

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT  
OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR

WITNESS STATEMENT

WITNESS INFORMATION:

Last Name: OTTOBER Gender: Male  
First Name: Mario Father's Name: Onying JUSTINO  
Other names used: Otto Mother's Name: Akello SANTINA  
Place of Birth: Olam Gulu, Uganda Passport / ID number: [REDACTED]  
Date of Birth/Age: 30 /12/1960 Nationality: Ugandan  
Ethnicity: Acholi Religion: Catholic

Languages Spoken: Acholi and some English  
Language(s) Written: Acholi  
Language(s) Used in Interview: Acholi, English

Occupation: Catechist Opit Parish and small scale Farming

Place of Interview: Gulu, Uganda

Dates and Times of Interview: 28 September 2015; 15:37-16:00; 16:16-17:50

29 September 2015 09:30-10:45; 11:03-11:55 -14:35-15:07

30 September 2015 11:38-12:40; 14:20-16:00

Names of all persons present during interview: Mario OTTOBER (Witness), [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] (Investigator), [REDACTED] (Associate investigator), [REDACTED]  
(Psychosocial Expert), and [REDACTED] (Interpreter)

Signatures:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *Mottober*  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Witness statement of Mario OTTOBER

UGA-OTP-0244-3375



UGA-OTP-0283-1307

## WITNESS STATEMENT

### Procedure

1. I was introduced to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and told that they are investigators with the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Court (ICC). I was introduced to [REDACTED] a psychosocial expert and [REDACTED] an interpreter, both working with the OTP of the ICC.
2. The investigators explained to me what the ICC is and described its mandate. They explained the role and mandate of the OTP within the ICC.
3. The investigators explained to me that they are investigating events that took place in Uganda since July 2002. I was informed that the OTP is contacting me because they believe I may have information relevant for establishing the truth.
4. I was told that I have the right to be questioned in a language that I fully understand and speak. I confirm that Acholi is a language that I fully understand and speak. I confirm that the language used by the interpreter in this interview is Acholi.
5. The investigators explained to me that this interview is voluntary and that I may end it at any time.
6. I was informed that any information I give to the OTP, including my identity, might become subject to disclosure to the parties of the proceedings at the ICC; in particular the Judges, Accused persons, the Counsel of the Accused and the legal representatives of the victims.
7. I was informed that I might be called to testify before the Court. It was brought to my attention that ICC trials are held in public and explained to me that, as an exception to the principle of public hearings, the judges may apply protective measures to those testifying if circumstances require.
8. I am currently willing to appear as a witness in Court, if called to testify. I understand that disclosure of my identity and information I have provided may take place whether or not I am called to testify.
9. The possible security implications resulting from my interaction with the OTP were discussed with me. The investigators have explained to me the reasons and importance of keeping my contacts with the OTP confidential, which I fully understand.

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10. Having understood all the above issues, I confirmed my willingness to answer the investigators' questions.
11. The investigators explained to me how the interview was going to be conducted. I was told by the investigators that it is important that I am as accurate as possible in my account; and that I state when I do not know or do not understand the question. I understand that I need to distinguish between what I have experienced or seen myself and what I have heard or learned about from someone else.
12. I was told that at the conclusion of the interview, I would be asked to sign a written statement after having had the opportunity to review it, make any corrections, or add additional information.

### Odek Internally Displaced Camp

13. Odek IDP camp was established between August and September 2003. Residents of the camp came from Olam village, Odek centre and surrounding areas. I do not know who established the camp, however I know that there was a government order for people to move to the camps. The Local Defence Forces (LDU) were moving around villages telling people to move to the camps.
14. Before the camp was established, everybody in my community including me and my family used to live at Olam village. During this time, we would stay at home during the day and go to the bush at night to sleep because of the insecurity. LRA were moving around the area. I moved to the camp with my wife, ADONG Helen and seven children soon after it was established. I lived with my family in two grass thatched huts within the camp.
15. The camp was registered in the same year it was established, 2003. NYEKO Julius was the camp leader at the time. I became a camp leader at the beginning of 2004. I remained the Camp Leader until around 2007/2008 when the IDP camps were dismantled.
16. I do not remember the exact number of the camp residents, but we were about 2000 people.
17. Apart from myself, there was a women camp leader called Edisa LAWINO BANYA. The camp was divided into two zones and six blocks. The zones were named A and B. The blocks had names but I cannot recall them now. Each Zone had a leader. I recorded their names in note books which I used to keep when we were still at the camp. I did not bring the note books for this interview.

