

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 PURSUANT TO RULE 92 *ter*

WITNESS INFORMATION:

Last Name: KRASNIQI

First Name: Cufë

Nickname /Alias:

Father's name: Sokol Mother's name: Nushe

Date of Birth: 24-03-1959 Gender: Male

Place of Birth: Vranoc village, municipality of Peja.

Ethnic Origin: Kosovo Albanian Religion: Islam

Current Occupation: Police Officer/Instructor at Vushtri Training School KPS
Former: Police Officer in Yugoslav Police Service

Language(s) Spoken: Albanian, Serbo Croatian, A bit of English and French

Language(s) Written: Albanian, Serbo Croatian

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Witness Statement

1. I am married and have six children. My home is in Peja, where I have come from now, but I am posted at the Kosovo Police Service Training School in Vushtri as an instructor. From 1982 till 1990, I worked at the Prizren police station as a police officer. Then I together with many others was dismissed from police. I came to live in Vranoc with my family. It was a difficult time and I did not have much work. So, I took to agriculture. All this time, I had been under watch of the former Serbian regime because we did not want to work or collaborate with them against our own population.
2. I will throw light on the story of the armed conflict in Kosovo especially with reference to the things that I personally experienced or came to my knowledge through my colleagues. I shall clearly indicate facts I learnt from others. I shall also clearly indicate what I experienced personally in my position as the UCK commander responsible for training of the UCK soldiers in the Barane Valley (Lugu-i-Baranit). There are 17 villages in this valley.
3. Sometime in 1990, I was dismissed from my service as a police officer. There were 74 police officers in all dismissed at that time. On 28th of March 1989, there was a new constitution introduced in which Kosovo's autonomy was annulled. After the new constitution, the government introduced rules for the police force that were discriminatory towards the Kosovo Albanians. These measures were allegedly introduced to protect the population from the Albanian separatists.
4. In July 1990, when I was posted at the police station Prizren as an Inspector of police, Mr. **BOSHKOVIC**, the police commissioner in charge of five municipalities of Prizre, Dragash, Orahovac, Malishevo and Suhareka called a meeting at the Prizren police station. The meeting was called to discuss the new rules of service. We disagreed with the new rules, but no one was taking

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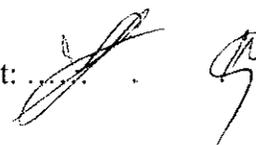


Others Present:



the first step of opposing the rules openly. I arrived in the meeting a bit late as I was coming from Peja.

5. When I arrived, my colleagues were happy. They expected me to speak up first. There was some discussion for some time till I took the floor, and said, "If the police continues to maltreat people for being Albanians, then we as communist party exist only on paper. From this moment, I do not consider myself being a member of the communist part any longer." I took a sheet of paper and asked my colleagues whoever shared my opinions write down their names. The paper came back to me with 44 names. Then I removed my photo from my personal book that showed my membership of and association with the party. Within three days, 74 police officers were dismissed.
6. From that time on, I was under a constant watch by the Serbian police, and they offered me through my former colleagues who were still in the force, to join the police force again. They also tried to intimidate me: I was told that I was an ethnic separatist. I told them we (the police officers) were trained to protect people and not interested in ethnicity. Everyone is equal before the law. People should be prosecuted for crimes committed and not because of their ethnicity.
7. In 1992, I went to the village Hajle to live for about 3-4 months in summer. It is the highest place in Rugova Mountains. One evening as we were still in the village Hajle, we were surrounded by the Yugoslav army and police. Among these officers was the police commander of Peja, Bora **VLAHOVIC**. That evening, the police and army collected 18 families from the same village, all of whom were inhabitants of Vranoc village having summer holiday in Hajle, and separated women and children from men. Most of the police officers or soldiers were Serbs. These officers were doing exercises in that area. They used the families and village for a real life exercise as to how to enter a village and surround and handle the people. They took the old men out in the cold and beat their palms with their rubber sticks. Younger men like me were also among the victims. They asked us where the army of Rugova was. They made

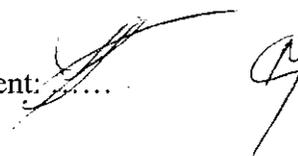


the young men like me to lie on ground stretched out on our hands and feet, and jumped with their boots on our hands. They maltreated us very badly.

8. They maltreated even women and children. One of the police officers even slapped my 5 year old son. The other one hit me in the side with the butts of a sniper rifle. They looked at 15 of us who were relatively younger and said that we knew where the army was but we were hiding the fact. They suspected us to be members of some army. But, we told them we were civilians. They maltreated us for 4 hours and then released us. I came back to Peja and met Sani **SINANAJ** who sent a doctor, medicines and transport for the people up in the mountains. He was a civilian on holiday in Kosovo. He lived in The Hague. This incident made a deep impact on me. Incidents like this were common. Every month the police would come to the villages and maltreated people. The usual excuse was that they were looking for illegal weapons possessed by the people.

9. From that day on in 1992, it was clear to me that it was not possible to live in peace in Yugoslavia, as it was already breaking up. Secondly, I was continuously hiding from the Serbian police. They wanted to capture me as I was a member of the group of the dismissed police officers who were fighting to get back our jobs. We had filed a suit with the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. I also went to Brussels, The Hague and many cities of Germany to participate in protests against the Yugoslav government for unfairly dismissing us from service which was a violation of human rights. I made many trips to Europe during this time.

