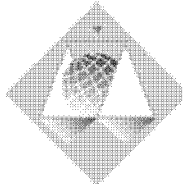




United Nations
Nations Unies

*DECLARATION BY PERSON MAKING A WRITTEN
STATEMENT PURSUANT TO RULE 92 BIS*



International
Criminal Tribunal
for the former
Yugoslavia

/Document filled in by hand/

Tribunal Pénal
International pour
l'ex-Yougoslavie

I,

First and Last name(s): Nikë PERAJ

Date and Place of Birth: 4 September 1946

Identity-, or Passport No.: K0152035

hereby confirm, in the presence of the Presiding Officer Carline AMEERALI

that the contents of the written statement(s) I made on 18 April 2000, 12-15 February 2002 and
Addendum 8 May 2002

and which is (are) now attached to this declaration, are true and correct to the best of my
knowledge and belief.

I have also been provided with a copy of Rule 91 of the Tribunal's Rules of Procedure and
Evidence in a language which I understand and I understand that I may be subject to prosecution
for giving false testimony if the contents of my written statement(s) are not so true and correct.

Done this: 8 May 2002

At: ICTY, The Hague

/a signature/

Witness's signature

Presiding Officer's signature

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:

Name: Nike

Family name: PERAJ

Date of Birth: 4 September 1946 Gender: male

Place of Birth: Ramoc /Ramoc/, Đakovica /Gjakove/ Municipality, Kosovo

Address: Dimitrija Tucovića, Marin Barleti, no. 16 Đakovica, Tel. 26428

Ethnic Origin: Albanian

Current occupation: Unemployed

Language(s) spoken: Albanian, Serbo-Croatian

Language(s) written: Albanian, Serbo-Croatian

Language(s) Used in Interviewer: English, Albanian, Serbian

Date(s) of interview: 18 April 2000

Location of interview: Đakovica, Kosovo

Interviewer: Anette MURTAGH

Interpreter: Ardiana SADIKOVIĆ

Names of all persons present during interview(s): Annette MURTAGH, Nike PERAJ, Neal HIGGINS, Philip Coe, Ardiana SADIKOVIĆ

Signature/Initials: /three signatures/initials, stamped, handwritten: 45/

My name is Nike PERAJ, I was born on 4 September 1946. On 8 May 2002 I read the two statements taken by Investigator Paolo PASTORE STOCCHI on 18 April 2000 and 12-15 February 2001. Both statements that I read were translated into the Serbian language. I would like to correct some details in both statements.

First statement of 18 April 2001

On page 2 of this statement, in the first paragraph it says: "...and at the same time I attended the school for Reserve Officers in the JNA in Bileća, Bosnia." This is incorrect, instead of "at the same time" it should be "after which."

On the same page in the fourth paragraph it says "I worked at the Transportation Unit in Prishtina." This is incorrect and it should be "Traffic Unit."

On page no. 3 of my statement, paragraph 11, in the last sentence it says "In total we transported 40 bodies of soldiers..." That is incorrect and it should be "We transported about 40 bodies of soldiers..."

On page no. 4, in paragraph 13 it says "in Mullah e Isufi Area..." That is incorrect and it should be "in the Muhalla e Isufit Area."

On the same page, in paragraph 14 it says "... I was sent to Niš to bring..." That is incorrect and it should be "... I was sent to Niš to take..."

On page no. 5, in paragraph 21 it says "... took the radio matrix..." That is incorrect and it should be "... took the codename for the radio matrix..."

03079348

On page no. 6, in paragraph 25, at the end of the first sentence it says "... between us there was no difference." What I wanted to say was that we are from same area.

On page no. 7, paragraph 33, in the last sentence it says "Miodrag ADAMOVIĆ was the head of the MUP in Gjakove but I do not recall in what period of time." That is incorrect and it should say "Miodrag ADAMOVIĆ was the chief of the MUP in Gjakove during the same period."

End of corrections to the first statement.

Corrections to the second statement of 12 – 15 February 2001.

On page no. 3, in paragraph 10 it says "One evening a group of nine arrived – two from Russia (one of whom was a doctor)," and continues to say "I think the total of such people was about 50." In order to clarify this detail I believe it should say "some 50 people arrived, including nine Russians (one of whom was a doctor)."

On page no. 4, in paragraph 13 it says "the commander's name was LCol FNU VUKOVIĆ" I would again like to add the name of the Major of this brigade, his family name was STANKOVIĆ while I do not know his name.

/a signature, three sets of initials, stamped, handwritten: 44/

On page no. 5, in paragraph 23, in the fourth sentence it says "... Osek (? Osek Hilja / Osek Hile) or (? Osek Paša / Osek Pashe) in Đakovica." The name of the village is not correct and it should just be Osek, because it is the same village.

On the same page, in the same paragraph a man called Muharrem “Mush” JAKUPI is mentioned. This is incorrect, because the man I mentioned is a man called Musa JAKUPI. Muharrem is his son.

03079349

On page no. 10, in paragraph 50 it says “On the 28th of April 1999, a day after Meja and Korenica massacre was committed...” This is incorrect and it should be “after 10 o’clock in the evening of the 27th of April 1999...”

On page 11, paragraph 53, in the second last sentence it says “it was through him that we were able to rescue people.” I would like to explain this. What I intended to say with this that we were able to persuade him (Milan ŠĆEPANOVIĆ) to allow the people to pass.

On page no. 14, paragraph 69, I would like to add some more details. In this paragraph I mentioned a speech/meeting that took place at the end of May or beginning of June 1998 at the Military Club in the Military Barracks. I was present at this meeting with some other military officers, some 570. I received orders from Commander Mladen ĆIRKOVIĆ. Everyone had to attend this meeting and only those who had an excuse did not have to attend. For example, if they were on duty or on an official trip. Among these 570 men, some 300 were from the Priština military barracks, some 150 were from the Priština Corps and some 50 or 60 men were from Priština Airport. Also present were the Commander of the 3rd Army Dušan SAMARDŽIĆ and General Nebojša PAVKOVIĆ from the Priština Corps. PERIŠIĆ came with his personnel, bodyguards, etc. After the meeting the comments of many officers were positive and they agreed with what PERIŠIĆ said. The speech/meeting lasted 1/12 /as printed/ hours, from 1300 to 1430 hours.

WITNESS STATEMENT

WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Statement has been read over to me in the Serbian 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: /signed/

03079350

Dated: /handwritten: 8 May 2002/

/two sets of initials, stamped, handwritten: 43/

INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

I, Ardiana SADIKOVIĆ, 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 Bosnian language into the English language and from English language into the Bosnian language.
2. I have been informed by Nike PERAJ that he speaks and understands the Bosnian language.
3. I have orally translated the above statement from the English language to the Bosnian language in the presence of Nike PERAJ who appeared to have heard and understood my translation of this Statement.
4. Nike PERAJ 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: /handwritten: 8 May 2002/

Signed: /signed/

/initialed, stamped, handwritten: 42/

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:

K0197357

Last Name: PERAJ

First Name(s): Nike

Father's First Name: PERAJ Sokol

Nickname: None

Gender: Male

Date of Birth: 04.09.1946

Place of Birth: Ramoc Village, Djakovića/Gjakove

Ethnic Origin: ALBANIAN

Religion: CATHOLIC

Language(s) Spoken: **Albanian, Serbo-Croatian**

Language(s) Written (if different from spoken):

Language(s) Used in Interview: **ENGLISH and SERBO-CROATIAN**

Current Occupation: Unemployed Former: Yugoslavian Army Official

Address:


Date(s) of Interview(s): 12th to 15th February 2001

Interviewer: Paolo PASTORE STOCCHI (Investigator) and Philip COO (Military Analyst)

Interpreter: Iris RUTARI-COEN

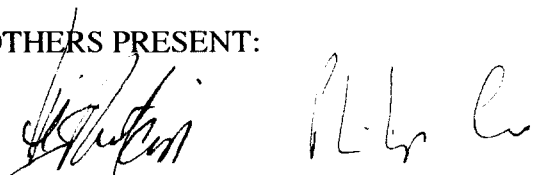
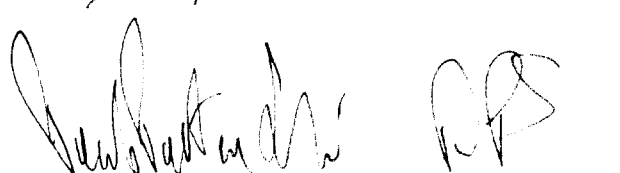
Names of all persons present during interview(s): Paolo PASTORE STOCCHI, Philip COO, Iris RUTARI-COEN.

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS:

NP 

OTHERS PRESENT:

PAGE 1 OF 19

WITNESS STATEMENT:

K0197358

My name is Nike PERAJ, I was a 1st Class Captain in the Yugoslavian Army until the NATO troops entered in Kosovo in June 1999. This is the second official statement that I have submitted to ICTY and with it I would like to clarify some of the issues that were discussed during the first statement and to add additional information which I did not mention before.

Between 1989 and 1991 I was in Pristina as a member of the 15th Mechanised Brigade within the JNA Pristina Corps. At that time I worked as a supervisor in the transport section. In 1992 the JNA changed to the VJ and the 15th Mechanised Brigade became the 15th Armoured Brigade. My rank was 1st Class Captain. Between 1992 and December 1998 I worked at the 15th Armoured Brigade in the operations section and was responsible for planning training and exercises. The 15th Armoured Brigade was commanded by Colonel Mladen ĆIRKOVIĆ during the conflict with NATO.