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18. My duties as a camp leader were to ensure security of the people in the camp and to liaise with the Office of Disaster Management. The Disaster Management Office is a district office under the Chief Administration Officer. I was also responsible for liaising with other development partners like Non Governmental Organizations (NGO's) which provided human rights education to camp residents.
19. The camp residents were receiving food aid from the World Food Programme (WFP). The food was distributed once or twice a month depending on the amount of food rations.
20. The LDU protected the camp. Initially there were about 20 to 30 soldiers. The number increased after the attack. The commander of the LDU was 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant ODONG. I believe he was part of the Shelly battalion and he was appointed from there to command the LDU in the camp.
21. People moved in camps because of insecurity in the area. I recall sometime before 2003, I was abducted briefly by the LRA. They looted the Odek trading centre and they were moving towards the health centre in Odek. It was at night and the government soldiers started shooting at the LRA, and I managed to escape.
22. I was asked whether there was any attack on the camp before April 2004. I do not know of any attack on the Odek camp before the 29 April attack. However, one day when we went to collect food from Awere camp, the LRA came and abducted two children from outside Odek camp. I do not know what happened to these children.
23. Before the attack, there were rumours that the camp might be attacked by the LRA. We started seeing strangers in the camp. During that time people within the camp used to stay in blocks and we knew each other. We could tell if somebody was a stranger. The rumours originated from the residents of the camp. I heard about these strangers whenever there were gathering of camp residents.

#### Attack on Odek Camp

24. On 29 April 2004, after children had come back from school, the LRA soldiers of KONY attacked the camp. I know it was the LRA because they came in the camp and started abducting people and looting food items. The LRA used to abduct people and loot food items. Some of the abductees from the camp who were later released confirmed this upon their return.
25. Earlier on the day of the attack the LDU soldiers gathered the people in the camp for a meeting. The meeting took place around 1500hrs before the children came back from school. I was present at the meeting. We met at the market place inside the camp. LDU talked about the relationship between the soldiers and the civilians and

cleanliness outside the camp. They did not talk about the potential attack on the camp.

26. In the afternoon before the attack a trainee Catechist, called OBUR Charles, who was teaching children at a school asked me to go somewhere with him but I declined. I headed home and soon after getting there, I heard the gun shots. I entered into one of my houses and closed the door. Soon after, about six people rushed in my house and they did not close the door. Among the six I can only remember a boy named KIBWOTA. We stayed in the house for more than 45 minutes.
27. When we just moved to the camp, the LDU soldiers had told us that when we hear gun shots we should get into our houses and close the doors. However I did not close the door because some people came rushing in and there was no time to close the door. In the house, the floor was a bit low and we all lay down. The floor of the house was built deliberately low so that we could shelter ourselves in case of gun shots.
28. I saw two LRA soldiers who came to my compound. I was peeping through the door while laying on the floor of the house. They were both bare-chested. They had tied their shirts around their waists. They were between 14 and 16years old. They both had guns. They wore army green trousers like army uniforms. The shirts were of the same colour. They did not have any shoes on. They both had their hair in dreadlocks. I did not hear them say anything during the attack. I would estimate the LRA were in the camp for about 30 to 45 minutes.
29. My wife was in another house within the compound with our children. They had locked the door of the house. The following children were in the house with my wife: OROMA Mary, OBWOYA Sunday, KIDEGA David, NYEKO Tony, OPOKA Robert, KILAMA Cecil, and the child youngest OCEN Jacob.
30. The LRA kicked the door and my wife came out. She told the LRA not to shoot as she is a civilian. They told her to carry the maize that was outside the house and follow them. She had OCEN, who was less than a year old, on her back. ADONG carried the maize and went with LRA. The other children were left in the house.
31. After they left, I got out of the house and went to the house where my children were. I told them not to worry but to pray for their mother and OCEN. I believe The LRA did not enter into the house because my wife came out.
32. Later, I was told by camp residents that the LRA entered the camp in three groups, one group went towards the trading centre, the second went to the barracks and the



third group went to the houses. There was sporadic shooting, abduction of people and looting.