10. The police would think I was a terrorist. As they were unable to capture me, they pressurised my family. My wife made up a false case against me and got the divorce from the court. It was all set up by us as I wanted to save my family from the police harassment. During all this time when I was hiding from the police I was living in the mountains of Hajle. I was in this hiding for at least 6 years.



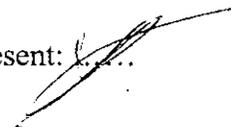
11. There was another dilemma. All the people who had worked earlier for the Yugoslav state either as police officers or as army officers were not trustworthy. This was a common thinking. The truth is that the people who were for some reason in contact with the Serbian police were regarded as suspects by the UCK. Precisely speaking, the Albanians who were still holding the government jobs in police or in other departments were thought to be the Serbian collaborators. The Serbs would look upon them as loyalists while the Albanian population would regard them collaborators.

12. But the life of the former government servants like police officers (like me) was even harder as they were regarded as rebels by the state and collaborators of the Serbs by the local population and the UCK. The situation grew tenser as the crisis in Bosnia was coming to an end and we knew that the state was preparing for a new crisis in Kosovo.

13. Before the appearance of the UCK on the scene, the people were still unarmed; the peaceful means were best suited for the resolution of the crisis. And the people generally believed in Rugova's peaceful policies.

14. There came a time, when the people started thinking that the peaceful means were not enough. Around 1997, there were regular dispersion by force and detentions of the students and professors in Pristina who took out peaceful demonstrations in Pristina. The Serbian police would arrest a lot number of people. Even the girl students were beaten, arrested and detained.

15. These revolts by the Albanian population in 1997 and their repression by the State government led to the students in Pristina abandoning their studies. They started joining different groups of the UCK all over Kosovo. They formed groups but were unable to fight as they did not have weapons. The intention of the Serbian government was to bring the people to the war front and then sell weapons to them through their agents. So that they could have an excuse to fight them openly. I do not want to say that this conflict was only because of the Serbian state. The Albanian population also wanted freedom as they were not safe under them. At this time everyone wanted to have a weapon to defend

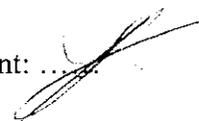


themselves from the police as the police were raiding the houses in the middle of the night and arresting people on the charges of being terrorists, collaborators of the terrorists and separatists.

16. And those who were jailed on the charges of being terrorists had to employ the Serbian lawyers to fight their cases at a high price. And usually the villages that had only the Albanian population received these repressive measures and not the villages with the mixed population. The catholic Albanians were left in peace generally. The Serbs told the Catholic Albanians to draw a cross on the wall of their houses so as to be distinguished, but the majority of the Catholics ignored this. However, some out of fear drew it on their walls.
17. The Serbs were raiding the villages and the houses of the Kosovo Albanians continuously on the pretext of finding weapons. They asked people to surrender their weapons. Even when the people would surrender their weapons, the police would still arrest, interrogate and beat them and ask them the source of the weapon as well as the names of the persons who had weapons. The people would try to approach the police through their Serb neighbours or through some Albanians who were still working for the Serbs, to seek peace from harassment. These intercedes would take a lot of money to provide insurance against the police harassment. This money ranged between 500 DM up to 1000 DM.
18. Because of this continuous harassment, the people (especially the young people, and those being sought by police) who had means started leaving Kosovo to seek refuge in other countries of Europe.
19. In 1994, some former police officers were convicted and sentenced from 8 up to 16 years in prison on the charges of supporting the Albanians separatists. The police officers who were convicted included: Sheremet **AHMETI**, the police commissioner of Kosovo, Destan **THAQI**, Shaban **SHALA** (Peja), Halil **BLAKA**, station commander Prizren police station, Adem **SHALA**, the Deputy Police Commissioner for Prizren. The total number of police officers sentenced to prison was more than 300. The charges were more or less the

same. I worked with and knew personally Shaban **SHALA**, Halil **BLAKA** and Adem **SHALA**.

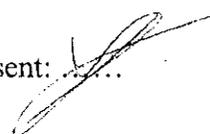
20. So, to sum up the background to the armed conflict I would say that the Albanians in general were a target of harsh measures. Those who wanted to stay on in their jobs were viewed as collaborators by the Kosovo Albanians; those who had left their jobs were looked upon as suspects by the Serb regime and by the Albanian nationalists both. In this back drop of arrests, detentions and convictions, some people decided to leave Kosovo while some decided to launch an armed struggle for freedom or independence.
21. I first heard of the UCK sometime in 1993. At that time I was hiding in the mountains, and I first read about them in a news paper called "BUJKU". The KLA communiqués were published in the news paper from that time on detailing their activities like attack on police stations, police patrols or on collaborators. However, the majority of the population was receiving the communiqués reluctantly. They were not very enthusiastic.
22. I knew that a resistance movement was going on in Kosovo against the oppression of the pro-Serb Yugoslav regime. But, this movement was a kind of secret till late 1997.
23. In the autumn of 1997 (October or November), as I have stated in my earlier statement, my cousin Adrian **KRASNIQI** was killed in the village Klliqine by the police. He was a KLA soldier and at the time of his killing he was wearing a KLA uniform. He was hiding in the mountains of Drenica and wanted to go to Albania to get weapons for the KLA through our village Vranoc. But, he was killed in Klliqine. Adem **JASHARI** was the commander of the Drenica area and my cousin was a soldier under him.
24. In 1997, my cousin, Adrian **KRASNIQI**, a student in Pristina was killed by the Serbs in Klliqina and after his murder the Serbs engaged in a terror against the whole population in Peja. Because of the Serb repression, we started organising ourselves in small groups to face the Serb repression. Since I was a



