were there -- were they bodies of men, of
12 women?

13 A. [12:04:06] I don't know. There might have been two or three women among
14 the dead bodies, going by what I -- what I heard.

15 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [12:04:21] Your Honours, I'd like to go into a brief private
16 session.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:04:25] Yes, I can imagine that. Perhaps with
18 regard, also, to paragraph 56.

19 Yeah, private session.

20 (Private session at 12.04 p.m.)

21 THE COURT OFFICER: [12:04:50] We are in private session, Mr President.

22 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [12:04:55]

23 Q. [12:04:55] So Madam Witness, we're in private session now, as you heard.

24 Now only the people in the courtroom will hear you. You mentioned already that

25 (Redacted) to *École de la*

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1 *Liberté* by the Red Cross. Can you tell us (Redacted)?

2 A. [12:05:42] It was (Redacted)

3 (Redacted).

4 Q. [12:05:58] Can you tell us (Redacted)?

5 A. (No interpretation)

6 THE INTERPRETER: [12:06:22] Interpreter corrects: It's not -- it was not (Redacted)

7 (Redacted).

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:06:33] Madam Witness, did you come to know
9 how they died?

10 THE WITNESS: [12:07:01](Interpretation) I was not in a position to know, but I just
11 learned, like everyone else, that the bodies had been brought back and we started to
12 cry and we were informed that it was the agents of the Red Cross who had brought
13 back those dead bodies.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:07:22] Madam Witness, we spoke already about
15 your statement that you gave to the Prosecutors in 2019.

16 That's again, for the record, CAR-OTP-2111-0452 at 0464 paragraph 56, and perhaps it
17 jogs your memory. There it is recorded that you said: "(Redacted)
18 (Redacted)."

19 Does this jog your memory? It's -- you're talking here about (Redacted)
20 (Redacted).

21 THE WITNESS: [12:08:21](Interpretation) Yes, that is correct.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:08:21] (Redacted)
23 (Redacted)

24 (Redacted)

25 (Redacted)

26

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1 Is that what you recall (Redacted)?

2 THE WITNESS: [12:09:04](Interpretation) Yes, that is correct.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:09:09] Did any of these (Redacted)

4 (Redacted), were they belonging to the Séléka, if you know.

5 THE WITNESS: [12:09:35](Interpretation) No, not at all. They did not belong to

6 Séléka. (Redacted)

7 (Redacted)

8 (Redacted)

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:10:05] Yeah, thank you. And one other

10 question. I think you mentioned a couple of minutes ago that you heard talk about

11 16 dead bodies that had been brought to *École de la Liberté*. On 0463, paragraph 55,

12 that's again your statement, you said they brought back 19 bodies to school. So

13 there's a small discrepancy. Here, does this jog your memory how many dead

14 people had been brought to the *école*?

15 THE WITNESS: [12:11:15](Interpretation) I told you that on that day I did not see

16 the bodies with my own eyes. I only heard these things being said, so I am not in a

17 position to give you an exact figure.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:11:28] That's fine.

19 So the witness is really differentiating here.

20 Can we go back to open session?

21 Not yet. Okay, please then continue.

22 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [12:11:38]

23 Q. [12:11:39] Madam Witness, so we just talked about (Redacted)

24 (Redacted) killed during the attack. These are – (Redacted)

25 (Redacted)? I'm sorry, is that

26

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1 right?

2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:12:16] I think she has already said that, but we
3 can repeat it.

4 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [12:12:37]

5 Q. [12:12:38] Madam Witness, is that right? You mentioned earlier (Redacted)

6 (Redacted)

7 (Redacted)?

8 A. [12:13:15] Yes, that is correct.

9 Q. [12:13:16] So in response to the Presiding Judge's question, you explained that
10 none of them were members of the Séléka. What about (Redacted)

11 (Redacted)?

12 A. [12:13:54] No, he was not part of them.

13 Q. [12:14:00] All right. We'll just stay in private session for the next few questions.

14 I want to ask you whether anyone who was injured was also brought to the *École de la*
15 *Liberté* following the 5 December attack?

