

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: Hoti

First name: Hajdar

Father's name: Sahit

Mother's name: Gjyl

Date of Birth: 10 April 1978

Gender: Male

Ethnic Origin: Albanian

Religion: Muslim

Current Occupation: Carpenter

Language(s) Spoken: Albanian, Slovenian and a little German

Language(s) Written: Albanian

Date/Place of the Interview: 24 October 2007 in Ljubljana, Slovenia

Interviewer: Romana Schweiger (Associate Legal Officer), Barney Kelly
(Investigator)

Interpreter: Ardina Sadiković

Language(s) Used in Interview: Albanian and English

Names of all persons present during interview: Hajdar Hoti, Romana
Schweiger, Barney Kelly, Ardina Sadiković

WITNESS STATEMENT

1. My name is Hajdar Hoti. On 10 April 1978, I was born in Dejn in Kosovo. I lived in Dejn with my father, Sahit, my mother, Gjyl, and my three brothers and four sisters until November 2006. In November 2006, I moved to Slovenia. I did not finish secondary school, because I needed to pass by the Serb police station on my daily way to school and the Serbs used to beat us. This is why I quit school and started to work as a carpenter.
2. On 12 or 14 May 1998, I joined the KLA in its headquarters in Dejn. This was during the Serb offensive in Ratvokc, Vrajak and Brtatin. I was officially registered, meaning that my name was entered on a list, and I was given a Kalashnikov. I did not get a uniform, because there were not enough uniforms. My commander was my cousin Jahir Hoti. I received military training in the KLA headquarters in Dejn and Drenovac. I served mostly in Dejn. My main duties were guarding the village of Dejn at the KLA checkpoint on the road close to Kramovik.
3. Idriz Hoti was my father's brother. In spring 1998 he was about 63 years old. He was married to Izeta Hoti, a Bosnian Muslim. They had two sons and three daughters. My uncle was doing construction work abroad, in Bosnia and in Belgrade. In 1998, he and his wife were living in Gjakova. I think he was retired.
4. Idriz hated the Serbs. He told us that his hate stemmed from an incident in 1990, when Bekri, Idriz's son, was arrested by the Serb police and Idriz was beaten by the Serb police. Idriz said that the Serbs arrested Bekri because the family possessed a weapon. Idriz was later himself arrested by the Serb police and he confessed to them that he had a weapon.
5. In 1998, Idriz was a member of the LDK and attended its meetings and demonstrations against the Serbs. He also morally supported the KLA in its fight to liberate the country. Idriz told me many times that he wanted to join the KLA.

When he met KLA soldiers on the street he also used to tell them that he wanted to join.

6. In June or July 1998, Idriz Hoti came to visit us in our house in Dejn. He visited us regularly. On that day he came with his bicycle, but he could not ride it because, he said, that the Serb police had just let the tyres down. He brought us a box of cigarettes.
7. He told us that on his way from Gjakova to our house in Dejn, he was stopped by the Serb military police at their checkpoint between Pertesan and Dolibare. He said the Serb police detained him for several hours and had beaten him. His face was red and he was complaining about pains but I could not see any signs of mistreatment on his body. He said the Serb police had accused him of travelling with money and cigarettes to give to the KLA, whom they called “terrorists”. He had told them that he was going to his brother’s house and the cigarettes and money were for his brother.
8. Idriz said that he was carrying about 600 Deutschmarks and that the Serb police had taken some of it from him. They left him with the cigarettes, because cigarettes were not important. He said the Serbs had also asked him how long he wanted to stay in the KLA controlled area and told him that he had to return on the next day. The Serbs then warned him that they would kill his family if he would not come back the next day. At that time, the Serbs controlled Pertesan and Dolibare, but Dejn was under KLA control.
9. That day, Idriz told my father that he was coming to our house for the last time, because he wanted to join the KLA and was not sure if he could visit us again after that. Idriz spent the night at our house. He and my father stayed up until about 4 a.m. talking about how badly he was treated by the Serbs at their check-point. I heard their conversation. My father tried to talk him out of joining the KLA saying that he was too old.

10. The next day, at about noon, Idriz left our house on his bike, which we had fixed. I accompanied him until we reached the river "Drini e Bardhi". I did not go beyond this point because it was a dangerous area, where Serbs were present.
11. Idriz was wearing a shirt and a light green pullover. He said he would not return because he was going to Ramush Haradinaj's zone to join the KLA and he thought he might never return. He went in the direction of Jablanica and I advised him which way he should go to avoid the Serbs. I told him to go through Cermian village and to avoid Gramovic, Bec and Dolibar.
12. The area between Cermian and Jablanica was then under KLA control under the command of Ramush Haradinaj. On the day that I last saw Idriz I know that the KLA fighters and the Serbian forces were fighting somewhere between Suka Cermian and Suka e Bektesch. I could hear the fighting and I saw through binoculars. I understand that the fighting had something to do with a Catholic Albanian family, from a village close to Pec, that was supporting the Serbs. The Albanian family attacked the KLA and the KLA fired back. Then the Serbs came to protect this family.
13. In August or September 1998, my father told me that Idriz was dead. He had heard it from my uncle Murat. Murat had learned this from Shaban Hajdari, an in-law of Idriz. I do not know how Shaban knew this.
14. In 1999, after the war, Ali Hoti, a close relative told me that he last saw Idriz in July 1998 in Cermjan. Ali said that he told Idriz to go to his house in Suka, next to Cermian, and to wait for him there. Ali was the care-taker of the Muslim shrine in Suka. Ali said that Idriz refused saying that he wanted directions to the KLA headquarter in Jablanica. Ali gave him the directions and last saw Idriz heading off towards Jablanica. Ali never saw Idriz again. No-one in my family ever saw him again.
15. After Idriz's disappearance I also made inquiries of the KLA about his whereabouts. In January 1999, I went to the KLA headquarter in Jablanica and met Ramush Haradinaj who introduced himself to me. I had heard that he was the

commander of Jablanica. I did not talk to Ramush Haradinaj about Idriz but I told another KLA soldier in Jablanica, who introduced himself as “Computeri”, that I wanted to know what happened to my uncle Idriz, who had disappeared in June or July 1998. “Computeri” checked his list of dead KLA soldiers and told me that Idriz was not on his list and he did not know what happened to him.

16. Before New Year’s Day 1999, I asked Arif whose family name is Hysenaj or Berisha, and who was married to my aunt Kadire about the whereabouts of my uncle. Arif was KLA commander of Bardanic village. He said he did not know what happened to Idriz and he did also not know if he ever joined the KLA.

17. I have voluntarily given this statement and I consent to it being used in proceedings at the ICTY. I am prepared to testify in The Hague. I agree to my statement being provided to other law enforcement agencies and/or judicial authorities. I have not been threatened or forced to give this statement and I have not been offered any promises or incentives to do so. I also understand that my name will become publicly known.