### **The Aftermath of the Attack**

33. We heard exchange of fire when the mobile government soldiers were fighting the rebels. Soon after, the soldiers came around and we were assured that the rebels had gone. My neighbour, OPIRA Jacob and I, started moving together to see what had happened in the camp. There was still day light when I came out of the house. It soon started raining heavily and we went back into the house. When the rain stopped we started moving around the camp again. By this time it was getting dark.
34. We found a lady, whose name I do not remember, who was shot on the lower part of the cheek and the bullet came out on the back of her neck. She was still alive but weak. She had a baby on her back, fortunately, the baby was not injured. She had blood on her body and she had vomited. We cleaned her, warmed some water to massage the wound and helped her to feed her baby. We covered her with blankets. She survived and she is still alive. She currently lives in Omyeligali village.
35. We heard cries and shouting coming from the Odek river. We went closer; when we got there it was quiet. We learnt later that there was a girl who was shot in the leg and fell in the water. I think she thought LRA came back when we got closer to the river and decided to stay quiet. Her body was recovered a few days later from the river. It had started decomposing.
36. On the next day, the camp residents started removing the bodies of their relatives for burial before the sunrise, as they were afraid the bodies would start decaying.
37. Among the dead was OBUR Charles. He was shot on the chest and had fallen on one side. One of his arms was also broken. There was also Mary ACAYO who was shot on the chest. I included both OBUR and ACAYO on the names of the deceased I compiled.
38. There were many people who came from other camps to assist with the burial.
39. I heard that at the barracks all the soldiers had run away except one who had his child with him. They were both killed. The soldier's name is LAPIL. I do not know the name of the child. Another soldier who was walking from the gathering earlier at the camp was also killed.

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### Abducted people

40. My wife was among those who were abducted. She was released the day after the attack and arrived at the camp in the afternoon.
41. Other women who were abducted included ADONG Kala and Santa OLING. Many other people were abducted and stayed in the bush for some time. Some later escaped and returned. I recall one of them is [REDACTED] [REDACTED] She was in the bush for between eight months and one year. She returned and went to Rachele Centre for rehabilitation. She is now with her husband at Min jaa in Lalogi Sub County. I was asked whether she told me what happened to her at the bush. I do not know. I did not ask her.
42. Santa OLING had just given birth to twins. She was abducted when she returned together with my wife and other women; she found her twins had died.
43. Afterwards, my wife told me, as they were moving with the LRA; they left a child of a woman called Alice on the way. Alice left her child because LRA said the child was making noise and disturbing people. The child was later rescued by the residents at the camp.
44. LRA abducted nine men who carried one of their injured commanders. These men were later killed. My wife and other women who were abducted and later returned told me this.
45. I did not compile any lists of abducted people. I do not know how many people were abducted from Odek camp.

### Diary and Lists

46. I have a personal diary for the year 2004. I wrote names of camp residents who were injured and those who were killed during the attack. Looking at the diary today, what I wrote look very faint because it has been a long time. I am able to read what I wrote. I will read through the relevant pages of the diary to provide the names of the injured and those who are deceased so that this information will be included in my statement. I consented for the investigators to take photographs of the relevant pages of the diary to be annexed to the statement. I will like to keep this diary as it contains some personal information.

### Injured People

47. I recorded names of injured victims a day after the attack. I did the registration for my personal record as a camp leader. The names are as follows;

48. BUA David is aged about 49 years old now. Two of his toes were cut off by a bullet. His brother, MORO Christopher was injured on the thigh and the leg was later amputated. He was also shot in the waist and the bullet was not removed. In unrelated incident, MORO was stabbed by BUA and he died as a result. BUA is currently in prison.
49. ATENYO Betty was a mother of four. She was shot at the back. She has recovered.
50. AKELLO Santa was shot on the back of her neck. The injury has healed.
51. I also wrote names of children who were injured during the attack as follows: Gloria, Agnes and OKELLO. OKELLO is a child of ATENYO Betty. I do not know how old the children were at the time of the attack. I do not know if all of them are still alive. I did not see them however, I was provided with the information by block leaders in the camp. I was asked who the block leaders were at the time of the attack. I cannot remember their names. I will have to check through some of my note books. I used to record information in note books and I had several note books for this purpose.
52. As far as I know, most of the injured people were not taken to the hospital except BUA and MORO. The two brothers were taken to Gulu Referral Hospital.
53. I was asked whether I have the note books which I used in the year 2004. I do not know, I will need to check at my house when I have time.