16 A. [12:14:48] Those who were injured were taken to the hospital.

17 Q. [12:14:55] Were any (Redacted)?

18 A. [12:15:17] (Redacted).

19 Q. [12:15:26] (Redacted).

20 A. [12:15:42] (Redacted).

21 Q. [12:15:44] And was she also taken to the hospital?

22 A. [12:15:59] Yes, she was also taken to the hospital.

23 Q. [12:16:03] Did you see her after the attack?

24 A. [12:16:23] (Redacted)

25 (Redacted)

26

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1 Q. [12:16:39] (Redacted)?

2 A. [12:16:55] (Redacted)

3 (Redacted)

4 Q. [12:17:10] (Redacted)?

5 A. [12:17:27] (Redacted).

6 Q. [12:17:38] (Redacted)?

7 A. [12:18:06] (Redacted)

8 (Redacted).

9 Q. [12:18:21] Madam Witness, I see that it's -- it's sensitive questions and I'm very
10 sorry to ask them, but maybe we --

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:18:31] No, but I think -- I have the impression at
12 least after the last break that the witness is a strong witness. We can of course
13 always make a break, but I think -- I have the impression we can ask her if you can
14 continue. We can also have a break.

15 Madam Witness, what do you think? I suggest to you we can continue or you can
16 also have a break if you want to have too.

17 THE WITNESS: [12:19:15](Interpretation) I would like a break.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:19:16] Then I would suggest perhaps that we
19 have the lunch break, which need not be so long, then. What do you think?

20 (Trial Chamber confers)

21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: Then we have the lunch break until half past 1, not
22 half past 2 as normally.

23 So, Madam Witness, we have now a longer break and we see you back then at half
24 past 1 our time.

25 THE COURT USHER: [12:19:50] All rise.

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1 (Recess taken in private session at 12.19 p.m.)

2 (Upon resuming in open session at 1.32 p.m.)

3 THE COURT USHER: [13:32:42] All rise.

4 Please be seated.

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:33:12] Good afternoon, Madam Witness. I

6 hope you had a break that could refresh you a little bit. We continue now with the

7 examination and I give the Prosecution the floor.

8 We are in open session. I'm not sure if we should stay there or can stay there.

9 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [13:33:28] If we could go back into private session because I
10 have a few follow-up questions --

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:33:31] Absolutely.

12 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [13:33:32] -- on what was discussed.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:33:35] Absolutely. I was not 100 per sure
14 because of that.

15 We go to private session.

16 (Private session at 1.33 p.m.)

17 THE COURT OFFICER: [13:33:49] We are in private session, Mr President.

18 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [13:33:56]

19 Q. [13:33:57] Madam Witness, I hope you're all right and ready to continue for the
20 next session. I have a few follow-up questions for you about what was discussed
21 just before we took the break. And we were talking about (Redacted),

22 (Redacted)

23 (Redacted)

24 A. [13:34:48] It was the Anti-Balaka.

25 Q. [13:34:55] And I know it's not -- it's a difficult topic to discuss, but I would like

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- 1 to go back to (Redacted)
- 2 (Redacted)
- 3 (Redacted)
- 4 (Redacted)
- 5 (Redacted)
- 6 A. [13:35:54] (Redacted).
- 7 Q. [13:35:58] (Redacted)?
- 8 A. [13:36:13] (Redacted).
- 9 Q. [13:36:21] That's all right. Thank you.
- 10 (Redacted)
- 11 (Redacted)?
- 12 A. [13:36:45] (Redacted).
- 13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:36:55] I (Redacted)
- 14 (Redacted)
- 15 (Redacted)
- 16 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [13:37:13]
- 17 Q. [13:37:14] (Redacted).
- 18 A. [13:37:31] (Redacted).
- 19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:37:40] So when I asked her during the last
- 20 session (Redacted)
- 21 (Redacted)
- 22 (Redacted), I think we can leave it at that. We don't need to ask that. It's also not --
- 23 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [13:37:51] Understood.
- 24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:37:52] -- it's also not in the statement, so -- and,
- 25 you know, (Redacted)
- 26

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1 (Redacted), it might be more difficult, yeah.