former police officer, I started training recruits in shooting, operations and tactics. Just before the first Serb attack on the village Vranoc on 29 May 1998, we were just a group but after this attack the village chose me as a commander. I had about 30-40 men under my command. At that time we did not belong to any brigade, but in June 1998, we created the Third Brigade. It was named as the "Adrian KRASNIQI" brigade. Rustem BERISH was appointed the commander of this brigade but he never showed up as he was living in Albania. He was a former captain of the Yugoslav army and would often come to Kosovo from Albania. So, Nazif RAMABAJA took over this position. The Adrian KRASNIQI brigade was at the Baran Primary School, with Nazif RAMABAJA as its commander. In the beginning of June 1998, Nazif and I decided to create the military police in Baran composed of the men who were better trained. The former Police Inspector Hasan Gashi became their commander. Hasan GASHI was stationed with his troops in the red school where Sanije BALAJ was brought. He had under his command about 30 soldiers. Hasan Gashi was from Baran village.

25. After this incident I came out of my hiding, and took part in the burial ceremony of my cousin. I was seen by people. I met the KLA colleagues of my cousin Adrian and discussed with them his murder. They gave me all the details on the circumstances of his killing. They asked me why I had not joined the KLA. They were all younger than I was. I told them I did not know who were behind the mask of the KLA.

26. Till that time the KLA were wearing masks both in **Drenica** and **Dukagjini** areas, and had not come out in the open. The people at that time were also afraid of the masked men as no body was sure who they were. The masked KLA were operating in small groups of 5 or 6. My cousin Adrian had also asked me during his life to join the KLA and train the soldiers in the Dukagjini Operational Zone. But, I was still thinking whether to join the KLA or not. I was a professional police officer, well known in the area and I did not like the idea of joining an army of people wearing masks. They had to unfold their identities to win the trust and confidence of the people. The general population



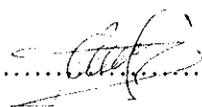
was equally afraid of these masked soldiers as they were afraid of the Serbian police and secret service.

27. Before the massacre of the **Jashari** family in March 1998, the village guards set up by the UCK were generally unarmed but after this incident people started arming themselves.

28. As far as I can recall, after the massacre at Prekaz on 25 March 1998, I met a former JNA officer named Rustem **TETAJ** in the village Lumbardhe in January 1998. This meeting took place in the house of Hasan Musli **UKAJ**, and about ten to twelve people took part in it. We (Mr. **TETAJ** and myself) used to know each other. We used to discuss the organisational aspects of the army, even though I was still not a KLA member at that time. We used to think that we should be very careful while setting up an army as criminals/delinquents might also join it. If it happened, we would be in a trap as criminals would grab weapons to use for crime. Therefore, professionals were needed to prevent the KLA army from becoming a refuge for delinquents. I was of the opinion that the people who wanted an AK 47 should know how to use it and why. The majority of the youngsters who possessed weapons had not had any formal training. An incident happened at that time; a young boy killed his own sister while he was showing them the weapon he had received as a KLA. I do not remember the name of the person or the village he came from. I also heard that in Pozar village a group of boys were showing how well they could shoot: one of the boys shot one of his friends.

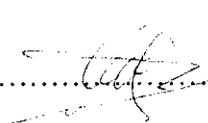
29. After this meeting at the village Lumbardhe, there was a murder in the Buqan village in end Feb, beginning of March 1998. The brother of Ismajl **SHALA** was murdered in an ambush by the Serbian police in the village Buqan. Ismajl **SHALA** was the leader of the LDK for the valley of Barane. He was also injured. By that time I had not joined the KLA.

30. In Feb 1998, Din **KRASNIQI** sent his cousin Mete **KRASNIQI** to my house in Vranoc. I met Mete. He told me that Din **KRASNIQI** wanted me to join the KLA army. He told me that they (Mete and Din) trusted me as they knew me



and my family. He told me that they knew that I was not a Serb collaborator. He invited me to come and train the young UCK soldiers. My reply was yes.

31. From that day on I started training the UCK soldiers first in Vranoc-e-Vogel near the river, Lumibardh. At that time, Dr. Din **KRASNIQI** was the UCK commander for Vranoc and later for the Barane Valley. There were 17 villages in the valley. I have shown them on a map attached as annexure "A" to my statement. At that time the soldiers were mostly in Buqan, Vranoc, and Vranoc-e-Vogel. It was very common at that time for the UCK soldiers to go to other villages and join the force because in this way, their families were safe from any possible harassment from the Serbian forces. Young men from the Valley would go to Drenica and those from Drenica and other areas would come to the Valley to join the KLA.
32. In order to join the KLA, a new recruit had to be accompanied by someone who would guarantee that he was trust worthy. We would take his personal data and ask him why he wanted to join. The new recruit would start getting training immediately, and later at a flag-raising ceremony he would take oath.
33. The office of Din **KRASNIQI** was located at his house in Vranoc village. He also had a private clinic at this place. In Feb 1998, not many people had uniforms. Most of them were training in civilian clothes. In Feb 1998, it was a known fact that an army existed in Jabllanica under the command of Lahi **BRAHIMAJ**. Din **KRASNIQI** had visited Jabllanica and being a trust worthy person, he was allowed to call himself as the commander of the Barane Valley. In February, there was no Dukagjini Zone in place. At that time there was no commander of the whole area later called the Dukagjini Zone.
34. On the first day, I had 21 soldiers under my training. I trained them in the handling and use of the weapons like rifles M48 and the AK47. Very few UCK soldiers had a pistol as it is not a weapon for war. I recall training one group from one to three months to fully prepare them for the combat. The best recruit was allowed to lead a group of ten soldiers for boosting morale of the good trainees.