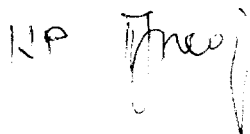
In 1998 General Nebojsa PAVKOVIĆ was the Commander of the VJ Pristina Corps. General Vladimir LAZAREVIĆ was the Chief of Staff in the Pristina Corps. Then in 1999 Nebojsa PAVKOVIĆ was appointed Commander of the VJ 3rd Army in Niš while LAZAREVIĆ took over as the Commander of Pristina Corps. I came into contact with both Generals in 1998, when I was duty officer and would brief them in the morning.

As stated in the previous statement, on the 21st of December 1998 I was assigned to the Artiljeriska Raketna Brigada (ARBR; Vojni Posta Number 1936) of Priština Corps i.e. the Rocket Artillery Brigade in Đakovica/Gjakove. The Brigade name had changed earlier in 1998 from the 52nd ARBR. I was responsible for the ARBR HQ's security at the Djakovića/Gjakove barracks. As part of my duties, I trained soldiers on security issues and ensured that they carried out their HQ security tasks.

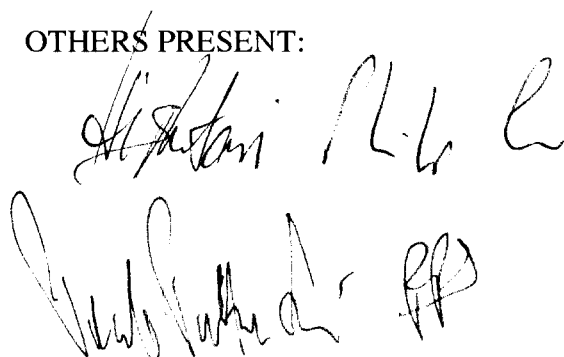
The Vojna Bezbednost – Military Security - was the organisation in the VJ responsible for intelligence and counterintelligence. They would collect information to enable the commander to plan and conduct operations. This was different to the security unit I worked in, which was charged with physical security. My Brigade, the Priština Corps ARBR, and the Priština Corps both had Military Security staff officers in their HQ's.

ARMED GROUPS - OVERVIEW

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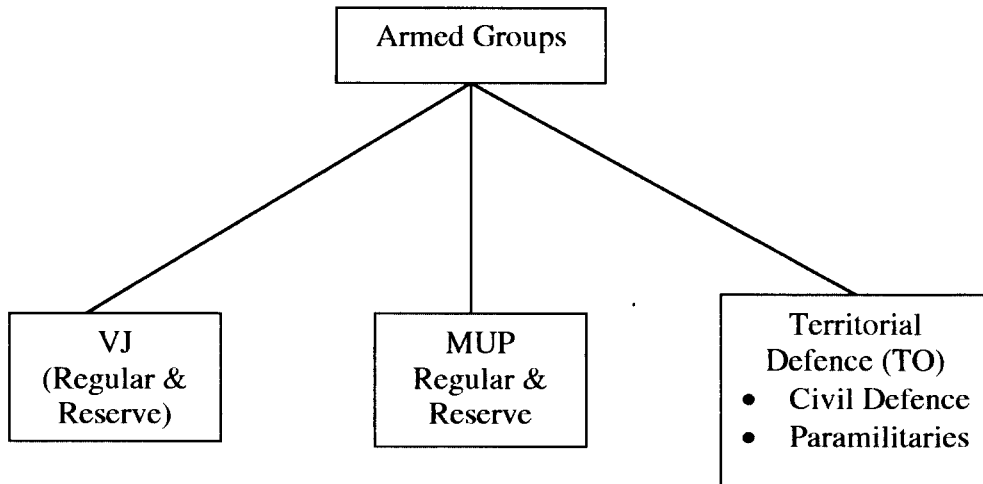
OTHERS PRESENT:



ARMED GROUPS - OVERVIEW

There was a law that during wartime, other structures would come under command of the VJ. These other structures were the MUP, and components of the Territorial Defence. VJ and MUP, in addition to regular units, had their own separate reserve units. The following diagram indicates what armed structures existed:

K0197359



Paramilitary organisations included ARKAN's TIGERS, ŠEŠELJ's WHITE EAGLES, and Franko SIMATOVIĆ's unit the FRENKIS. There were no official regulations or orders that identified these units and assigned them to the Territorial Defence but they operated under the Territorial Defence on a de facto basis.

During the NATO conflict, all the units in the line diagram above were supposed to be represented at twice-daily meetings which occurred at 0800 and 1800 hours. Very often the representatives of the paramilitary units did not show up at the meetings. I know for sure that paramilitary, TO, and the other units operated jointly with MUP as I will explain later.

VJ

The regular VJ was responsible for operations against the KLA e.g. Košare. The attacks against civilian targets were conducted by MUP and the groups under the Territorial structure. The army stayed in static positions with tanks.

Once NATO began bombing, smaller groups of 5-10 men (generally people interested in looting) would arrive to join the VJ. Many were unkempt and many had criminal backgrounds having been recruited from prison. One evening, a group of 9 arrived – two

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OTHERS PRESENT:

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from Russia (one of whom was a doctor). We registered them and they were sent to the front at Košare after the Commander Miloš ĐOŠAN refused their request to stay in ĐAKOVICA saying he would not allow them to loot. I think the total of such people was about 50. They were paid by the Territorial Defence of the municipality from where they came and the Ministry of Defence would in turn fund the Territorial Defence units.

VJ reservists included Kosovo Albanians and Roma Gypsies loyal to Serbia. They were subordinate to Major Nikola MIČUNOVIĆ aka Dragan. MIČUNOVIĆ also attended meetings with ĐOŠAN and the Mayor of Đakovica/Gjakove – Momčilo STANOJEVIĆ. Also, the FRENKIS members I mention later in the statement were at one time VJ Reservists under MIČUNOVIĆ before leaving to join FRENKIS.

The VJ uniform was a green camouflage. VJ reservists wore the same uniform and insignia. The best way of distinguishing a reservist from a regular VJ member is the age – reservists tended to be older.

The RS Brigade of about 1000 personnel maximum had their own transport and arrived before the NATO bombing. This VRS brigade from Republika Srpska was deployed to Rezina. The RS unit had on their insignia “Republika Srpska”; the commander’s name was LCol FNU VUKOVIĆ. The RS Brigade arrived in Đakovica/Gjakove late February/early March (10-20 days before NATO bombing). They had T-55 tanks and anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) which they probably brought from the Republika Srpska. A sub-unit of about 60 people in this RS Brigade held the AAA.


I am basing the assertion that the equipment came from the RS on the assumption that it would not have made sense for a unit to deploy without its own equipment although it is possible that the tanks were given to them in Serbia but that would require familiarisation training. Also, I doubt that Serbia had any spare tanks to give to units coming from elsewhere.

The RS Brigade was in the Đakovica/Gjakove area of Kosovo to defend from attacks from Albania and to provide security for units in forward positions. Serbia paid them and provided logistical support. Their uniforms and equipment were the same as the VJ’s but with the different insignia. My unit provided logistical support to them. I did see members of the Brigade from the RS having meetings in ĐOŠAN’s office.

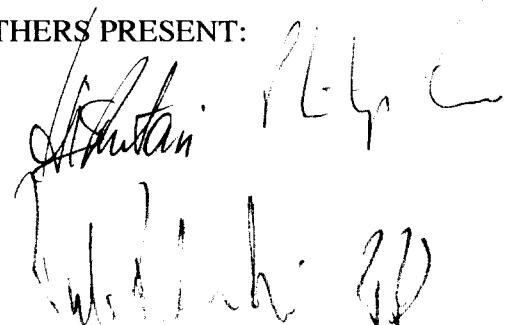
Regular VJ forces were concentrated during the NATO conflict along the line Prizren - Đakovica – Peć. The deployments started before the conflict.

When I was in Priština before 21 December 1998, the barracks there had 70 tanks. I think that there were over 170 tanks in the Đakovica/Gjakove area from at least 1998. There were also 10 tanks from the Prizren Brigade in Đakovica/Gjakove under command of the Prizren Brigade. There was always an element of the Prizren Brigade in Đakovica/Gjakove in the barracks near the Catholic church near the outskirts of the town near Ura e Tabaku

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bridge, not in the ARBR barracks. When I took bodies to Niš in late April 1999, the man at the fuel point said he had just fuelled 60 tanks that day.

During the bombing, the military police and HQ security element for the ARBR were in the house in front of our barracks in Đakovica/Gjakove; the same location where the idea to conduct the Meja operation was first discussed. I will describe this operation later. The HQ was dispersed in three places in Đakovica/Gjakove for security from NATO bombing - the cultural centre, the cellar of the storehouse, in the cellar of a disco. The Priština Corps forward command post (FCP) during the NATO bombing was located in the basement of a building in Marshall Tito Street (now called Nena Theresa Street). Before the bombing, the FCP for the Corps was in the old barracks in Đakovica/Gjakove – the same barracks used by the unit from the Prizren Brigade.

The Ministry of Defence administrates VJ mobilisation through entities known as Vojni Okrugs and Vojni Odseks. A Vojni Odsek is a VJ administrative body covering a municipality. It is responsible for military defence at that level. The Vojni Odsek keep records of recruitment and who is sent to the VJ. During wartime, they mobilise the population for the VJ.


