



Original: English

No. ICC-01/14-01/18

Date: 2 April 2024

TRIAL CHAMBER V

**Before: Judge Bertram Schmitt, Presiding Judge
Judge Péter Kovács
Judge Chang-ho Chung**

SITUATION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC II

**IN THE CASE OF
*THE PROSECUTOR v. ALFRED YEKATOM AND PATRICE-EDOUARD
NGAISSONA***

**Public
with Annexes A and B**

**Twenty-Second Decision on Victims' Participation in Trial Proceedings
(Groups A and B)**

Document to be notified in accordance with regulation 31 of the *Regulations of the Court* to:

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TRIAL CHAMBER V of the International Criminal Court, in the case of *The Prosecutor v. Alfred Yekatom and Patrice-Edouard Ngaiisona*, having regard to Article 68(3) of the Rome Statute, Rules 85 and 89 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence (the ‘Rules’) and Regulation 86 of the Regulations of the Court, issues this ‘Twenty-Second Decision on Victims’ Participation in Trial Proceedings (Groups A and B)’.

1. The Chamber recalls the procedural history as set out in its previous decisions concerning victim participation.¹ In particular, the Chamber recalls the criteria for an applicant to qualify as a victim and the procedure established for the admission of Group A and B applications, namely that, ‘barring a clear, material error’, it would ratify the Registry’s assessment of the applications.² The Chamber further recalls that Group A applications correspond to ‘applicants who clearly qualify as victims’ and Group B applications correspond to ‘applicants who clearly do not qualify as victims’.³
2. On 29 February 2024,⁴ the Chamber received a total of 48 Group A victims’ applications (the ‘Group A Applications’),⁵ and 47 Group B victims’ applications (the ‘Group B Applications’).⁶ Additionally, the Registry filed accompanying assessment reports, containing a brief description of the criteria applied in its transmissions of the Group A and Group B Applications.⁷
3. The Registry notes that, pursuant to the Chamber’s previous decisions, it categorised within Group A applicants who mention (i) ‘the crime of

¹ *See, in particular*, Decision on Victims’ Participation in Trial Proceedings, 23 November 2020, ICC-01/14-01/18-738 (the ‘First Decision on Victim Participation’), paras 1-5.

² Pre-Trial Chamber II, Decision Establishing the Principles Applicable to Victims’ Applications for Participation, 5 March 2019, ICC-01/14-01/18-141 (the ‘5 March 2019 Decision’), paras 29-41.

³ 5 March 2019 Decision, ICC-01/14-01/18-141, para. 41(i).

⁴ *See* Twenty-First Decision on Victims’ Participation in Trial Proceedings (Groups A and B) and Decision on Requests for Extension of Time to Transmit Applications, 17 October 2023, ICC-01/14-01/18-2148 (with Annexes A and B), paras 4, 7-12, p. 10 in which the Chamber extended the deadline for the transmission of victim applications in the possession of the Registry to 29 February 2024.

⁵ Registry Transmission of Group A Applications for Victim Participation in Trial Proceedings pursuant to ICC-01/14-01/18-2148, ICC-01/14-01/18-2386 (with confidential *ex parte* Annexes 1 to 48, only available to the Registry).

⁶ Registry Transmission of Group B Applications for Victim Participation in Trial Proceedings pursuant to ICC-01/14-01/18-2148, ICC-01/14-01/18-2387 (with confidential *ex parte* Annexes 1 to 47, only available to the Registry).