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35. At that time, the UCK were organised in Jabllanica and Glogjane. The young men were being armed by these HQ's; there was no training at all in the beginning. The UCK commander in Jabllanica was Lahi **BRAHIMAJ**. Lahi **BRAHIMAJ** is a maternal uncle of Ramush **HARADINAJ**. Jabllanica is the oldest KLA HQ in Western Kosovo because it was mountainous, and not easily accessible by the Serbian forces. They did not want to have a big clash for a small village. Jabllanica was well known as a free territory since 1991. In 1991, the police arrested a wanted man in this village whom the villagers snatched from the police. This was a humiliation for the police, and they decided not to mess with the people in Jabllanica.
36. I visited the Jabllanica KLA HQ in March 1998. I was accompanied by Dr. Din **KRASNIQI** who wanted to see some young boys who had been injured in the village Suka e Cermjanit. These UCK soldiers were guarding the road. The Serb army wanted to capture the top of the hill to control the village. This resulted in a battle between the UCK and the Serbian forces. I know that in this battle at least 300 Serb soldiers and policemen took part with at least 4 tanks and several military trucks. They were armed with heavy artillery. At the beginning of this attack the number of the UCK soldiers was 4-5, but soon the number of the UCK soldiers also reached 200-300 as help arrived from the HQ and neighbouring villages. The battle continued for about 5-6 hours but the Serbs did not retreat but stayed there. Some 12-13 UCK soldiers were injured in his battle.
37. Ramush **HARADINAJ** was a KLA soldier even in 1997, and he was with his brother Luan **HARADINAJ** when Luan was killed while crossing the Albanian border in autumn of 1997. They were bringing weapons from Albania. As a result of this ambush, Ramush **HARADINAJ** could not enter Kosovo and went back to Albania. He came to Kosovo a few days later. Ramush **HARADINAJ** buried his brother in Albania, and came back to Kosovo later.



38. However, the **HARADINAJ** family came to full light after the attack by the Serbian forces on the compound of **HARADINAJ** family in Glllogjan village. At that time the UCK was only a guerrilla force. Till that time, we did have UCK soldiers but they were not able to stop the Serbian forces from patrolling in the area of Dukagjine or the Barane Valley. Soon after this incident the people in the Dukagjini Zone started arming themselves. I was not in Glllogjan at that time. I did not visit the village after this incident. I do not know much about it.
39. On the state television it was reported that allegedly the Serbian police patrol was attacked in Glllogjan. Hand grenades were used in this attack. The unexploded hand grenades were also shown.
40. This incident gave Ramush **HARADINAJ** immense popularity in Kosovo. He was not severely injured during this attack. I do not know if he went to Jabllanica for treatment. After this incident, Decan became the second municipality that resisted the Serbian forces in a big way after Prekaz in Skendraj municipality, where a pitched battle had taken place between the Jashari family and the Serbian forces between March 21-25 1998. After this incident the village Glllogjan became the most important UCK HQ after Jabllanica.
41. The overall commander of the Dukagjini Operational Zone was Ramush **HARADINAJ** who had his headquarters in his village Glllodjan. Sali VASELI was the Operations Commander for the DOZ, while Rustem TETA was Deputy Commander. Nezif RAMABAJA was the commander of the 3rd brigade in Baran, Tahir ZEMAJ was the commander of the 1st brigade in Prapacan and Musa GJAKOVA was the commander of the 2nd brigade in Bardhanic. All three brigades were in principle under Ramush **HARADINAJ** who was the overall commander, but these were also kind of independent because there were no regular systems of reporting on a daily basis. But, in case of need or trouble the Zone Commander was to be contacted. But otherwise all the brigade commanders had their instructions to do the job properly.