Vojni Okrugs are VJ administrative bodies covering a number of municipalities. In Kosovo there was only one and the HQ was in Priština. There were Vojni Odseks in Priština, Uroševac, Peć, Đakovica, Prizren, Orahovac, Kosovska Mitrovica, Gnjilane. Other municipalities had a representative for military issues. Odseks received orders from the Vojni Okrug. All information from Vojni Odseks was passed to the Vojni Okrug. The Okrug decided how many from each Odsek would be recruited and reported to the Ministry of Defence in Belgrade. These organisations had no operational authority.

MUP

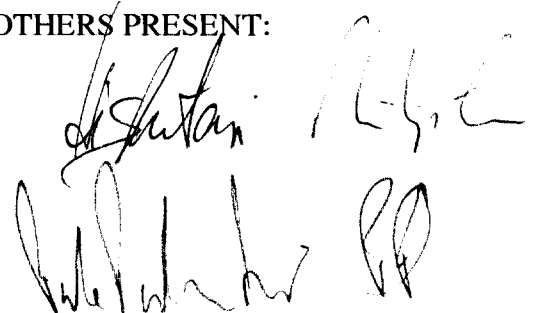
There were MUP reservists who were usually people with a Military Police background and also retired regular MUP. I think that there may have been 50 to 70 in Đakovica/Gjakove but many more came from Serbia. When I was in Priština before 21 December 1998, the MUP reservists would come with their own vehicles and weapons and leave with them when their tour had finished. The reinforcement of local MUP tripled their numbers. It was the MUP that was tasked to handle the UCK alone at first. Before the war, special buildings were built in VJ barracks all over Kosovo for the MUP. There were 400 MUP in the Priština barracks before the war.

Belgrade decided that every municipality should have a local police unit formed from Albanians loyal to Serbia. They were sent to villages to maintain security where it was too hostile for other police to work and they collected Intelligence on the local population for Serb forces. This began in the summer of 1998. One such group was at Osek village in the Đakovica/Gjakove municipality. It included a father and two sons from the JAKUPI family, a family of farmers and workers, and also five members of the ABAZI family headed by Mhill ABAZI. The group had a total of about 20-30 people. Muharem "Mush" JAKUPI was

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OTHERS PRESENT:



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the father and had two wives – he was 78 years old. The youngest son did not want to join the police so he was beaten. One son was, Sahid, and his brother (FNU JAKUPI) was the leader of this family group and a bodyguard for Momčilo STANOJEVIĆ. The older son was the only one with the camouflage uniform while the others wore the blue uniform and peaked cap of the normal police. There were two representatives of the regular MUP with these local police units in the Đakovica/Gjakove area and the co-ordinator was Milutin PRAŠCEVIĆ, the policeman killed later in Meja.

The MUP wore blue camouflage uniforms. Their patch included the Serbian flag colours, the word “Milicija” and a laurel. In some ways it was similar to the VJ patch. The patch was shaped like a police badge or shield.

The MUP had M-84 9mm pistols (made by Crvena Zastava in Kragujevac), 7.62mm automatic rifles, and short-barrelled machineguns manufactured abroad (for officers). These included Scorpion automatic pistols (MUP Inspector Milan ŠEPANOVIĆ had one in the Meja incident). These are normal issue to MUP in Serbia. I also saw 7.62mm TT pistol, manufactured in Kragujevac under Russian licence, with local police and MUP reservists. MUP also had M-75 ORB (grenades).

ADAMOVIĆ was the head of MUP in Đakovica/Gjakove until about 1999. When Colonel FNU KOVAČEVIĆ came from Belgrade he may have replaced ADAMOVIĆ but I am not sure. KOVAČEVIĆ was in command of MUP units from outside Đakovica/Gjakove. All high-ranking MUP officers had been through the VJ academy and war school; it was only later that the MUP got its own officer academy; KOVAČEVIĆ was MUP and wore the MUP uniform. He was an older man (mid-50's), I think he had already retired before coming to Đakovica/Gjakove. KOVAČEVIĆ was a close friend of PAVKOVIĆ.

The MUP had a similar system to the Vojni Okrug – the Pokrajinski MUP (provincial level, like the Vojni Okrug) based in Priština and the municipality level was the Općinski MUP.

TERRITORIAL DEFENCE ORGANISATION & PARAMILITARIES

The Territorial Defence was all people between 15 – 65 years who were not in VJ or MUP and included Civil Defence, which might also be referred to as Civil Protection. They had to defend the civilian population, provide fire-fighting, flood control, and provide food and water, among other tasks. Part of the Territorial Defence was people in factories concerned with war production. They had weapons to protect their factories. Vojni Odsek also recruited for Territorial Defence.

Nikola MIČUNOVIĆ (aka Dragan) was Chief of the Vojni Odsek in Đakovica/Gjakove but he just had an administrative role in peacetime concerning Territorial Defence. In wartime, he was operational commander of Territorial Defence for the Đakovica/Gjakove municipality. MIČUNOVIĆ reported to ĐOŠAN and to Mayor STANOJEVIĆ.

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS:

MUP [Signature]

OTHERS PRESENT:

[Signatures]

K0197363

Partial mobilisation of the Territorial Defence began around October/November 1998. By January/February 1999, mobilisation was practically complete.

In my assessment, there were about 200 paramilitaries in the Đakovica/Gjakove area most of whom were ARKAN's and ŠEŠELJ's with about 30 from FRENKI's. VJ officers and locals were saying the FRENKI's (also known as the Black Hand) were the worst. Members of these groups had rough backgrounds – prison, drug use. FRENKI's were based in a building between the VLLAMZINI Stadium and the Gymnasium School on Dimitrije Tucovič in Đakovica. Members of FRENKI's that I am aware of were **the sons of Dragan ISAJLOVIĆ, Milan SLAVKOVIĆ, Jovo FILIPOVIĆ, FNU ZARIĆ, and Rajko PANTOVIĆ** (son of Mujo, owner of a grocery store). They were about 20-30 years old. Bato ĐURĐEVIĆ, a former neighbour, gave me this information. He would be a useful source on paramilitaries but is currently in Serbia. His son, Peko, worked in a bank and Bato was a Statistician in the municipality. Peko saw the paramilitary members I just mentioned in Đakovica/Gjakove and told me and his father. I think that the paramilitaries were provided with automatic rifles, ammunition, and logistics support by the MUP (the MUP got the material from the VJ) but they were able to be fairly self-sufficient e.g. they robbed cars from private citizens.

FRENKIs wore different uniforms – some wore the VJ uniform, some the MUP, but never a complete uniform (always a mixture) and no one person had the same as the other. Balacavas were common with a pompon on top. They also wore headbands. I never saw them at VJ locations but I saw their leaders (I do not know the names) going to meet the Mayor Momčilo STANOJEVIĆ at the municipality building.

I had no contact with the WHITE EAGLES or TIGERS other than bumping into the TIGERS once at the Pastriku Hotel in Đakovica/Gjakove along with MUP and other groups; There were at least 50-60 based there. The TIGERS and WHITE EAGLES, like FRENKI's wore a mixture of VJ and MUP uniforms and even wore MUP and VJ insignia. The TIGERS also had an olive green uniform with a vest that had many pockets. I had not seen such a uniform before. The pockets were full of things like ammunition, grenades, and knives.

I heard that ARKAN kept a very disciplined unit insofar as they did not use drugs. I never saw ARKAN's unit using drugs but based on what my friend told me about his son and from their behaviour, I concluded that they must have been using some type of drug. A lot of alcohol was being consumed in the Pastriku hotel and Colonel ĐOŠAN, being responsible for the forces in Đakovica/Gjakove, tried to ban it but unsuccessfully. I was once sent by ĐOŠAN to put a stop to the drinking but with the drunken state of the people in the hotel and their weaponry, it would have been too risky so it was not pursued.

There was a café (near the Gymnasium school) in Đakovica/Gjakove where 20-30 of the FRENKIS would often gather and then they would spend the night expelling people from their homes, burning and looting and, most likely, killing.

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OTHERS PRESENT:

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Paramilitaries could be distinguished from other units by insignia. I recognise the diagram of the WHITE EAGLES insignia shown to me by ICTY investigator Paolo PASTORE STOCCHI as one I saw at Meja. Also, I saw a skull and crossed bones insignia on some paramilitary members but I do not know which unit. You could also identify paramilitaries because they carried very large knives.

COMMMAND & CONTROL

All armed groups (VJ, MUP, others) were subordinate to the VJ in theory. The "other" groups were those such as ŠEŠELJ's and FRENKIs and the Territorial Defence. The paramilitary ones tended not to be responsive to VJ direction even though the VJ tried; they followed their own agendas. Their main agenda was a greater Serbia as intended by the politicians who formed them.

I do not know if the paramilitaries were on the same radio nets as VJ and MUP (I suspect that they were), but I know that they did carry Motorola-style, hand-held radios – more modern than the ones the VJ had. I saw these radios with paramilitaries at the Meja incident.

The VJ and MUP had meetings every day during the bombing in the Shadow disco bar on Marshall Tito Street (now called Mother Theresa Street) but the VJ and MUP kept separate HQ's. These meetings had also been held before the bombing in the barracks and in the municipality building. I have marked on the city plan of Đakovica/Gjakove where the HQ's of the Corps, ARBR, and MUP were at different times during the bombing (VJ in green and MUP in blue). The Corps, ARBR, and MUP HQ's were all in separate locations. From the barracks, the ARBR HQ occupied different locations at different times according to the numerical sequence I have marked on the city plan with approximate dates. The MUP deployed from its peacetime HQ at the same time as the VJ i.e. around 24 March 1999. I drove the ARBR Commander a few times to meetings between the MUP and VJ. These meetings occurred at various locations – MUP HQ, VJ HQ, or the municipality building (always in the basements for safety).