2 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [13:38:10] Understood, your Honours.

3 Q. [13:38:15] Madam Witness, I have one more question to follow up on before we
4 change topic. And I'd like to go back to the 5 December attack.

5 So you described in the previous sessions how you (Redacted)

6 (Redacted).

7 How did you know that they were Anti-Balaka?

8 A. [13:39:15] When the gunfire started, I immediately understood that what was
9 going on was a clash between the Séléka and the Anti-Balaka, and those who were
10 shooting at us were most certainly the Anti-Balaka.

11 Q. [13:39:35] Can you describe how they looked like?

12 A. [13:40:01] Some of them had plaited hair, others were wearing *gris-gris* and had
13 scarves. Others were wearing military dress.

14 Q. [13:40:29] All right.

15 I believe we can go back to open session.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:40:32] Open session.

17 (Open session at 1.40 p.m.)

18 THE COURT OFFICER: [13:40:48] We are back in open session, Mr President.

19 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [13:40:56]

20 Q. [13:40:56] Madam Witness, I'd like to now talk about -- about your stay at the
21 *École de la Liberté* after the 5 December attack on Bossangoa and I'd like to ask you if
22 you returned to your house after the attack?

23 A. [13:41:27] No, we did not return to the house.

24 Q. [13:41:31] Do you know what happened to your house?

25 A. [13:41:49] Our houses were destroyed and they later set fire to the houses.

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:42:00] Microphone, please.

2 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [13:42:02]

3 Q. [13:42:02] Could you tell us how -- how do you know that?

4 A. [13:42:17] We fled without taking anything at all with us, not even clothes. We
5 left simply in the clothes we were wearing. The FOMAC forces who escorted some
6 people back to their homes to get supplies, but the others, such as us, could not go
7 back home. We did not leave from the hospital because some of our relatives had
8 already been killed. It was only later that we learnt that our houses had been burnt.

9 Q. [13:43:04] And could you tell us about Bossangoa Central Mosque, where is it
10 located?

11 A. [13:43:35] It is located opposite Boro market. It's -- it was when I returned from
12 the hospital that I saw the mosque. I didn't see it after that.

13 Q. [13:43:57] When you say that you returned from the hospital and saw the
14 mosque, which date are we talking about?

15 A. [13:44:24] It was 5 December.

16 Q. [13:44:28] Was the mosque intact when you saw it on that day?

17 A. [13:44:55] When I saw it, it was still intact.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:45:03] Did you see -- Madam Witness, did you
19 see the mosque any time later again?

20 THE WITNESS: [13:45:27](Interpretation) When we were getting ready to depart for
21 Chad I saw it again, because we took the main road.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:45:40] Was there a difference of the appearance
23 of the mosque between 5 December when you saw it last and then when you
24 departed for Chad?

25 THE WITNESS: [13:46:08](Interpretation) The mosque was still there, but the

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1 roofing was gone.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:46:15] Why was it gone? Could you describe
3 this a little bit more, how it looked like?

4 THE WITNESS: [13:46:39](Interpretation) I don't know. I don't know what to say.
5 Back then I attended school and the mosque was located in the neighbourhood. I
6 can't say who was responsible for the destruction.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:46:55] I think that's enough. Please continue.

8 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [13:47:02]

9 Q. [13:47:03] I'd like to talk a little bit about the situation, especially the security
10 situation in Bossangoa after the 5 December attack. You already mentioned that you
11 were staying at the *École de la Liberté*. Did you feel safe within the school?

12 A. [13:47:35] Yes, the Congolese FOMAC soldiers were maintaining security at that
13 place.

14 Q. [13:47:47] You already mentioned that a lot of other people were staying at the
15 school with you and they included men, women, and children. Where were they
16 accommodated? How were they accommodated?

17 A. [13:48:24] It was the World Food Programme, the WFP, that was providing
18 assistance. They had brought tarpaulins, rice, blankets, mats, oil, and salt. And we
19 used the tarpaulin to construct a shelter and we would sleep there.