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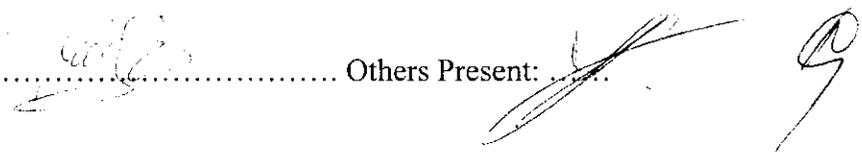
42. While attacking Glllogjan the Serbs underestimated the strength of Ramush **HARADINAJ**. They attacked it with police and the special operations unit. They were forced to retreat. The attack on Glllogjan was the first public victory for the guerrilla KLA army. In Prekaz, the Serbs were able to crush the KLA, but in Glllogjan they failed. After this incident the KLA came into open. Till this time the Serbian forces were able to patrol the areas of Dukagjini freely but after this defeat, they became cautious.
43. When this incident of Glllogjan attack happened, I was still training the UCK soldiers in Vranoc-e-Vogel. As I was under the command of Dr. Din **KRASNIQI**, I would often see him in the evening to discuss professional matters. During these meetings I came to know that after the attack on Glllogjan, there took place meetings at Jabllanica which Dr. Din attended. At those meetings they celebrated the victory and they decided to organise the UCK better and better. Glllogjan was discussed as an example to follow. It was a moment when the people started to trust their own army. The people started supporting the UCK openly. There were students' demonstrations in Prisitina in support of the UCK. After this a lot of students also joined the UCK. The Glllogjan was accepted as the focal point of the KLA in the whole of Peja and Decan, and Ramush **HARADINAJ** as the popular commander of the UCK forces in the Dukagjini area.
44. There were around 40-50 villages in the Dukagjini Zone under the control of the KLA in March 1998. Every village had its village commander elected by the village staff. The structure at the village level consisted of a General Commander, Deputy Commander, the Operations Commander (responsible for training of the soldiers), the Logistics Commander and the commander of the Guards. The Operations Commander was supposed to come to the aid of any village under attack in the whole of the Zone. The Logistics commander was responsible for the supplies. The commander of the Guards was responsible for the village guards. The logistics officers under the Logistics Commander would collect monetary contributions from the villagers to buy supplies and the arms.

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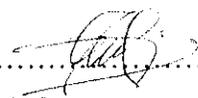

45. In the beginning every village was paying for the weapons. People were being sent to Albania, Serbia and Montenegro to buy the weapons through Jabllanica and Prekaz. After March 1998, the village commanders would select some brave young men to be sent to Albania for picking up weapons. The weapons were being provided by the Albanian Diaspora. The young men were sent to Glllogjan to Ramush **HARADINAJ** who would send them to Albania with contacts. The UCK along the way would escort these people. They would come back with the weapons to their village.
46. As early as March 1998, the Serbian forces were stationed in the garrison in Peja. They were stationed in the police station in Decan. They were also deployed to the hill named Suka-e-Babaloq. Position on this hill helped them command a view from the height of all the neighbouring villages like Babaloq, Gramacel, Rastavica, Glllogjan, Irznic, Ratis, and Prelip etc.
47. The Serbian forces also controlled the main road between Peja, Decane and Gjakova. But, they did not dare to enter the villages. They were scared of being attacked by the KLA. They were also in control of Peja-Klina road. There was one Serbian artillery located in the village of Kerstec (Peja). The villages of Bezhenik, Goradze, Doberdol, Vragoc, Babic and Kerstec (all in Peja Municipality) were Serbian villages in which the population was fully armed. The Serbian forces had their artillery in the village of Voljake in municipality of Klina.
48. The rest of the villages in the Peja, Decane and Klina municipalities were under the KLA control. The MUP had retreated to the Irznic police station from which they evacuated in early May 1998. The last MUP police station in the Dukagjini Zone was evacuated in Qllapek village in June 1998. The UCK was also able to block the main Decane-Gjakova road near the village Prilep in April-May 1998. At this place at that time, there were regular gun battles between the Serbian forces and the UCK forces.

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49. I have shown in red the Serbian forces' positions and the Serb villages mentioned above on the map attached as annexure "B".
50. From late March 1998 till the Serbs were only shelling the villages of the Dukagjini Zone from their artillery positions.
51. Until May 28 1998, I continued training the soldiers in Vranoc-e-Vogel. On 29th of May 1998, the Serbian forces surrounded the village by the night. They arrived with some 14 heavy military trucks. We were surprised. The police and the army entered our trenches in the hill of Gilavice, and took our positions without firing a bullet. They wanted to burn down the village. We retreated and stopped the Serbs in the village Vranoc-e-Madh.
52. The battle started at 0500 hrs in the morning and lasted till 1800 in the evening. I was injured in the hand, the legs and the back by the hand grenades thrown by the Serbs. Two other soldiers were injured. The Serbs failed to enter the village because of resistance from us. We received help from Irznic, Buqan, Jabllanica, Maznik, Dasinoc, Luka, Pozare, Lumbardh etc. Around this time the KLA was well organised and strong enough to resist the Serbian forces. It was a successful battle for the KLA. When the battle started we had only 13 weapons. We had rocket launchers that were very good. We also had two light machine guns, two snipers, Kalashnikovs and hand grenades.
53. I can recall that I threw one hand grenade that did not explode. This scared the Serb forces more, so we started throwing the unexploded hand grenades to scare them away. And it worked.
54. The Serbs set up a position on the hill. They retreated from the hill in the evening and went back to Qllapek, Strelc, and the Decane city. The rest went to the garrison of Peja. But, they failed to enter the Barane Valley. My commanders were happy as I led this battle from A to Z. The people were happy. 25,000 people were saved. There were only four victims who were civilians. In this battle, 400-500 animals were killed as a result of the Serbian artillery.