#### Deceased People

54. I initially recorded names of 21 people who were killed during the attack. Then there were a boy and a girl who I recorded later when the information was provided to me. There were also about nine men who were abducted and killed in the bush. In total there were 32 people who I included as killed during the Odek attack. These were all civilians and did not include a child of LAPII, a soldier who was killed at the barracks together with his child. Below are the names of those who were killed:
55. OPIYO Thomas; was about 19 years. I knew him well before he was killed. I did not see his body; however, he was shot in front of my younger brother's house. My brother is called OCANA Maurencio. OPIYO's body had already been taken away by the time we were checking around the camp. I saw the blood in front of OCANA's house and the relatives told me that OPIYO was shot dead. They did not tell me on which part of his body he was shot. The camp residents were saying that





OPIYO was drunk. He was shouting calling the LRA chicken thieves before they shot him.

56. OKEC Kejikiya; I knew him before he was killed. He was a retired Prison Officer. We used to live in the same village before we moved to the camp. He was killed in his house together with his wife AUMA Veronica. I did not see the bodies but their son, OKUMU Victor told me that they were killed in a terrible way; the male organs of OKEC had been cut off.
57. ONGWEN Jenaro; was an older brother of OKEC. I did not see his body. His relatives told me he was shot.
58. AMONO Catherine; was shot dead whilst she had a child tied at her back. She fell with the child at the back. Luckily, the child survived. She had other children but I do not know where they are. I heard about AMONO from my wife. My wife saw her body when she was passing by with the rebels. The rebels told her that she might end up like her if she is stubborn.
59. ACEN Everlyn; I do not remember who brought information about ACEN. I was told she was shot.
60. OKOT Valentino; was an old man. His relatives told me that he was shot when he was trying to get into a big store with a steel door at the camp, where some of the residents were hiding.
61. OKULLU Adonibejege; was an old person. He used to stay at one of the houses at the trading centre and he was shot from there. I heard about this from his relatives.
62. ACAYO Kerobina; I was told that ACAYO was killed inside her house. She used to stay near the food store for the school children at the camp. Her husband, whose name I do not remember told me this.
63. I was also given four names by the relatives of the victims OJOK Walter; OJOK Jimmy; ADONG Betty and her daughter AJOK. There was no additional information provided with these names.
64. OKELLO Aldo; his wife AKELLO Santa (who was injured during the attack) told me that OKELLO's tongue was shot and the bullet cut it off.
65. APIYO Doris; was a newly-wed girl. Her relatives told me she was shot and killed.
66. APIYO Kevin; her relatives told me she was shot.

67. ACAYO Mary; was a traditional birth attendant. I saw her body; she was shot on the chest.
68. OBUR Charles; he was trainee Catechist, I saw his body. He was shot on the chest and his arm was broken.
69. OKOYA Wilson; he was shot inside his house and he fell on the grinding stone. I saw his body. He was a young man of about 19 years.
70. OJOK Thomas; I was told by his relatives that he was killed.
71. OMONY Charles; was fourteen years old. He died outside the camp. I did not see his body. I know his father; he had been abducted and stayed in the bush for a long time. I do not remember who told me about OMONY.
72. The following are the names of nine men who are believed to have been killed in the bush. They had been abducted to carry LRA commander who was injured during the attack at Odek. After the commander they carried died, they were all killed. I received this information from abductees who returned the day after the attack. Among these men are: LATIGO Titus; he was a staff member at the Health Centre Odek. OJOK David is a son of ACAN Helen. (ACAN has lost many children). ODONG Patrick; AYELLA James; OKOT son of MALA and KIDEGA and OJOK sons of OMORO; LAGII and OTTO Fabio.
73. There were also two children who are believed to have been killed in the bush after they were abducted. Their names are; KILAMA and Rose AWEKO.
74. I know that two LDU's were killed during the attack. LAPII who was killed at the barracks, and another soldier, who was not an Acholi, who was killed on his way to the barracks after the meeting with camp residents. I did not see their bodies.
75. I was asked whether the lists I prepared were comprehensive. My response was no, the lists I prepared for those injured and dead were not comprehensive. I know there are individuals who might have more information about the injured and those killed. For instance a man called Lakoch P'OYOO made a list of the dead people at the camp.

