

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE PROSECUTION
OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS
OF INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY
OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA SINCE 1991

WITNESS STATEMENT

WITNESS INFORMATION:

Last Name: SYLEJMANI

First Name: Agim

Middle name: N/A

Nickname/Alias: N/A.

Father's name: Emrush

Date of Birth: 19.01.1948

Gender: Male

Place of Birth: Ponore

Ethnic Origin: Kosovar Albanian;

Religion: Islam;

Current Occupation: Automobile electrician .

Former: same

Language(s) Spoken: Albanian

Language(s) Written: As spoken.

Date of Interview: 13 August 2006

Place of interview: Gjakove.

Interviewer: Tetyana LAZARENKO

Interpreter: Ilir ZIU

Language(s) Used
in Interview: Albanian and English

Persons Present
during interview: Agim SYLEJMANI, Tetyana LAZARENKO, Ilir ZIU

Signatures:

Witness

A. Gjundri

Others

Tetyana Lazarenko

Ilir Ziu

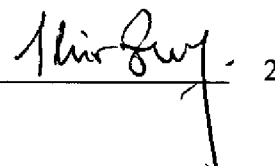
WITNESS STATEMENT:

1. I am here voluntarily to give a statement to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). I have not been threatened or forced to come here, nor have I been offered any promises or incentives to do so. I have been told that should any of the persons I speak about in this statement be indicted by the ICTY, my name may become known to the defence lawyers of the accused and the general public. I am NOT prepared to testify before the ICTY in The Hague, Netherlands and I understand that if I am required to testify, the Tribunal will take all necessary security precautions on my behalf. I do not consent to a copy of this statement being supplied to UNMIK Police or any other law enforcement agencies investigating allegations of war crimes committed in Kosovo during the recent conflict.
2. I was born in Parnoc village Klina municipality. I had one brother- Afrim SYLEJMANI and 3 sisters- Sakibe LOTA, Muzaqet RUSTA and Hazbije KATONA. Both of my sisters -Sakibe and Hazbije live in Gjakove and my sister Muzaqet lives for a long time in Germany. My only brother Afrim got missing in 1998.
3. In Gjakove I live with my wife- Bekrije, my daughter- Doruntina and my son Ilir. My other son Adonis lives in US. My other son Florent was killed on 07.05.1999 at the age of 13 by Serbian forces in Gjakove.
4. In 1998 my brother Afrim SYLEJMANI lived in Gjakove with his wife Nashide and 4 children- 2 sons Veton and Visar and 2 daughters- Valdrina and Valentine. His son Veton still lives with his mother, Visar works in Pristina. Valdrina is married and lives with her husband and Valentina is single and lives in Gjakove with her mother.
5. During 1998 there were Serbia forces in Gjakove all the time. I haven't seen any KLA presence in Gjakove but they were in the villages around and in the mountains. I heard that KLA HQ was in Glogjane, but I don't know who the commander was. I personally never joint KLA and stayed all the time in Gjakove with my family.
6. At around March-April 1999 my eldest son Adonis wanted to joint KLA but finally he did not, because I didn't let him go. He had no weapon, no military training, only 16 y.o. During the war time I had no relatives in KLA.
7. In 1998 my brother Afrim SYLEJMANI was working privately as water plumber in Gjakove and other places around where this work was required. He was not in KLA and I never heard him talking about KLA. He lived quite far away from me and we saw each other maybe once in 3 months.
8. Before 1998 Afrim worked as a teacher of physical training in elementary school in Dujak. In April 1998, 5 school children were killed near the border to Albania. I don't know from which village they were but Afrim knew some of them because they were his pupils during the time he was teaching at school.
9. I went to the funeral with Afrim. I don't remember in which village the funeral took place, but it was the day Afrim left home and never returned back- 26 April 1998.