The names of those always attending daily 0800 and 1800 hours meetings were Momčilo STANOJEVIĆ (the Mayor), Major Nikola MIČUNOVIĆ (the head of the Vojni Odsek), Sreto CAMOVIĆ (the Head of DB in Đakovica/Gjakove, born in Šeremet in the Carragojs valley), Miodrag ADAMOVIĆ head of the MUP in Đakovica/Gjakove (I do not know who replaced ADAMOVIĆ), Miloš ĐOŠAN (Commander of Priština Corps ARBR in Đakovica/Gjakove), and a representative from the Priština Corps (sometimes LAZAREVIĆ, JEFTOVIĆ, KOTUR). KOVAČEVIĆ who co-ordinated MUP and paramilitary units attended some meetings but I do not know if attended every meeting. I know about KOVAČEVIĆ because ĐOŠAN would mention his name when he returned from some meetings complaining about how stubborn KOVAČEVIĆ was.

Once I had to separate ĐOŠAN and MIČUNOVIĆ after a meeting, because they were arguing. I do not know what they were fighting over. On the same occasion once ĐOŠAN

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got into the car with me, he said that KOVAČEVIĆ and MIČUNOVIĆ were doing unauthorised things and blaming it on the VJ. MIČUNOVIĆ's VJ Reserve unit had killed eight civilians in Deva village at the end of March 1999. Peko ĐURĐEVIĆ confirmed this for me because he was in the same unit. Members of the ASLLANI family from Deva also confirmed this after escaping to Ramoć where members of my family live.

I am not aware of there being a special name for the group that had these twice daily meetings. They discussed operations, supplies, unit deployments and other things concerning the wartime situation. Once ĐOŠAN called me from a meeting and said that the unit near Ljug Bunar (NE of Đakovica/Gjakove) should be moved to Košare NW of Đakovica/Gjakove). I then had to pass this information on the ARBR operations staff (Major Zdravko VINTER). This unit was part of ĐOŠAN's ARBR.

Operations maps were prepared by the VJ and given to the MUP. The maps showed deployments of VJ, VJ Reserve, and MUP units to ensure that operations were co-ordinated and avoid incidents of fratricide. The deployments were decided at the twice-daily meetings I mentioned elsewhere in this statement and the information plotted on the maps. The maps also showed UCK positions.

The MUP needed VJ support for large operations and the VJ would tell the MUP on large operations how to deploy and what to do.

The MUP did decide on its own several times that I am aware of to conduct operations without consulting the VJ beforehand. This was typically for smaller operations and applied in peacetime and wartime. Usually, when the MUP did inform the VJ what operations it had planned, the VJ had no ability to prevent the MUP operation from taking place.

The MUP checkpoints during the Meja incident were set up because the MUP was in a better position to check identification cards and decide who should be allowed to go free. At the checkpoints, the MUP was taking ID cards and money from people. The MUP, I believe, probably already had the intention of meting out revenge for the killing of PRAŠCEVIĆ and four others officers, knew which area they wanted to target for revenge, and asked the VJ to assist using the reason that they needed the VJ to provide security against UCK attacks. I do not believe that there were any UCK at that time in the area.

MEJA INCIDENT – PLANNING & POST INCIDENT ACTIVITIES

The Military Security Commander of the VJ Pristina Corps was Colonel Momir STOJANOVIĆ and he was a good acquaintance of mine. At the beginning March 1999 STOJANOVIĆ told me about a cleansing plan that the Serbian forces would carry out against the Kosovo-Albanian population in the Municipality of Djakovića/Gjakove.

I was present during an informal meeting that took place in a private house in Djakovića/Gjakove near the barracks in April 1999 after that MUP officer Milutin

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PRAŠČEVIĆ was killed in a UCK ambush. The following people were at the informal meeting: Sreto ČAMOVIĆ (the Chief of the State Security or DB in Djakovića/Gjakove); Nikola MIČUNOVIĆ (a VJ Major Commanding the reservist units of the Territorial Defence); MUP Colonel KOVACEVIĆ (in 1999 he assumed command of the MUP station in Djakovića/Gjakove possibly replacing Miodrag ADAMOVIĆ and he also had responsibility for paramilitary units operating in the municipality); Captain Sergej PEROVIĆ (Chief of Military Security for the Priština Corps ARBR); the Military Security Officer from 63rd Parachute Brigade in Niš (an antiterrorist unit) - I do not recall his name; two or three other people from different units were also there but I did not know them or their units. During the meeting STOJANOVIĆ addressed MIČUNOVIĆ and KOVACEVIĆ ordering them to carry out an operation in the Carragojs Valley where at least 100 "heads" had to be eliminated (INVESTIGATOR'S NOTE: according to the witness by "heads", STOJANOVIĆ meant human beings) and all houses burned in retribution for the killing of PRAŠČEVIĆ. The order was phrased in almost exactly this way.

In less than a week the massacre in Meja and Korenica took place. STOJANOVIĆ also assured MIČUNOVIĆ and KOVACEVIĆ at the meeting that he would provide them with adequate physical protection and protection from any repercussions. He referred to his very close friendship with General PAVKOVIĆ when he offered his protection.

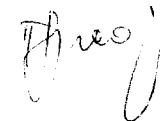
I was at the meeting when the Meja massacre was planned because it occurred in the same building as I occupied with my security unit. STOJANOVIĆ saw me and greeted me because at that time, I was still considered "one of them" i.e a soldier. The house where the meeting occurred and where my section lived during the NATO conflict, was a Kosovo Albanian's house and was used by the Meja planning group to gather in prior to the funeral of Milutin PRAŠČEVIĆ. Also based there with my section were elements of the military police. STOJANOVIĆ's own house was near the barracks at Sadik Stavileči St.

On the 28th of April 1999, the day after Meja and Korenica massacre was committed, I was in the Brigade HQ at the cultural centre in Đakovića/Gjakove. Major Zdravko VINTER, who was employed in the personnel office, was preparing a report for the 3rd Army HQ in Niš. In the report the VJ stated that 74 terrorists had been killed in Korenica and 68 in Meja. On this occasion I was able to read over Major VINTER's shoulder part of the post operation report saying terrorists had been killed. VINTER used large fonts when typing.

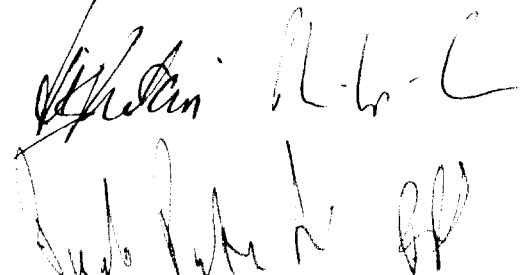
By this period, General LAZAREVIĆ was based primarily in Đakovića/Gjakove together with other members of the Pristina Corps Command who formed a forward command post (FCP).

For the operation carried out in Korenica and Meja, a week later Gen. LAZAREVIĆ, Goran JEFTOVIĆ, Novica STANKOVIĆ and other lower ranked soldiers were given commendations. Novica STANKOVIĆ was the deputy of Priština Corps ARBR Commander, Milos ĐOŠAN, in Djakovića/Gjakove. ĐOŠAN did not agree with the operation in Korenica and Meja and arrested MIČUNOVIĆ for his involvement. MIČUNOVIĆ, however, remained in prison only three days. I learnt about the arrest of MIČUNOVIĆ from his brother, Aco

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MIČUNOVIĆ, who was a Sergeant in the VJ in Đakovica/Gjakove. MIČUNOVIĆ was released because of the personal intervention (I do not know at which level, perhaps political) of Vojislav ŠEŠELJ and Željko RAŽNJATOVIĆ (aka ARKAN). Sergej PEROVIĆ told me this.

MEJA INCIDENT

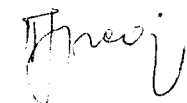
In Meja on the 27th of April I helped about ten families to pass through a Serbian checkpoint manned by MUP. Kofi SHYTI, Zef PNISHI, Sadni BEKA, Nue Mark MIRASHI, Sokoli JETISHI, and Hasan IDRIZI were among these people. All of them live in Meja except for MIRASHI. MUP Inspector Milan ŠEPANOVIĆ, from Đakovica/Gjakove, was in charge of a checkpoint at Meja. It was through him that we were able to rescue people. ŠEPANOVIĆ was dressed in the MUP blue camouflage uniform.

Near the HASANAJ house in Meja, I saw the bodies of about 20 victims who had been shot from close range. My VJ officer training allowed me to make this assessment. I saw the powder burns on the heads of these victims, which suggests executions. Some of the witnesses mentioned that in Meja before executing people, the Serbs would spray a gas to incapacitate the victims. I did see one of the paramilitary soldiers carrying a gas mask near the execution site. I never saw gas canisters in Meja to confirm this allegation but I am convinced that the Serbs used them. My colleague Major ŽIVKOVIĆ was an expert in chemical weapons and said he detected something unusual in the air at the incident site. I am no longer in contact with him; he lives in Niš (all VJ personnel from Đakovica retired to Niš). Furthermore, my nephew Mercur PERAJ from Dallashaj Village, was also stopped at the Meja checkpoint that day and he stated that a policeman recognised my nephew and ordered his release upon noticing that someone with a canister was about to administer the incapacitating agent to him.