#### **Burial of the Deceased**

76. Most of dead were buried at a place near the camp but some people took the bodies of their relatives to other places. They were buried in shallow graves which were covered with soil. Logs were put on top of the graves. In Acholi tradition it is believed that the graves of people who were killed that way (as it happened at the

Odek attack) should be shallow and logs put on them so that they can avenge their deaths. No particular marks were put on the graves.

77. People have now returned home and rituals are being performed. The chiefs performed rituals to cleanse the area.
78. After a few days after the attack, we organized a memorial ceremony for the deceased. Some government officials attended. The Archbishop John Baptist ODAMA came for the ceremony. Reverend LODWERO George also helped in organising the ceremony. During the service, the collections were organized and were later distributed to the families of the victims.
79. I was asked whether there were any official documentation provided to those who lost their family members. I responded that, as far as I know there were no such documents.
80. I was asked if I am aware of any investigations in relation to the Odek attack. As far as I know there was no investigation related to the attack.
81. I provided the list of the deceased to Justice and Reconciliation Project (JRP) who are planning to build a Monument to remember the dead. The same Monument as the one at Barlonyo.

#### Looting

82. I did not see looting myself but the people who were abducted said they all carried something. They carried food items like beans, salt, maize and others. I was told that the LRA wanted to break into the food store for the children but when the mobile soldiers arrived they left. The food items they carried were looted from the houses of the camp residents.
83. I know that LRA did not break into the food store because I inspected it with the store keeper the day after the attack. All the food items, like Sugar, Flour used for porridge, *Posho*, cooking oil, beans and cowpeas.

#### ANNEXES

84. I drew a sketch to illustrate the Odek IDP Camp as it was in April 29 2004 during the attack. This sketch is annexed to this statement as ANNEX 'A.' I utilized my knowledge of the camp as it was then and information provided to me by other camp residents to indicate movements of the rebels within the camp during the attack.

85. Pages of my personal diary for 2004 were photographed by the investigators. The pages contain names of the injured and those who were killed during and after the attack on Odek IDP camp on 29 April 2004. These photographed are annexed to this statement as ANNEX 'B.'

Closing Procedure

86. I was informed that individuals who according to the judges qualify as victims will be entitled to participate in future court proceedings and potentially to receive reparations. I was informed of the existence of the Victims' Participation and Reparation Unit and its function, as well as on the procedure for applications. I consent to my personal data being shared with the Victims' Participation and Reparation Unit.

87. The investigators informed me of the protective measures that may apply during and after the investigation and/or trial proceeding.

88. I have nothing to add to the above statement nor do I have anything to clarify. I am available to be contacted in the future for clarifications or questions on topics not covered during this interview.

89. I have given the answers to the questions of my own free will.

90. There has been no threat, promise or inducement which has influenced my account.

91. I have no complaints about the way I was treated during this interview.

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**WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

This statement has been read over to me in the English and Acholi language and it is true to the best of my knowledge and recollection. I have given this statement voluntarily and I am aware that it may be used in legal proceedings before the International Criminal Court and that I may be called to give evidence in public before the International Criminal Court.

Signed: Amattaber

Dated: 30-09-2015

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**INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION**

1. I, [REDACTED] certify that:
2. I am duly qualified to interpret from the Acholi language into the English language and from the English language into the Acholi language.
3. I have been informed by Mario OTTOBER that he speaks and understands the Acholi language.
4. I have orally translated the above statement from the English language to the Acholi language in the presence of Mario OTTOBER who appeared to have heard and understood my translation of this statement.
5. Mario OTTOBER has acknowledged that the facts and matters set out in his statement, as translated by me, are true to the best of his knowledge and recollection and has accordingly signed his signature where indicated.

Signed: [REDACTED]

Dated: 30/9/15