20 Q. [13:48:53] Was this shelter constructed outside or inside, within the school
21 compound? Can you describe it a little bit.

22 A. [13:49:18] In the school courtyard there were no tarpaulins, rather, there were
23 classrooms, and the classrooms were occupied by those who were the first to arrive in
24 the place. We had arrived in later and we used the tarpaulins to construct shelter.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:49:49] You -- Madam Witness, you said there

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1 were many, many people in the *École de la Liberté*.

2 Do you have an idea how many? Can you give us a number, how many people
3 lived there?

4 THE WITNESS: [13:50:18](Interpretation) Around 1,000 people, but I can't give you
5 an exact figure.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:50:24] No, nobody expects an exact figure, but
7 that's already something that we can have an idea.

8 And for how long did you stay there?

9 THE WITNESS: [13:50:54](Interpretation) From the point in time when we went
10 there and set up home there, that was 5 December, and we went to Chad on 2 or 3
11 April. So that was about four months. You can calculate it out. We did not return
12 home in the interim.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:51:13] Okay. Thank you.

14 Could you describe a little bit the living conditions in the place during these couple of
15 months that you lived there? You know, you have already talked about where
16 people slept, about hygiene. Was there some medical care or whatsoever?

17 Could you please tell us a little bit so that we can picture it for ourselves how the
18 situation was there.

19 THE WITNESS: [13:52:00](Interpretation) Well, we weren't at home, therefore, living
20 conditions were necessarily difficult. We were using blankets. It was the cool
21 season. We didn't have good food. The food was the same every single day,
22 notably rice. MSF built toilets, toilet rooms. There were toilet rooms for the -- or,
23 rather, washrooms for the men and washrooms for the women built from the
24 tarpaulins, and to access them we had to stand in queue. These washrooms were
25 constantly occupied.

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1 They also built two water points, which operated in the morning and again in the
2 evening. You know, we did not have enough vessels to store water. We only had
3 jerrycans, the jerrycans provided to us.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:53:27] Thank you.

5 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [13:53:32]

6 Q. [13:53:33] Let's just continue talking about the living conditions a little bit more.
7 Could you tell us about what kind of medical care, if any, was provided to these
8 thousand people?

9 A. [13:54:02] Yes, MSF opened a little clinic. It was located by the tribunal, which
10 was situated close to the school. There were also refugees at the tribunal. It was
11 the clinic that would provide first aid and, in more serious cases, an ambulance
12 would be called in to transport patients to the large central hospital.

13 Q. [13:54:40] Was there enough staff, medical staff at this clinic that was established
14 by MSF?

15 A. [13:55:01] There were two staff members there who were assisted by people
16 locally recruited in the camp, but things didn't really operate as they should.

17 Q. [13:55:28] You mentioned earlier that there were many children also at
18 the -- seeking shelter at the school. Was there any special provisions that were put in
19 place for the children?

20 A. [13:55:56] UNICEF set up a tent and they put toys in the tent. And some of the
21 displaced people in the camp were recruited by UNICEF to supervise the children in
22 the tent, but no education or proper schooling was given.

23 Q. [13:56:28] And did the situation remain like this in January?

24 A. [13:56:55] There was no school in the area from the point in time that the rebels
25 arrived in. All of the children stayed at home. The displaced people in *École de la*

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1 *Liberté* had the benefit of the facilities, notably the tent which UNICEF had put up.

2 Q. [13:57:26] Did the number of the displaced people - you already mentioned
3 about a thousand when you had arrived there - did this number go up or did this
4 number go down during your stay?

5 A. [13:58:02] Well, there were people who were already there, and then we came
6 from Bossangoa, but no further people joined us there.

7 Q. [13:58:17] Were people able to leave the school and go into Bossangoa?

8 A. [13:58:42] I haven't understood your question fully.

9 Q. [13:58:48] I'll try to rephrase that. So the displaced people who stayed at the
10 *École de la Liberté*, why didn't they leave? Why didn't they go back home, for
11 instance?

12 A. [13:59:19] Well, who could have protected those people? And what's more,
13 let's remember all of the houses had been destroyed. All of our possessions had
14 been looted, so it was practically impossible for the displaced people to return home.

15 Q. [13:59:44] Do you know of anyone who would have tried to leave the school?

16 A. [14:00:08] Yes, there was a young person who took care of the toilets at the
17 camp.

18 Q. [14:00:26] What happened to him when he left?

19 A. [14:00:43] Well, I didn't see him leaving that day, but in the night I heard that he
20 had left to go and get his bicycle and that he had been killed.

21 Q. [14:01:00] Do you know who killed him?

22 A. [14:01:09] No, I don't know who killed him. I did not see him leave.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:01:28] So, Madam Witness, at some point in time
24 you left the *École de la Liberté*. How did that happen and where did you -- were you
25 brought to, to word it this way?

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1 THE WITNESS: [14:01:57](Interpretation) I left *École de la Liberté* and went straight to
2 Chad.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:02:09] How did you get there? How was
4 transport to Chad from the *École de la Liberté*?

5 THE WITNESS: [14:02:46](Interpretation) I do not know the details, but leaders held
6 meetings with the officials of the HCR and the leaders asked that we be displaced
7 because of the prevailing insecurity. That is how some trucks were brought to
8 transport us to a safe place in Chad.

9 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [14:03:15]

10 Q. [14:03:15] Madam Witness, can you -- can you tell us how many people were
11 evacuated at this time?

12 A. [14:03:45] 517 of us, that was the number.

13 Q. [14:03:54] And how was the security of this -- of this convoy, of this evacuation
14 ensured?

15 A. [14:04:24] It was done by the Chadian elements of MISCA. They are the ones
16 who provided security for us during the evacuation.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:04:36] Madam Witness, you said 517 persons.
18 How do you come to know the exact number of the persons that were evacuated with
19 you, together with you?

20 THE WITNESS: [14:05:10](Interpretation) I know that figure because the HCR had
21 asked for a census of the people to be evacuated (Redacted)
22 (Redacted) that headcount or census within the camp. (Redacted) another
23 young man and (Redacted) aware of the exact number of persons to be
24 evacuated.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:05:43] And was this the first evacuation from the

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1 *École de la Liberté* to Chad?

2 THE WITNESS: [14:06:06](Interpretation) That was for the second convoy. I don't
3 know the number of persons who were evacuated during the first convoy.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:06:16] Thank you.

5 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [14:06:23]

6 Q. [14:06:24] Madam Witness, I'd like to go back a little bit and talk about the
7 security situation. You mentioned that it was not safe to go outside of the school in
8 the months -- in the four months, in fact, that you stayed there. Can you tell us a
9 little bit more about why was it unsafe at that time?

10 THE WITNESS: [14:07:12](Interpretation) It was for security reasons.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:07:15] I think we can leave it at that, that she has
12 already explained, given an example, a person that left the compound, so to speak,
13 and what happened to that person.

14 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [14:07:29] Your Honours, I'd like to go into a brief private
15 session then for one more topic.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:07:36] Do you also want -- I'm not sure if you
17 think it's important, but it might be interesting, I'm also not so sure, but there is also a
18 drawing that the witness made. This is annex A to her statement. It could be put to
19 her, for example.

20 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [14:07:57] If --

21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:07:58] I can do it if I think it's necessary, but we
22 go first back to private session.

23 MS BERDENNIKOVA:

24 Q. [14:08:16] Madam Witness, what I --

25 (Private session at 2.08 p.m.)