55. The very same day, the Serbs tried to enter the village Krushac, in the Municipality of Peja, but they failed.
56. The Serbs created a frontline or a barricade between themselves and the KLA positions and then there were sporadic attacks between them. The Serbs were only shelling the villages with artillery. In May, the local population of Poberxhe, Cerno, Llokane, Voksh, Silub, Drenoc, Libushe, Strelc and Lubeniq left their villages because of the Serbian shelling, and took refuge in the KLA controlled free zone, especially in Barane Valley and the villages like Isnic, Lluca etc. The Serbian forces were stationed in the village Hulaj and they did not dare to enter any of the villages in the Barane Valley. They were just shelling them. I have shown the villages under attack on the map attached as annexure "D". The red lines show the position of the Serbian forces.
57. The UCK controlled the villages Poberxhe and Voksh as these were located along the weapon supply routes. The Serbs entered once in April or early May 1998 in the villages Poberxhe and Voksh, and burned them down. But, they went back because they could not hold these villages.
58. In early April 1998 Rustem **TETAJ** went to Glllogjan village to meet with Ramush **HARDINAJ**. Rustem **TETAJ** was also given a position in the Main HQ (Glllogjan), but I do not know what position.
59. As far as I can recall, I first heard about the Black Eagles in June 1998. I heard that they were based in Irznic and were training hard. But I never went to visit their HQ. I went to Irznic in August 1998 when Glllogjan was under attack. At that time I saw the Black Eagles HQ for the first time.
60. I heard about Togerri first time in May 1998, and around the same time I saw him in Lumbardh village HQ. It was a brief encounter. He was in a black jeep and wearing a black uniform. He opened the window of the jeep, greeted us and continued on his way to Pozare. I heard from others he was Togerri. He



looked rather weak. He is the same person indicted by the Tribunal known as Idriz **BALAJ**.

61. I can recall meeting Ramush **HARADINAJ** for the first time in April in the village Vranoc-e-Vogel. In a field near river Lumibardhe. I was there training the soldiers. He wanted to see us. We were having a break at that time. Ramush greeted us and said we were doing a great job and he told us to keep it up. I think Rustem **TETAJ** was with Ramush **HARADINAJ**. At that time Ramush **HARADINAJ** was not officially the commander of Dukagjini Zone, but we regarded him with respect as a leader and de facto commander.
62. I heard from Dr. Din **KRASNIQI** in May 1998 that there was a meeting in Gllodjan in which Dr. Din also took part. At this meeting, the village commanders and the village representatives chose Ramush **HARADINAJ** as the Dukagjini Zone Commander. At this time, Lahi **BRAHIMAJ** was the commander of Jabllanica, but I think he was deputy of Ramush **HARADINAJ**.
63. In June 1998, we moved to the new Barane School building from Vranoc-e-Vogel, and started training soldiers there. My office and soldiers were there.
64. In June 1998, the FARK officers under command of Tahir **ZEMAJ** arrived in the Dukagjini Zone (DOZ) from Albania. The officers of the FARK that I met with were Nazif **RAMABAJA**, Musa **DRAGA** and Esat **ADEMAJ**. They were appointed to be part of my brigade. This brigade was created around the same time as the FARK arrived. It was named as Adrian **KRASNIQI** brigade and then re-named as Isuf **GERVALLA** Brigade. It was 131st brigade (also known as the third brigade of the Dukagjini area). Rustem **BERISHA** was appointed the brigade commander, but he never took charge of the brigade. Nazif **RAMABAJA** was working in his place as commander.
65. As I said in my earlier statement, the overall commander of the Dukagjini Operational Zone was Ramush **HARADINAJ** who had his headquarters in his village Gllodjan. Sali **VASELI** was the Operations Commander for the DOZ,

while Rrustem **TETAJ** was Deputy Commander. Nazif **RAMABAJA** was the commander of the 3rd brigade (also called 131st brigade) in Baran, Tahir **ZEMAJ** was the commander of the 1st brigade in Prapacan and Musa **GJAKOVA** was the commander of the 2nd brigade in Bardhanic. All three brigades were in principle under Ramush **HARADINAJ** who was the overall commander, but these were also kind of independent because there were no regular systems of reporting on a daily basis. But, in case of need or trouble the Zone Commander was to be contacted. But otherwise all the brigade commanders had their instructions to do the job properly.

66. Ramush **HARADINAJ** visited our brigade two-three times when I was there. Ramush **HARDINAJ** was normally a very dynamic person. He did not speak much but he moved in his Zone a lot to have a direct personal contact with the forces and the village commanders. I also spoke to him about the organisation of the UCK in general. I met him and discussed with him at the oath-taking ceremony in Barane on 20th of July 1998.
67. The ceremony was conducted by Nazif **RAMABAJA**. There were about three hundred (300) soldiers. The event was video recorded. There were a great number of civilians from the families of the soldiers and from the village Barane. On the occasion, Ramush **HARADINAJ**, Rrustem **TETAJ**, Nazif **RAMABAJA** and Tahir **ZEMAJ** made speeches. All the soldiers present took an oath. There was a list on which the soldiers entered their names and family names, and they picked up a paper on which the oath was printed. They entered the date when they took the oath, and they were told to keep this paper as a certificate.
68. I reported to Nazif Ramabaja who in turn reported to Tahir Zemaj and Ramush Haradinaj. Nazif would ask me to take my unit to a front-line and I would do so. He used to ask whether anyone was prepared to go and help fight at the front-line.
69. The Black Eagles were well-known and trusted by the people. The unit had a difficult task compared to the other units. I only heard after the war that some

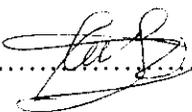
members were alleged to have committed crimes during the war, such as misusing uniforms. Whenever a village was under attack, they were the first to help. I have no knowledge about any bodies along the Lake Radonjić canal.