⁷ Registry Assessment Report on Victim Applications for Participation in Trial Proceedings pursuant to ICC-01/14-01/18-2148, 29 February 2024, ICC-01/14-01/18-2385 (with confidential Annex 1 and confidential *ex parte* Annex 2, only available to the Registry) (the ‘Registry Report’).

imprisonment and other forms of severe deprivation of physical liberty in relation to their forced stay at the *Ecole de la Liberté* in Bossangoa during December 2013’; (ii) ‘crimes committed by Anti-Balaka groups in areas neighbouring the borders of Cattin or Boeing and clearly related to the alleged attack in Bangui on 5 December 2013’; and (iii) crimes committed by Anti-Balaka groups along the PK9-Mbaiki axis and clearly related to the Anti-Balaka’s advance through and takeover of villages along the PK9-Mbaiki axis, notably within a short distance of the villages of Sekia, Ndangala, Bimon, Kapou, Bossongo, Pissa and Mbaiki’.⁸

4. Additionally, the Registry notes that certain Group A Applications ‘provide[d] an erroneous date of the alleged events or [did] not explicitly state specific dates’ while, at the same time, ‘refer[red] to publicly known events [...] or provide[d] other sufficiently detailed contextual descriptions that date the events’.⁹ With regard to these applications, the Registry submits that it applied the Chamber’s instruction to examine applications ‘holistically by assessing their internal coherence and the overall context of the alleged acts’.¹⁰
5. Furthermore, the Registry notes that certain Group A applications contained minor discrepancies, pertaining to, *inter alia*, ‘the date of birth of the applicant or the person acting on her/his behalf (“PAB”); an inversion of the applicant’s first and last name; the spelling of the applicant or the PAB’s name; or other minor inconsistencies [...] which appear to be the result of inadvertent errors’.¹¹ In this regard, the Registry submits that it took note of the previous Pre-Trial Chamber II instructions, *i.e.* that ‘a certain degree of flexibility must be shown’, considering that the discrepancies mentioned above ‘do not call into question the overall credibility of the information provided by the applicant’.¹²
6. With regard to the Group B Applications, the Registry notes that, in conducting its *prima facie* assessment, it concluded that the applicants therein ‘clearly do not qualify as victims’, due to the fact that ‘the harm alleged has resulted from the

⁸ Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-2385, paras 24-25.

⁹ Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-2385, para. 26.

¹⁰ Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-2385, para. 26 *citing* email from the Chamber to the Registry, 30 July 2020, at 17:29.

¹¹ Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-2385, para. 21.

¹² Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-2385, para. 21 *citing* 5 March 2019 Decision, ICC- 01/14-01/18-141, para. 34.

indication of perpetrators and events falling outside the territorial, temporal, and/or material parameters of the [c]ase'.¹³

7. The Chamber recalls the applicable law set out in its 'Decision on Victims' Participation in Trial Proceedings'.¹⁴
8. The Chamber notes that the Group A Applications were individually assessed by the Registry, which determined that the applicants meet, on a *prima facie* basis, the requirements of Rule 85(a) of the Rules for the granting of victim status.¹⁵ The Group B Applications were also individually assessed by the Registry, which determined that, on a *prima facie* basis, the applicants clearly do not qualify as victims.¹⁶
9. The Chamber has not identified any clear, material errors in the Registry's assessment and therefore authorises the participation as victims of the 48 applicants whose applications were transmitted under Group A, and rejects the 47 applicants whose applications were transmitted under Group B.

¹³ Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-2385, para. 31.

¹⁴ First Decision on Victim Participation, ICC-01/14-01/18-738, paras 11-12.

¹⁵ Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-2385, para. 20.


¹⁶ Registry Report, ICC-01/14-01/18-2385, para. 31.

FOR THESE REASONS, THE CHAMBER HEREBY


ADMITS the 48 applicants whose applications were transmitted under Group A, listed in Annex A to the present decision, as participating victims for the purpose of the trial proceedings; and

REJECTS the 47 applicants whose applications were transmitted under Group B, listed in Annex B to the present decision, as participating victims for the purpose of the trial proceedings.


Done in both English and French, the English version being authoritative.



Judge Péter Kovács



Judge Bertram Schmitt
Presiding Judge



Judge Chang-ho Chung

Dated 2 April 2024

At The Hague, The Netherlands