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- 1 THE COURT OFFICER: [14:08:19] We are in private session, Mr President.
- 2 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [14:08:22]
- 3 Q. [14:08:24] Madam Witness, what I wanted to ask you is whether you saw any
- 4 Anti-Balaka in Bossangoa following the 5 December attack?
- 5 A. [14:08:49] Yes, I saw them.
- 6 Q. [14:08:52] Can you tell us where you saw them?
- 7 A. [14:09:06] I saw them (Redacted).
- 8 Q. [14:09:10] Approximately when did you see them (Redacted)?
- 9 A. [14:09:34] It was (Redacted).
- 10 Q. [14:09:40] Can you describe (Redacted)?
- 11 A. [14:10:03] Yes, they (Redacted)
- 12 (Redacted).
- 13 Q. [14:10:22] Did you speak to any of these Anti-Balaka (Redacted)?
- 14 A. [14:10:40] No, I did not talk to them.
- 15 Q. [14:10:45] All right. (Redacted)
- 16 (Redacted)?
- 17 A. [14:11:15] (Redacted).
- 18 Q. [14:11:16] (Redacted)?
- 19 A. [14:11:33] (Redacted)
- 20 (Redacted)
- 21 (Redacted)
- 22 Q. [14:12:02] (Redacted)
- 23 (Redacted)
- 24 A. [14:12:28] (Redacted)
- 25 (Redacted)
- 26

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1 Q. [14:12:41] (Redacted)

2 (Redacted)

3 A. [14:13:09] (Redacted)

4 (Redacted)

5 (Redacted) the attack did not unfold as planned,

6 that the plan had been to attack on Friday during the prayer, but unfortunately, the

7 Bangui attack took place in the morning and so they too were forced to launch their

8 own attack.

9 Q. [14:14:02] So the attack was supposed to take place on Friday, as you said,

10 which was 6 December, but instead it took place on Thursday, 5 December.

11 A. [14:14:30] Yes, that is correct.

12 Q. [14:14:33] (Redacted)

13 (Redacted)?

14 A. [14:14:56] (Redacted).

15 Q. [14:14:58] (Redacted)?

16 A. [14:15:18] (Redacted)

17 (Redacted)

18 Q. [14:15:40] (Redacted)?

19 A. [14:15:56] (Redacted).

20 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [14:16:03] Your Honours, I believe we can go back into open

21 session.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:16:11] Yes, open session.

23 (Open session at 2.16 p.m.)

24 THE COURT OFFICER: [14:16:22] We are back in open session, Mr President.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:16:26] Madam Witness, you spoke of an attack

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1 that (Redacted) told you about that was going to happen. What happened to the
2 patients at the hospital?

3 THE WITNESS: [14:16:54](Interpretation) Those who were injured during the attack
4 of the 5th were taken to the hospital.

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:17:09] That was my fault. My question was
6 unclear.

7 You told us about that (Redacted) warned you there would be an attack on the
8 hospital and then you said indeed this attack took place.

9 So with regard to this attack, what happened to the patients that were already at the
10 hospital?

11 THE WITNESS: [14:17:50](Interpretation) They were not able to reach the hospital.
12 They launched their attack at the bishop's place with serious gunshots in the
13 afternoon. Some people were killed, including some youth, but they did not reach
14 the hospital. Then, at midnight, MSF came to the hospital to evacuate the patients to
15 the *École Liberté*.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:18:33] Did they evacuate all the patients to the
17 *École de la Liberté*?

18 THE WITNESS: [14:18:51](Interpretation) That is correct.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:18:53] Because I have here the statement in front
20 of me, that's, again, CAR-OTP-2111-0452 at 0468, paragraph 78. I read it to you. At
21 the -- the "MSF evacuated the Muslim patients from the hospital to the school *École*
22 *Liberté* because they felt unsafe."

23 Is that -- does that accord with your recollection?

24 THE WITNESS: [14:19:40](Interpretation) Yes, that is correct.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:19:42] Please continue.

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1 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [14:19:45]

2 Q. [14:19:45] Madam Witness, so I also understand from your last answers that in
3 fact the insecurity, the insecure situation was because the Anti-Balaka were still in the
4 area; is that right?

5 A. [14:20:17] Yes, that is correct. They were able to reach the hospital, but could
6 not enter the promises -- the premises, rather, of the hospital.

7 Q. [14:21:02] All right. Madam Witness, this in fact brings me to my last question
8 for you, and it's, were you ever able to return to Bossangoa, to your home, after the
9 events that happened?