Witness



Others

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10. After the funeral we were coming back home. I don't remember what time it was, but it was already dark. We were driving with Afrim car- Opel Corsa, I don't know the number plates but it was Gjakove number plates. I think the colour of the vehicle was red but I am not sure about it.
11. On our way from the road Peja-Gjakove before the entrance into Gjakove we were stopped by Serbian policed at the check point. At that time all entries and exits from Gjakove had Serbian check points. They checked our documents and let us in. They didn't ask us for any money and I don't remember if my brother offered to buy them some beer. It was Afrim who was talking to Serbian police and I don't remember what was the conversation about.
12. Then he gave me a lift back home and left. He said that he is going home as well. It was the last time that I saw my brother alive. He never told me about his desire to join KLA and I don't know where he went after he dropped me home.
13. Around 1 week later my sister Hazbije told me that Afrim's wife and children came to her house to stay with her because Afrim left the house. She didn't tell me where he left and I have no idea where could he go. I only know that he left with his car. The car is still missing.
14. I didn't ask Afrim's wife about his whereabouts. I also didn't go to search for him because it was not safe to do it at that time. It was war around and police always wanted to know the name of the person I would be looking for. I only heard some rumours from people that he went to KLA. I cannot name anyone who told me this because it was just rumours around.
15. Being asked if I know anything about KLA HQ in Jablanica I can say, that I heard about it from the radio but I know nothing about it and I don't know who the commander was.
16. Later on I met Afrim's wife Nashide and she told me that Afrim was in KLA. After the war she didn't report him missing for a long time and I didn't ask her about Afrim anymore, so I don't know the reason why Afrim's wife reported him missing so late but she told me that she didn't want to make her children worry.
17. I know that after the war Afrim's wife Nashide was receiving donation for her husband as he was missing person. I don't know if she still receives any money for him because we are not talking about this subject.
18. After the war, but I don't remember the year, there was repeatedly information on the radio that people, who have relatives missing during the war should come to Missing person Office to report their relatives missing. It was said that there are still unidentified bodies in Rahovec morgue. After that ICRC were collecting blood samples for identification.

Witness

A. Lupa

Others

*B. P. S.**Sh. P. J.*

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19. As I had my son Florent killed during the war, I gave the blood samples for his identification. Afrim's sons and sisters gave the blood samples for his identification as well.
20. Around 3 months after the blood samples were given for identification, at the end of August 2005 ICRC informed Afrim's wife Nashide by phone about positive identification of his remains and she informed all of us about it- me and the sisters. The next day the list of identified people appeared on TV.
21. ICRC also asked the relatives to go to Rahovec morgue to see the bones of identified people, but I didn't go there as I was there before for my son's identification. So Nashide and her son Veton went to Rahovec. I only went to the funeral ceremony on 30 August 2005, which took place in Sport palace in Gjakove. All of Afrim's relatives were present during the funeral ceremony except Hazbije because she was sick at that time. Along with Afrim around 13 other people were buried that day.
22. Afrim was buried in Çabrat cemetery in Gjakove. When I asked Afrim's wife Nashide where his body was found, she told me that he was found in Batanice near Belgrade in a mass grave. I don't know from whom Nashide got information that Afrim was found in a mass grave in Serbia but probably from ICRC. She supposed to have a documents about it but I never asked her to show it to me.
23. I personally never asked ICRC or Missing person unit where exactly Afrim was found and what was the cause of his death, because for me it was only important that his remains were found and we could burry him.

Witness

Afrim

Others

Blas
*K**Shirley*

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WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This Statement consisting of 6 pages has been read over to me in the Albanian language and is true to the best of my knowledge and recollection. I have given this Statement voluntarily and I am aware that it may be used in legal proceedings before the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, but I do not agree to be called to give evidence in public before the Tribunal.

Signed: Aljmir
Dated: 13-8-2006

Witness Aljmir Others Shuruf 5

INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

I, Ilir ZIU certify that:

1. I am duly qualified and approved by The Registry of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Law Committed in the Territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991, to interpret from the Albanian language into the English language and from the English language into the Albanian language.
2. I have been informed by Agim SYLEJMANI that he speaks and understands the Albanian language.
3. I have orally translated the above statement from the English language to the Albanian language in the presence of Agim SYLEJMANI who appeared to have heard and understood my translation of **this Statement**.
4. Agim SYLEJMANI has acknowledged that the facts and matters set out in his Statement, as translated by me, are true to the best of his knowledge and recollection and has accordingly signed his signature where indicated.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

Witness _____

Others

13.08.2006

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