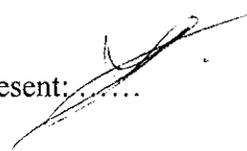
70. The KLA didn't have any official prisons or detention centres in my area. Anyone under suspicion was kept in the same houses that the KLA soldiers were staying in, but kept isolated. These included those who had violated KLA discipline.

71. We used radios for communication when we could, but they were weak and the Serbs used to block the frequencies we were using. We had one or two satellite telephones but rarely used them because of the expense. We couldn't use mobile telephones because the towers were in Serb controlled areas. We often used couriers to convey messages between units and villages.

72. A military police unit was formed in Barane at about the end of May or the beginning of June 1998. It was based in the school in Barane, had about 30 members and was under the command of Hasan Gashi. Its area of responsibility comprised of about 17 villages. Two members were assigned to the village from each village so that villagers wouldn't be mistreated. Its members wore whatever they could. Some wore black shirts and trousers but they all wore KLA patches. This unit was the first to go to villages under Serb attack and it made sure that the population fled the village. It also ensured that no-one committed forbidden acts. If someone did they would take the suspect for interrogation. Suspects had to be released because of the lack of detention facilities. Fadil Nimonaj became its commander in about August 1998.

73. The military police were supposed to enforce discipline in the KLA. I personally enforced discipline by talking to the soldiers in my unit and other units. One example was a complaint made by a civilian that a KLA soldier had taken his car without the permission of the KLA commanders. I went to the soldier's parents' house and told them to tell him to return the car or we would undertake "necessary measures". The soldier returned the car. The

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“necessary measures” would have been expulsion from the KLA and disarmament.

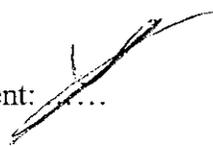
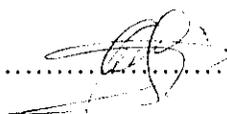
74. I think that there were some Serbian families in Ratish, Dasinovac, and Lumbardhe. These families were evacuated by the Serbian forces in April and May 1998. Some Serbs who did not leave at this time, they left on their own later. Some of these Serbs were helped out by the Albanians. I also remember having escorted one such Serb old man, but I can not remember his name now. He was either from Meznik or Dasinovac. Halil **DERVISHAJ** from Meznik came to me so that this Serb could be evacuated. He should know the name of the evacuated Serb.
75. I heard that there were some arguments between the Tahir **ZEMAJ** soldiers and the KLA soldiers at Prapacan. It was handled well by Tahir **ZEMAJ**. I do not remember the date or the month of this incident.
76. I know that Ramush **HARADINAJ** himself brought FARK people to me at Barane in June 1998. I do not know if there was a disagreement between them. I am not familiar with any other incidents that may have happened between the FARK and the UCK.
77. A very important battle took place between the Serbian forces and the KLA forces on 6th June 1998. This is known as the battle of Loxha. The Serbian artillery was stationed in Taba hill in Peja. This hill is part of the Peja town. It is above the police station. On the 5th of June 1998, the Serbian Forces threw a hand grenade near an Albanian house in village Loxha. One person was killed and two injured. On the 6th of June 1998, the Serbian Forces started shelling Loxha. We were informed that Loxha was under attack. All the UCK soldiers in the villages in the free zone (Dukagjini Zone) went to defend Loxha.
78. A severe battle took place. It was led by Nazif **RAMABAJA**. Officers like, Rustem **BRUCI**, Skender **CEKU**, Esat **ADEMAJ**, Shaban **SHALA**, Tahir **ZEMAJ** and Ramush **HARADINAJ** etc, took part in this battle. The Serbian forces were defeated. They withdrew from the battlefield. Around 300 soldiers

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or even more fought on the Albanian side. That day, our bullets travelled to Peja city. But, we did not have enough ammunition for taking the city of Peja. The Serbian population was already leaving in panic. We did not enter Peja and kept Loxha.

79. One month later, in July, the Serbs entered Loxha and destroyed it completely. I have provided on the map the Serb positions in red and the Albanian positions in blue in the first battle of Loxha. It is attached as annexure "E".
80. To my mind a collaborator during the conflict was a person who would work for the benefit of the enemy of the people. For example, there was a person named Sali **SHKRELI** from the village Kosuric. He was a collaborator with the Serbs with his family. He was known as UDB (the Yugoslavian Secret Service). He was giving information to the Serbs about the KLA soldiers before and during the conflict. He was captured by the end of June 1998 by us. He was interrogated in Barane by Toger (Idriz **BALAJ**) and Mete **KRASNIQI**.
81. I heard that the detainee allegedly said that he wanted to be a member of the KLA with his family. As he received the permission from Ramush **HARADINAJ** to move freely in the area, he entered a house by force in an Albanian house in village Kliqina with the Serbian police. After the police removed the Albanian family, Sali took that house over. The family that was kicked out of the house came to us. During the Serbian offensive of August Sali **SHKRELI** and his son showed the Serbs the way to enter the villages of Glllogjan and other villages of the area. In this offensive all the villages were burnt down and the population concentrated in Isnic and Prapacan. The people stayed in these villages for 7 days before they left with Tahir **ZEMAJ** to Albania.
82. All the villages were robbed and burnt down after this offensive. This offensive started around 26-27 of August. This offensive lasted till 5th or 6th of September 1998.