10 A. [14:21:35] No, I have not yet returned there.

11 Q. [14:21:42] Did your family or your community return?

12 A. [14:22:07] Yes. Some of them do go back to sell their goods and then come back.
13 And I'm referring here to the Muslims you are talking about.

14 Q. [14:22:27] Have your family members been able to return?

15 A. [14:22:48] One of my uncles usually goes there, but also usually comes back.

16 Q. [14:23:00] And are the rest of your family members living in refugee camps?

17 A. [14:23:23] Yes.

18 MS BERDENNIKOVA: [14:23:25] Madam Witness, I thank you very much for giving
19 us your testimony today. And I realise that it was not always easy for you, so I
20 appreciate you doing that for us, and I have no more questions for you today.

21 Thank you.

22 Thank you, your Honours.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:23:42] Thank you very much.

24 I have one question in private session and then we give the floor to the
25 representatives of the victims.

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1 Private session, please. Private session, please.

2 (Private session at 2.24 p.m.)

3 THE COURT OFFICER: [14:24:09] We are in private session, Mr President.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:24:13] Thank you.

5 Madam Witness, how is your life today? Can you describe it a little bit to us.

6 THE WITNESS: [14:24:41](Interpretation) I no longer live like I used to. Today we
7 sleep on the tarpaulins in tents built by the HCR and I sleep on a wooden bed. My
8 school life has been destroyed. I am no longer able to return to school. My mother
9 also suffers a lot because she does not know what to do. (Redacted)

10 (Redacted) so living conditions for us are extremely

11 difficult. We are not living in an area of perfect security because (Redacted)

12 (Redacted)

13 (Redacted) people are able to move around freely, so I don't know what God
14 has in store for me.

15 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:25:54] Thank you, Madam Witness. We go
16 back to open session.

17 (Open session at 2.26 p.m.)

18 THE COURT OFFICER: [14:26:11] We are back in open session, Mr President.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:26:14] Thank you.

20 I would give the floor to Ms Douzima, if you have questions.

21 MS DOUZIMA LAWSON: [14:26:32](Interpretation) Yes, indeed, Mr President. I
22 have two small questions for the witness.

23 QUESTIONED BY MS DOUZIMA LAWSON: (Interpretation)

24 Q. [14:27:01] Good afternoon, Madam Witness.

25 Madam Witness, I have two small questions for you.

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1 THE INTERPRETER: [14:27:19] Sorry, Mr President, the interpreters -- oh, we
2 thought we had lost the counsel.

3 MS DOUZIMA LAWSON: [14:27:26](Interpretation)

4 Q. [14:27:27] Madam Witness, you mentioned (Redacted)
5 (Redacted).

6 Are you aware of any other women who were raped, or do you have an idea of the
7 approximate number of women who were raped during those events?

8 A. [14:28:00] (Redacted)
9 (Redacted)

10 Q. [14:28:09] Thank you. You also said that the Anti-Balaka burned down your
11 house. Do you know whether they burned down any houses other than yours?

12 A. [14:28:32] Yes, several houses were burned.

13 MS DOUZIMA LAWSON: [14:28:37](Interpretation) Thank you very much,
14 Madam Witness.

15 Mr President, that will be all for this witness.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:28:43] Thank you. And I think she had
17 answered that before, but it's not important.

18 Mr Suprun, any questions to the witness?

19 MR SUPRUN: [14:28:49] Mr President, I have no questions to this witness.

20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:28:53] Thank you very much.

21 I think we would -- we should stop here for today and we have - I think I would even
22 say - more than enough time for tomorrow for the examination by the Defence.

23 Madam Witness, this concludes the testimony for today. I would like to ask you that
24 you please do not discuss your testimony with anyone you may be in contact today,
25 not even with family and friends. Do you understand that?

26

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- 1 THE WITNESS: [14:29:41](Interpretation) Yes, I have understood you.
- 2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:29:43] Then have a good rest and we will see
- 3 you again tomorrow. This is also applicable to everybody else here in the room.
- 4 Tomorrow, 9.30.
- 5 THE COURT USHER: [14:29:54] All rise.
- 6 (The hearing ends in open session at 2.30 p.m.)