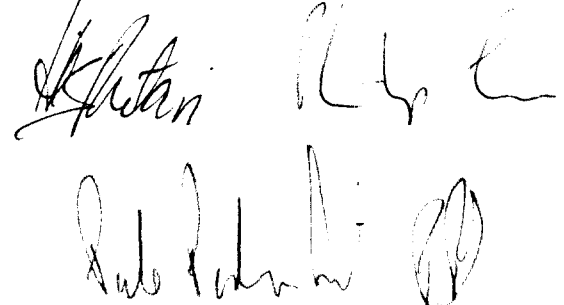
On 28 April 1999 I went to the MUP command post (CP) in Dužnje where I saved two other Kosovo Albanian families after assuring the MUP that they were not UCK. I do not know the name of the MUP commander but there were senior MUP officers present. These MUP were not from Đakovica/Gjakove.

As I stated in the previous statement, I saw in Meje members of paramilitary units. I recognised them from their clothing and from their behaviour. They had Range Rovers and wore black and other colours of load-bearing vests, and green and brown camouflage trousers similar to the one that ICTY Investigator Paolo PASTORE STOCCHI showed to me (INVESTIGATOR COMMENT: PERAJ identified the current German Army style of camouflage on the left low side of the camouflage pattern frame END OF COMMENT). They had stains of blood on their trousers, possibly from wiping their knives, and on the boots. Their faces were painted with black polish. Some of them had balaclavas on their heads, probably those who were from Đakovica/Gjakove. It seemed to me that they must have been under the influence of drugs or alcohol to commit such horrible acts.

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Some of my VJ colleagues told me that the majority of those who joined paramilitaries were people with criminal records and drug addicts. Some were released from prison specifically to join these units but I do not know on whose authority. The son of Dragiša STOJANOVIĆ, a colleague of mine from Pristina, was member of ARKAN'S TIGERS in Bosnia. I know that the son of my colleague was a drug addict who committed suicide after he returned from Bosnia.

Colonel Milan KOTUR was not at the informal meeting for the Meja incident but had already arrived in Đakovica with LAZAREVIĆ's HQ and deployed from there to a command post (CP) at the Catholic church Northwest of Ošek village. From there he had a clear view of the Carragojs valley to direct the Meja operation. The MUP CP was in the Dervish prayer house (Tyarbe) in Dužnje village.


I have provided an annotated map of the operations in the Carragojs valley and Meja area. The VJ was in the west to defend from the UCK coming from Albania. Also, the VJ was deployed along the Đakovica – Decane road to protect it from the UCK. There were Brigade-sized groups, including the 63rd Parachute Brigade of about 500 men (I do not know the name of the commander), a Special Police Brigade of about 400 personnel from Serbia, which pushed down the valley burning and forcibly-displacing civilians towards the paramilitary groups around Meja acting as a blocking force. LAZAREVIĆ and LCol Goran JEFTOVIĆ (Staff officer for operations in Priština Corps) co-ordinated this from Đakovica. On 27 April 1999, the push reached the line I have marked on the map where the local MUP and paramilitaries took over. Then the massacre occurred on the same day. On the 28th April, the push continued in a SE direction.

I saw the Carragojs valley area after the operation on the 28th when I was going to see if anything had happened to my house and to my parents in-law. I got authorisation to go to Ramoć from LAZAREVIĆ and JEFTOVIĆ in the HQ at Đakovica/Gjakove; they passed this authorisation on to KOTUR at the CP in Northwest of Osek. In LAZAREVIĆ's office was a wall-sized map covered in clear talc which JEFTOVIĆ was marking with details of the operation occurring in the Carragojs valley. The details I saw on the map were confirmed by what I saw when I went to the field. I noted that the 63rd Airborne Brigade was marked on the map as operating in the Carragojs valley and I was also told of their presence by STOJANOVIĆ and Sergej PEROVIĆ.

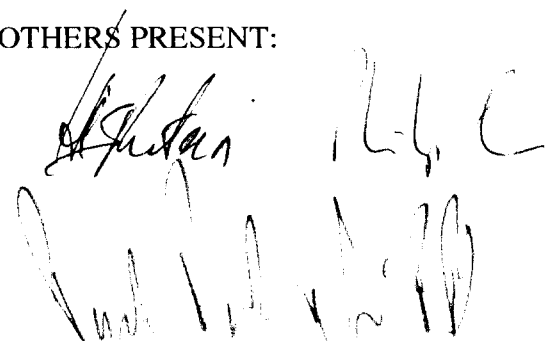
The Priština Corps forward Command Post in Đakovica/Gjakove was getting reports from the CP where Novica STANKOVIĆ and KOTUR were operating. I visited this CP with Sergej PEROVIĆ (part of the ARBR Brigade security section) and two military policemen. I did not get to my house because there was still a lot of live fire in the area.

In the days after the massacre, the VJ and MUP were looking for bulldozers in Đakovica, ostensibly for road repair but I think that they were associated with disposal of bodies. I do not know what happened to the bodies. There were rumours that they were burnt but I have no other information. On 29 April 1999, I saw two trucks driving towards Đakovica from Meja, covered with tarpaulins. These trucks were those normally used to

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move such things as sand and would not normally be covered. I saw body parts when the tarpaulins lifted in the wind.

I do not know anyone else from the VJ or MUP who are available to assist you in understanding the Meja massacre. All of those who have knowledge have left Kosovo.

Those taking part in the Meja massacre were VJ, MUP, local police, and paramilitaries.

Miloš ĐOŠAN, the commander of the ARBR was theoretically the person who should command military operations in the area of Đakovica but the operation I saw in the Carragojs valley was commanded by General LAZAREVIĆ, Colonel KOTUR, and other staff officers in Priština Corps. ĐOŠAN, from Bosnia originally and about 48 years old, was a very sensitive man who had compassion for those suffering. He was not aggressive. He should have become a General but his Deputy was promoted above him after the war.

One of the Operations Staff Officers from the Priština Corps was Atanas KOKOLANSKI. He was not there during the period when NATO was bombing. Major Zdravko VINTER, a Slovenian, was the liaison officer to the OSCE KVM in Đakovica/Gjakove. He replaced another VJ officer, a Lieutenant-Colonel who was the assistant to the ARBR political advisor.

SENIOR PERSONALITIES

Occasionally officers from 3rd Army HQ visited Đakovica/Gjakove. General PAVKOVIĆ visited two or three times for meetings, especially when Serbian officials came to visit. Nikola ŠAINOVIĆ came on one of these occasions, I think around February 1999. I do not know why he was there, probably something to do with the political situation. ŠAINOVIĆ was a kind of political co-ordinator. Also with him was Zoran ANDELKOVIĆ. He was the civilian co-ordinator for Kosovo and based in Priština. PAVKOVIĆ did visit Đakovica/Gjakove on at least one occasion during the NATO bombing with Colonel STOJANOVIĆ - I think it was mid to end March. Because of the requirement for additional security measures on these visits, I was involved. ŠEŠELJ also visited Đakovica/Gjakove and met Momčilo STANOJEVIĆ (the Mayor of Đakovica/Gjakove), MUP and VJ officials. The streets were blocked for security reasons. I did not see ŠEŠELJ but his visit was advertised by the media and was common knowledge. This was sometime around January 1999.

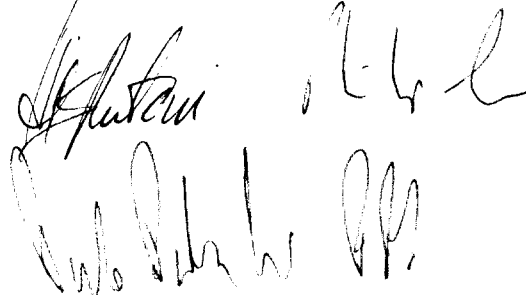
Vuk DRAŠKOVIĆ also met Momčilo STANOJEVIĆ in early 1999, probably January or 2-3 weeks after ŠEŠELJ's visit. I did not hear about DRAŠKOVIĆ having a paramilitary group in Kosovo. I think he may have visited Đakovica/Gjakove to get his political views across and to enhance his reputation abroad through propaganda.

The Chief of the VJ General Staff before General Dragoljub OJDANIĆ was General Momčilo PERIŠIĆ. He was dismissed because he disagreed with using the VJ for internal security operations. I listened to an address by PERIŠIĆ in Priština at which he said he would

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not allow the VJ to be dragged into the internal conflict. He said the MUP would have to handle internal problems while the VJ defended from external attack as per its Constitutional role. Once OJDANIĆ came in, the VJ became involved in internal security operations.

OTHER CRIMES

I have no knowledge of any liquidation orders or lists existing such as those for prominent Albanians but I did see a list around September/October 1998 of Kosovo Albanians held by Milutin PRAŠČEVIĆ in the MUP building in Đakovica/Gjakove. I was there to attempt to secure the release of some people in detention there. Those in detention were Nik NIKAJ (from Piskota) and Pal KOLAJ (from Beć village). The list was on a table in the MUP building and covered those who were to be interrogated. Some names were circled. The same day there were about 10 people waiting to be interrogated by the MUP officer whose death would later precipitate the Meja incident - PRAŠČEVIĆ. He put them in prison, beat them, or released them and told them to return another day for interrogation. There were rumours that liquidation list existed. I was on a UCK liquidation list which fell into the hands of the MUP in Dobroš during a search. Captain PEROVIĆ showed me the list.