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83. I fought near Jabllanica. I withdrew to Buqan village. From Buqan I went to Vranoc. The Serbian forces stayed in Buqan for a night. Next day they started offensive against Vranoc. It was already September 1998. The civilians had abandoned the village, the Serbian forces started looting and celebrating.

84. After the war Sali left for Serbia with his family and nothing happened to him.

85. The penalty for being a collaborator was of course life imprisonment. The KLA did not have any system of giving a collaborator a fair trial. The KLA did not get hold any of them. [REDACTED]

86. When I spoke about the penalty for collaboration being "life imprisonment" I meant that we were thinking about how we were going to deal with these people after the war. We had no military courts at the time. (16)

87. It was a duty of every KLA soldier to report if they knew a collaborator. But, I do not know if there was someone specifically tasked to deal with the collaborators. We did not have time to think about it because of our engagement in the war.

88. Sometime before September 1998, I heard about the abduction of the couple Nurije and Istref **KRASNIQI**. Tahir **ZEMAJ** called me to Prapacan to ask if I knew what happened to the couple. He told me that Fadil **NIMONI** was the commander of the Military Police, and was appointed to deal with the case of the **KRASNIQI** couple. I told Tahir to clarify this with the Military Police as they were patrolling the villages.

89. I heard later different gossips about their killing. Rumours had it that they were collaborating with the Serbs. I was a little surprised as to what they (the killers) did to verify this allegation. I did not know who killed them.

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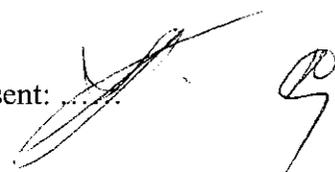
90. During all the time from April 1998 to late August 1998 the Dukagjin Zone was mainly a free area totally under the control of the UCK except for the boundaries of the Zone. I have highlighted in blue ink on a map the area that was under the control of the KLA throughout between April 1998 and August 1998. The Serb positions have been highlighted in the red ink. The map is attached to my statement as Annexure "C". During this time the Serbian forces could not enter this free zone. This is known as the free zone as well because it was freed from the Serb occupation. These villages were under artillery attack during this period as there were almost no Serb civilians left in these villages except some old people.
91. I do not know what position Faton **MEHMETAJ** had. He was from Pozare. I know he was at Jabllanica. But I know that he met Mete **KRASNIQI** many times. I do not know what they talked about.
92. I know Sadri **SELCA**. He was a KLA member based at Barane under Nazif **RAMABAJA**. He was in charge of disciplinary matters.
93. In August 1998 (around 2nd August), Nazif **RAMABAJA** told me that Glllogjan was under attack. He told me go there to help. I left with a truck full of 25 soldiers, and two drivers. I arrived there around mid day. The soldiers got down in front of the HQ. I met Ramush and asked him about the situation. He told me it was serious. The house of Ramush **HARADINAJ** was partly destroyed. He told me to go to Gramacel and Dubrava. We were under attack. The Serbian forces were shooting from a distance; they were situated on the Suka-e-Babaloq and Suka-e-Gramacel and up in Prilep. I took the bridge of Gramacel to prevent the forces from entering Dubrava. I stayed in Gramacel for two days and two nights. There was no civilian population. The Serbian forces entered the village Gramacel and took over. It was late August.
94. I turned back on the third day. The Serbian forces entered the school in the village Glllogjan from Sheptej. I managed to reach the Glllogjan HQ. I stayed there for 5 minutes, and then went back to Barane through Irznic. Once I

arrived in Prapacan where Tahir **ZEMAJ** was based, I got a vehicle to go back to Barane.

95. Tahir **ZEMAJ** left Kosovo in September with all his officers and men. He first moved to the mountains of Rugova, and then to Rozhaje and then to Albania. I stayed in Vranoc. I left for the river banks of Lumibardhe. My family was in Isnic during the September offensive. With the intervention of OSCE, my family went back to Vranoc. Our house was totally burnt down.

96. Ramush **HARADINAJ** was with Tahir **ZEMAJ** at Prapacan after the fall of Glogjan. Then Ramush **HARADINAJ** went to Brolic village. From Brolic, he went to Jabllanica.

97. This is the story of armed conflict in the Dukagjini Zone. I took a lot of notes during this time, but unfortunately, all my notes have been burnt down during the war. My notes were stored at my office in the primary school at Barane.



Declaration

I have been advised that my statement may be provided to other law enforcement agencies and /or judicial authorities. I agree to my statement being provided to those authorities at the discretion of the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This statement 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 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, and that I may be called to give evidence in public before the Tribunal.

Signed:



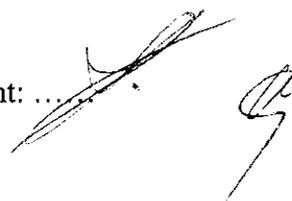
Dated:

14.06.07

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Others Present:



INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

I, Ardiana Sadiković, the Interpreter, 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 Cufë **KRASNIQI** 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 Cufë **KRASNIQI** who appeared to have heard and understood my translation of this statement.
4. Cufë **KRASNIQI** 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.

Dated: 14/06/2007

Signed: 

Signed / Initialled: 

Others Present: 