I heard about the 134a Ymer Grezda Street incident at the end of March 1999 in Đakovica/Gjakove and, although I have no direct knowledge, I heard it was a paramilitary group – the Black Hand headed by Rajko PANTOVIĆ – which was responsible. This was rumoured to be the only group looting and burning houses in the town at that time. It was rumoured that people had brought their money to Zenelabedin DERVISHDANA, the Sheh in the Dervish Sect, thinking he would not be touched.

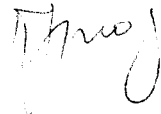
I have not heard of Millosh Gillish Street. I heard that in a house near the bus station some civilians were burnt. I have no direct knowledge of this incident.

Bato ĐURĐEVIĆ, the man who gave me the names of members of FRENKIs, told me that the paramilitaries were burning and looting. I am sure that the Black Hands were burning things and possibly other groups. I was sitting near the military recreation centre near the Gymnasium school around late March 1999 in Đakovica/Gjakove and saw a red VW Golf without licence plates carrying incendiary bombs (marked with ZB M-“year of manufacture”). I recognised Rajko PANTOVIĆ in the car. Only the MUP used these bombs. The VJ had them in its inventory but did not distribute them.

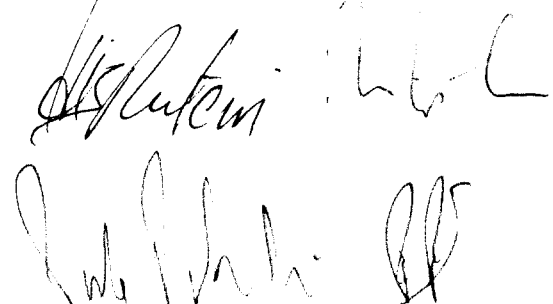
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The UCK had left the Đakovica/Gjakove area by the time the NATO bombing started and planned operations from Albania. There was no real resistance from the UCK from the beginning of 1999.

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The 137th UCK Brigade (about 126 uniformed members and 40 volunteers) at Ramoć was surrounded in early June 1999 by the VJ and MUP who planned an offensive to crush them. I managed to warn them through a family member and they escaped which could be why they let me live now. I got the information on the planned operation first from Dragan PEJKOVIĆ (who was guarding the post office). His son was in the MUP who told PEJKOVIĆ that there would be an operation. PEJKOVIĆ was afraid his son would die in that operation. I then went to the CP and met Sergej PEROVIĆ and told him I had this information. Also, some of my family had already returned to the area where the operation would occur and I asked PEROVIĆ why he had not told me before because I wanted to rescue them. PEROVIĆ said he would see what he could find out. Later, PEROVIĆ told me that I had no need to worry because Dallashaj and Dobroš villages would not be touched. He also told me exactly where the operation would occur – in Madanaj and Ramoć villages. I then went to Ramoć and informed my brother-in-law (Pal GJOKLAJ) and Pal's brother Zef. They informed the UCK. I returned to Đakovica/Gjakove. Shortly after, I was informed by Nenad (I am not sure of the first name) POPOVIĆ, the driver who I took bodies to Niš with me, that the MUP wanted to kill me for doing this because some had seen me going to this area.

I had to take VJ and VJ Reservists bodies (about 40) to Priština, Niš, and Prizren on various occasions. On one occasion I took eight VJ who had died in their own minefield. Others had been killed by UCK in the area of Bishtazhin, Damjane, Košare and Morine border area. Others were killed by NATO bombing in Lug Bunar.

The MUP had no tanks but had armoured personnel carriers given to them by the VJ and painted blue. BOV were VJ and MUP assets. The MUP did not have PRAGA because they would not know how to use them. Colonel ĐOŠAN's unit had BOV's (approx 30) and PRAGAs.

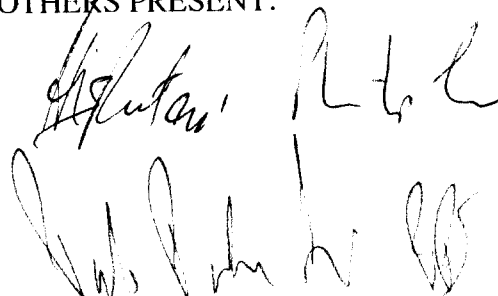
After the war (around 15 June 1999), six UCK came to my house in Đakovica/Gjakove and asked me to go to their temporary HQ (established after NATO entered) with my weapons and uniforms. They acted correctly by not mistreating me, asked me some questions, and drove me home. The next day the UCK told me to go to the cultural centre (another UCK HQ) to give a report where I was interviewed by Besim VOKSHI, the commander of the UCK Police in the area. After that, I was told to report to the HQ in the village of Babaloć village for a third interview where I saw Ramuš HARADINAJ, the UCK Commander of the Dugagjini Zone. The UCK also acted correctly during the second two interviews.

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**NAMES & POSITIONS OF KEY
INDIVIDUALS MENTIONED IN THE STATEMENT**

General Nebojša PAVKOVIĆ: Commander of Priština Corps until early 1999 and then promoted to command VJ 3rd Army.

General Vladimir LAZAREVIĆ: Chief of Staff in VJ Priština Corps until he replaced PAVKOVIĆ as the Commander in about January 1999.

Colonel Miloš ĐOŠAN: Commander of the Priština Corps Rocket Artillery Brigade in Đakovica/Gjakove.

Momčilo STANOJEVIĆ: Mayor of Đakovica/Gjakove

Colonel Momir STOJANOVIĆ: Commander of the Military Security Staff in Priština Corps. STOJANOVIĆ's wife's was the cousin of Milutin PRAŠČEVIĆ

Inspector Milutin PRAŠČEVIĆ: MUP Officer killed by the UCK in 1999 which lead to the Meja incident.

Major Zdravko VINTER: VJ Officer in the ARBR

LCol Goran JEFTOVIĆ: Operations Officer in Priština Corps HQ

LCol Atanas KOKOLANSKI: Operations Officer in Priština Corps

LCol Novica STANKOVIĆ: Deputy Commander of the Đakovica/Gjakove ARBR

Major Nikola MIČUNOVIĆ (aka Dragan): Chief of the Đakovica/Gjakove Vojni Odsek and commander of the VJ reservists in Đakovica/Gjakove

Major Ljubiša ŽIVKOVIĆ: VJ Major on duty at Đakovica/Gjakove ARBR

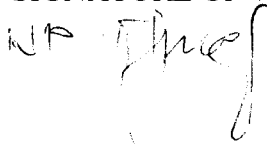
Colonel Milan KOTUR: VJ Operations Staff Officer in Priština Corps HQ

Captain Sergej PEROVIĆ: Head of security for ARBR barracks

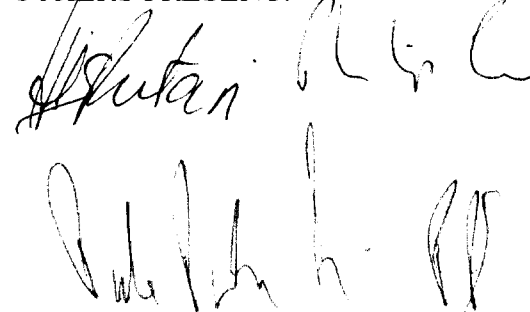
Inspector Milan ŠEPANOVIĆ: Member of the Đakovica/Gjakove MUP who was commanding a checkpoint at Meja

Miodrag ADAMOVIĆ: Head of the MUP in Đakovica/Gjakove until about January 1999. Miodrag ADAMOVIĆ, I heard, was replaced as Chief of Police for health reasons.

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Colonel FNU KOVAČEVIĆ:


Head of the MUP units from outside Kosovo and paramilitary groups operating in the Đakovica/Gjakove area from about January 1999. Came from Belgrade

Sreto CAMOVIĆ:

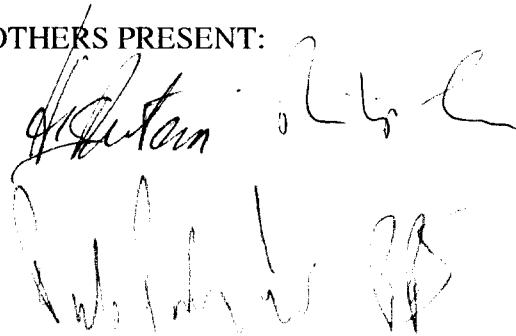
Head of the DB in Đakovica/Gjakove

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I have been advised that my statement may be provided to other Law Enforcement Agencies and/or Judicial Authorities for the purpose of prosecution. I hereby agree to the release of my statement to such authorities at the discretion of the Office of the Prosecutor.

WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Statement consisting of 18 pages, has been read over to me in the Serbo-Croatian 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: NP [Signature]

Dated: 15th February 2001

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS:

NP [Signature]

OTHERS PRESENT:

[Signatures]

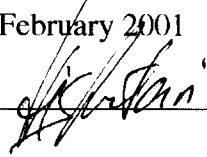
INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

I, Iris RUTARI, Interpreter, certify that:

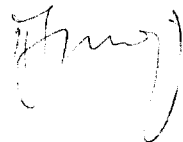
1. I am duly qualified and approved by The Registry of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 to interpret from the Albanian language into the English language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

Dated: 15th February 2001

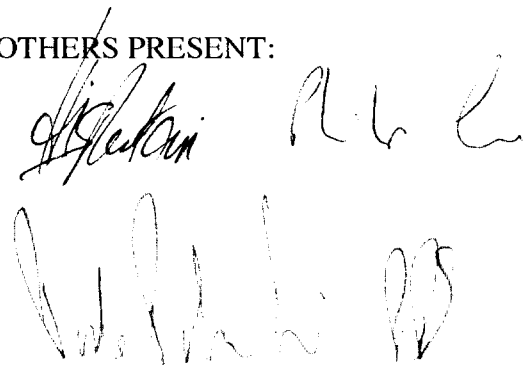
Signed: _____



SIGNATURE OF WITNESS:

NP 

OTHERS PRESENT:



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: PERAJ

First Name(s): Nike

Father's First Name: Sokol PERAJ

Nickname: None

Gender: Male

Date of Birth: 04.09.1946

Place of Birth: Ramoc Village, Djakovica/Gjakove
Municipality, Kosovo

Ethnic Origin: Albanian

Religion: Catholic

Language(s) Spoken: Albanian, Serbo-Croatian

Language(s) Written (if different from spoken):

Language(s) Used in Interview: English and Albanian

Current Occupation: Unemployed

Address: Dimitrije TUCOVIC, Marin BARLETI, nr. 16, Djakovica/Gjakove City, Kosovo.
Tel. 26438.

Contact point: As above

Date(s) of Interview(s): 18th of April 2000

Place of Interview: Gjakove City, Kosovo

Interviewer: Paolo PASTORE STOCCHI

Interpreter: Taulant SARAQINI

Names of all persons present during interview(s): Pal GJOKLAJ, dob. 10.06.1944, brother-in-law of the witness.

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS:

OTHERS PRESENT:

K0223385

WITNESS STATEMENT:

1. My name is Nike PERAJ, I was born in Ramoc Village, Djakovica/Gjakove Municipality. I attended the high school in Gjakove from 1964 to 1969 and I got the Teacher Diploma. In the period between 1969 and 1975 I worked as a teacher in the village of Sheremet, Gjakove Municipality and at the same time I attended the school for Reserve Officers in the JNA in Bilece, Bosnia.
2. In October 1968 I married Prende GJOKLAJ, born in 1952 and we went to live in Dallashaj Village, Gjakove Municipality. We lived for 30 years in Dallashaj Village. I have three children, Pashk PERAJ, 30 years old, my son; Gite PERAJ, 29 years old; Enxhel PERAJ, 27 years old, my son. My three children live in Switzerland.
3. On the 1st of November 1975 I joined the JNA Army. My rank was Second Lieutenant and my duty station was in Zajeqar, Serbia. I worked in Zajeqar until the 3rd of November 1977. Between the 3rd of November 1977 and the 21st of December 1998 I worked in Pristhina. From 1998 I worked in Gjakove. During this period I got first the rank of 1st Lieutenant, in 1985 I became 1st Class Captain in the JNA.
4. From 1985 I worked at the Transportation Unit in Pristhina. Within my unit I used to work as a driving teacher for the JNA soldiers. My work also consisted in supplying JNA first and later VJ units with the necessary equipment and vehicles.
5. On the 21st of December 1998 I took the duty in Gjakove at the JNA/VJ at the **52nd Artiljeriska Raketna Brika (ARBR) – 52nd Rocket Artillery Brigade**. I worked as an instructor for the VJ soldiers. When I arrived in Gjakove the situation was already degenerated. The VJ Army was occupying the territory of Gjakove Municipality. VJ forces arrived from Serbia. There were units from Kraljevo, Cacak and Nis and other. Artillery and tank special units were deployed all over the territory of Gjakove, Peja, Prizren and Orahovac. Sophisticated antiaircraft rockets and artillery were positioned in the strategic areas of the territory.
6. Colonel Millos DOSAN was the Commander of the 52nd ARBR; he was the responsible for the VJ units in the municipality of Gjakove. Colonel Millos DOSAN was also the responsible for MUP, reservists units. Novica STANKOVIC was DOSAN deputy. In the wartime all the regular forces engaged in the field were subordinate to the VJ Army. As far as I know the paramilitary units were not under the control of the VJ Army. Most likely the paramilitary units had contacts with the MUP. The 52nd ARBR was directly subordinate to the VJ Corps Headquarters in Pristhina. General LAZAREVIC was the Chief of the Corps HQs, and Lieutenant General Nebojsa PAVKOVIC was the Corps

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OTHERS PRESENT:

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Commander. The VJ Corps HQs received orders from the Ministry of Defense in Belgrade.

7. Between February and March 1999 many volunteers, most of them from Russia joined the VJ Army. Also SESELJ and ARKAN paramilitary units started to arrive in the territory of Gjakove Municipality. The Chief of the State Security (Secret Police) in Gjakove was Sreto CAMOVIC. The MUP Colonel KOVACEVIC arrived from Belgrade in 1999 and took the Command of the local MUP Station. Together with KOVACEVIC also MUP units arrived from Montenegro, Serbia and from Srpska Republika. From each town arrived about 50/60 policemen. The Mup unit would shift every two months. Between 13.000 and 14.000 VJ soldiers and policemen were deployed in the territory of Gjakove, Prizren and Peja Municipalities. I heard from other colleagues that 150.000 VJ soldiers and policemen were engaged in Kosovo. Miograd ADAMOVIC was the head of the MUP in Gjakove until 1999.
8. VJ Major Nikolla MICUNOVIC aka Dragan was the Commander of the Reservist Units in Gjakove. He coordinated approximately 500 or 600 reservists. The reservists were Serbs, Montenegrin, gypsies and also local Albanian. Nikolla MICUNOVIC aka Dragan was subordinate to Millos DOSAN.
9. Colonel Branko KOTUR from the VJ Corps HQs was the one who collected all the information and reports from the different Commanders who were in the field in Gjakove. Colonel KOTUR would pass the information to the VJ General Colonel Dusan SAMARDZIC Commander of the VJ HQs in Nish. From Nish the information were sent to the Ministry of Defense in Belgrade. General Colonel Dusan SAMARDZIC was the responsible for the third VJ Army. The VJ Army was split in three different areas. The 1st Army was deployed in Kraljevo, Cacak and Subotica (North area of FRY); The 2nd Army was deployed in Montenegro and Sandjak (Center of FRY); The 3rd Army was deployed in Kosovo, Nish, Vranje, Zajecar, Knjazevac and Bujanovac (South area of FRY).
10. At the beginning of 1999 the Serbian forces had the total control of Gjakove Municipality and Gjakove City. The UCK/KLA forces left Gjakove City and went to the mountains. In my opinion they left the city because doing so they wanted to prevent the involvement of the civilian population in the war. The UCK/KLA would carry out sporadic actions against the Serbian forces. Their action was a sort of not organized guerrilla.
11. On the 24th of March 1999 the NATO started the air strikes against Serbia. I was never engaged in combats. I continued working at the 52nd ARBR. During the air strikes I executed the transportation of the bodies of the VJ and Reservists soldiers to Nish, Pristhina and Prizren. I went four times to Nish, three times to Pristhina and once to Prizren. In total we transported 40 bodies of soldiers who had been killed by NATO air strikes and UCK/KLA.

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12. As I stated before the MUP was subordinate to the VJ Commander Leadership. This happened only on the agreements. De facto the MUP carried out their actions without making the VJ Commanders aware of the situation. I heard that the MUP had their list of people who had to be eliminated. MUP, VJ reservists and paramilitary group committed the worst horrible crimes in Gjakove City. These three forces went out of the control of the VJ Commander Leadership. The 50 percent the VJ reservists had a criminal background. In Gjakove the VJ Commanders arrested many the regular soldiers and reservists who committed different type of crimes. I heard about two cases of rape in Osek and in Gergoc Villages. The rapists, actually eight reservists, were arrested and detained in a basement located opposite the VJ barracks. The Military Court convicted five of them. I know that the VJ Commanders did not order the soldiers to rape women. They were only isolated cases. From the beginning of the war some of the reservists had joined the paramilitary units.
13. I know that the big military operation carried out at the beginning of May 1999 in Mullah e Isufi Area and in Cabrat Hill in Gjakove was led by the VJ Colonel Milan KOTUR and by the MUP Colonel KOVACEVIC and by the Reservists Commander Major Nikolla MICUNOVIC from Korenica. This was the biggest operation carried out in Gjakove. Many civilians were massacred. I know about the involvement of these three persons because they commanded all the military operations in the area. They attended daily meetings, actually twice a day, at the same barrack where I performed my duty.
14. On the 26th of April 1999 I was sent to Nish to bring bodies. I was supposed to return two days later but I returned on the 27th of April. The driver of the truck was POPOVIC, born in 1949, from Priluza Village, Vuciterna Municipality. POPOVIC was a reservist in my unit. We stayed in Priluza in POPOVIC's house and on the morning of the 27th we left. We arrived in Gjakove at 1100 hrs. I think that it was a Tuesday. The VJ Army, MUP and paramilitary forces started a massive operation in the valley of Carragojs from Junik to the direction of Gjakove. The paramilitary units were in Meje.
15. At 1130 hrs. I went to the Cultural Centre in Gjakove. Since the Cultural Centre was one of the safest places, there the VJ Army had established its Headquarters. I slept until 1400 hrs. at the Cultural Centre then I went to the Catholic Church near Boris Kidric Street to take my family. I went there together with my brother Ndue PERAJ but we were in two different cars. My brother was together with the VJ Major Ljubisa ZIVKOVIC and I was alone. My family was on a tractor near the church where I found many people from Ramoc Village that I knew.
16. These persons told me to go to Meje near HASANAJ house and to save some men who had been arrested by police. Together with Major ZIVKOVIC we took my family to my apartment in Gjakove and then we went to Meje. At about 1500 hrs. we arrived in Orize. We wore our VJ uniforms and we carried guns. We went with my private car, a Suzuki Vitara Jeep. We stopped in Meje-Orize because there was a police checkpoint. The officer in charge at the checkpoint was the MUP Inspector Dimitrije RASOVIC, from the village of Piskote. There were also local policemen and paramilitary soldiers at the checkpoint

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together with RASOVIC. All together were 10 or 12 men and some of them had red eyes. They were probably under the influence of drug.

17. The checkpoint was in front of the store of Krist SOKOLI, just opposite the school. I saw four dead bodies lying on the grass behind the toilets of the school. They were men in the age of 30 or 40 years old. Their faces were devastated I saw sign of boots on their faces and blood.
18. I spoke to Inspector RASOVIC and I asked him about the other men who had been stopped at their checkpoint. I told him that I had learnt from my brother that a number of men had been detained inside the school. RASOVIC told me that there were no men there and he advised me not to go to Meje because it was dangerous. I replied to RASOVIC that I had nothing to be afraid because Major ZIVKOVIC and myself were both two officials of the VJ Army. Probably RASOVIC did not want that my colleague and I would see the massacre.
19. Together with ZIVKOVIC I headed towards Meje. Before reaching Meje I met approximately ten families and I escorted them to Orize to help them to pass the checkpoint. I told to Inspector RASOVIC not to touch any of the people I had escorted there. He replied to me by asking if I believed that he had killed the four men on the grass near the toilets. I told him that since he was in that place he knew better then I did. The families passed the checkpoint and headed towards Gjakove. The families had told me about the men who had been killed near HASANAJ house.
20. I went back to Meje together with Major ZIVKOVIC it was about 1530 hrs. I heard no shootings. Before arriving in Meje, near the Vulkanizer store I met 20/30 VJ soldiers and I stopped there to talk to them. I spoke to a Lieutenant who was leading the group of soldiers. I asked him how long they had been there. He answered that they had been there from after midnight. I asked where the civilians were and I explained that I had heard from other refugees that the men had been abducted. The Lieutenant answered that the men were in Meje. He did not specify if these men were dead or alive. He showed me the direction where the men were supposed to be.
21. Major ZIVKOVIC took the radio matrix of the Lieutenant because we were alone and he wanted to be in touch with his unit. The Lieutenant told us that there were not VJ Units in that place. Major ZIVKOVIC told the Lieutenant that some members of my family had been stopped in Meje. We greeted the Lieutenant and we headed towards Meje. When we arrived near HASANAJ house we saw people lying on the meadow with the face on the grass. Major ZIVKOVIC went to speak to the officers at the police checkpoint in front of HASANAJ house. I went to the meadow and there I saw about 20 dead bodies of men. I turned some of the bodies to see if I could recognize some of them.
22. I saw the faces of the victims devastated. They had been shot from a very short distance in a perfect execution style. The victims had been shot when they were already on the ground. They were shot from vertical position. They had been shot with automatic rifles.

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The policemen at the checkpoint carried automatic rifles. I was looking at the bodies when the soldier who was together with me grabbed my arm and took me away from the place because a paramilitary soldier was pointing his gun against me from two or three meters.

23. I went to the police checkpoint and Major ZIVKOVIC asked me if I had recognized someone among the victims. I answered that I had not seen any member of my family amongst the victims. Of course, together with Major ZIVKOVIC we were pretending that I could recognize some of my relatives among the victims. Firstly I wanted to see and secondly we were trying to save some of those who were still alive at the checkpoint. It was around 1600 hrs. I saw 12 men lined up against the wall of HASANAJ store near the house and three tractors crowded with women, children. Major ZIVKOVIC spoke to Millan SCEPANOVIC wore MUP blue camouflage uniform different from the one that ICTY Investigator Paolo PASTORE STOCCHI shows to me. It was a different kind of camouflage with some dark blue spot among the light blue. I saw the MUP patch on the uniform of SCEPANOVIC.
24. Major ZIVKOVIC was told by SCEPANOVIC to ask me if I had recognized some of my relatives amongst the men who were lined up at the wall. SCEPANOVIC ordered the men lined up to turn their head and to show their face. I said that my relatives were not among these men. I told SCEPANOVIC that the men were people from my valley and that they had not done anything. SCEPANOVIC replied by telling that they were separatists and terrorists. I told him that it was not possible because the terrorists would never go towards the police.
25. I told to Major ZIVKOVIC that I also should line up together with these men because they were from my region and between us there was no difference. SCEPANOVIC told me that I was asking too much and that he could not grant this to me. In the meantime the paramilitary soldiers were approaching the place. Major ZIVKOVIC contacted the Lieutenant we had met before and told him to come with his soldiers.
26. When SCEPANOVIC saw the VJ soldiers who were at 70-80 meters from us he ordered his men to withdraw. SCEPANOVIC changed his behavior. Major ZIVKOVIC told SCEPANOVIC that he had received an order to go to that place (Meje). SCEPANOVIC released the men who were lined up; he cursed them and ordered them to jump on the tractors quickly. The tractors left the place and Major ZIVKOVIC ordered the Lieutenant to escort the tractors to Orize.
27. Together with Major ZIVKOVIC and the other soldier we took the way towards Madanaj Villages. The people in the tractors had told us that there were other refugees who needed for help. About 600 or 700 meters from the Shyt Hasanaj meadow on the left side I saw four dead bodies lying on the ground; a pile with other seven dead bodies were lying down on the ground a bit further on. They were all men in different ages from 20 to 50 years old.

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS:

OTHERS PRESENT:

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28. Near the Serbian house in Meja I saw three jeeps with paramilitary soldiers belonging to ARKAN units. I know that they were from ARKAN units because I had seen them out of our barracks in Gjakove. I recall that my Commander ordered me not to allow these paramilitary soldiers in our premises.
29. Together with Major ZIVKOVIC we escorted two families from Meje to the entrance of Orize. We stopped at the checkpoint; we informed the police that other two families were about to pass through and not to touch them. Then we went to Korenica to see if we could help some other family. We saw one dead body there near the house of my brother-in-law. We met people from BERISHA family; they told me that they were afraid because they doubted that the refugees could be killed in the church.
30. I recall that three or four days before the massacre in Meje Nikolla MICUNOVIC aka Dragan told me that the valley of Carragojs was going to pay a very high price. I immediately thought about the killing of Milutin PRASCEVIC that had been committed on the 20th of April 1999 in Meje. PRASCEVIC used to be the Chief of the State Security in Gjakove. Together with him four other people were killed. One of them was the brother of Sheqer, a local policeman from Ratish Village. His brother committed crimes in Meje on the 27th of April. Milutin PRASCEVIC was the godfather of Nikolla MICUNOVIC aka Dragan.
31. Four days later the incident in Meje I saw in the computer we had at the Cultural Center that 68 men were killed in Meje and 74 men in Korenica. The day after the incident at 0930 hrs. I saw two civilian trucks that were transporting two piles of bodies. The trucks were heading towards Gjakove and I thought that they were going to deliver the bodies at the Public Cemetery. A police Lada Niva jeep was escorting the trucks in front of them. The workers on the trucks wore orange uniforms. I estimated a number of about 20 bodies on each truck.
32. A man nicknamed Nexha was head of the commission of cleansing of the area and for the collection of the bodies after the military operations. He gave orders to the VJ Major Ljubisa ZIVKOVIC and to Zivko VUKSANOVIC. This latter wore often MUP or VJ uniforms. Nexha did not wear uniforms.
33. Nikolla MICUNOVIC aka Dragan, Milan KOTUR and KOVACEVIC are the main responsible for the massacre of Meje and Korenica. They planned and led the entire operation. Miodrag ADAMOVIC was the head of the MUP in Gjakove but I do not recall in what period of time.
34. Three days before the KFOR forces entered in Kosovo I quit from the VJ Army. I learnt from sources in Montenegro that I was sentenced with 15 years imprisonment by a Serbian Military Court in Nish together with other five VJ soldiers for desertion from the Army. When I was a VJ Captain I was never engaged in combat or in other operational situation.

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SIGNATURE OF WITNESS:

OTHERS PRESENT:

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WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This Statement consisting of 9 pages 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: 18th April 2000

Signature: _____
(Witness)

Initials: _____
(Others present)

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS:

OTHERS PRESENT:

K0223392

CERTIFICATION OF INTERPRETER

I, Taulant SARAQINI 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 Nike PERAJ 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 Nike PERAJ who appeared to have heard and understood my translation of this Statement.
4. Nike PERAJ has acknowledged that the facts and matters set out in this Statement, as translated by me, are true to the best of his knowledge and recollection and has accordingly signed his signature where indicated.

Dated: 18th April 2000

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SIGNATURE OF WITNESS:

OTHERS PRESENT:

K0223393

Signed: _____

SIGNATURE OF WITNESS:

OTHERS PRESENT: