

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT  
OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR

WITNESS STATEMENT

WITNESS INFORMATION:

Last Name: AKITE Gender: Female  
First Name: Gwentorina Father's Name: EKUKA Obadiah  
Other names used: Mother's Name: AKULU Georgina  
Place of Birth: Ariek ID number: [REDACTED]  
Date of Birth/Age: 11/02/1940 Nationality(s): Ugandan

Language(s) Spoken: Lango

Language(s) Written:

Language(s) Used in Interview: Lango and English interpretation

Occupation:

Place of Interview: Lira, Uganda

Date(s) and Time(s) of Interview: 05/02/2016: 10:30-13:00; 15:45-17:05; 1820-1940

Names of all persons present during interview: AKITE Gwentorina, [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

Signature(s): GWENTORINA AKITE

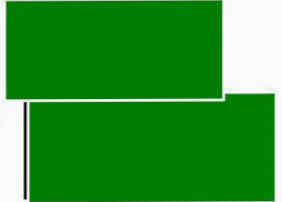
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## WITNESS STATEMENT

### 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 and told that they are also 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 meeting me today following our previous meeting dated 19/09/2015 and that they would like to get further information about what took place at Abok, and relating to their investigation of the events that took place in Uganda between July 2002 and 2005. 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 Lango is a language that I fully understand and speak. I confirm that the language used by the interpreter in this interview is Lango.
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.



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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.
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 have it read to me and to make any corrections, or add additional information.

### **Background**

13. My names are AKITE Gwentorina. I was born in Ariek, in Bar parish, Abok sub county, Oyam district. I do not remember my date of birth but I know that I was 17 years old when Ugandan gained her independence. You can calculate my year of birth from there. The investigator stated that on my national Identity card it is mentioned that I was born on 11/12/1940. I told the same thing to the people who made the Id card, that I was 17 years old when Uganda gained her independence and they made their calculation.
14. I moved to Abok when I and I have been living in Abok since. I did not go to school. I followed the catechism course in Opit, I completed it, and then I was baptised and then got married to my husband called OKULU Alpayo. After I failed to give a child to my husband, I consented for my husband to marry a second wife who gave him 5 children. She then died and my husband married a third wife who gave birth to 3 children. She also died. By the time of the Abok camp attack, my husband had been dead for 2 years. I can neither read nor write. I have always been a peasant farmer in Abok. I have never moved out of there until I moved to the camp

### **Life prior to move to Abok**

15. At the time of my abduction, I was living with my grand-son OGWAL Jaspa, son of OKITE Elicent, my son. Because of the rebels' attacks, we started sleeping in the bush and I took Jaspa along with me in the bush. He was about 4 years old. This was long before we moved to the camp. I cannot recall exactly how long the period

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that we were sleeping in the bush before moving to the camp was but it could have been between two to three years.

### **Move to Abok Camp**

16. When I moved to the camp, I went with Jaspa. The camp was attacked shortly after we moved into it. The camp was located in Abok centre.
17. There were so many people in the camp. The people had come from very many villages around Abok. AKELLO Evelyne who is the last born of the second wife of my husband also lived in the camp. When my co-wife died, Evelyne was a baby and I cared for her so that she did not know that I was her step mother. Evelyne had been impregnated by a young man with whom she had moved into the Abok camp. The camp was protected by government soldiers. There were local leaders in the camp. Some of them had also fled from their places.
18. In the camp, the routine was that people would not move out of the camp early morning and in the evening. Sometimes, when the soldiers were available, people were allowed to get out of the camp to collect food stuff from their gardens at specific times.

### **Attack on Abok IDP Camp**

19. One day OKITE, who was living in Lira, came to pick his son Jaspa from me in Abok because it had become difficult for me to keep moving with him from place to place.
20. My hut in the camp was being built and I was sleeping in an iron roofed house that belonged to a relative within the camp. I do not write and I cannot draw the map of the camp or locate my hut in it. I went to my hut under construction to cook during the day and went to sleep in the iron roofed house.
21. About two days after OKITE had picked up his son, I went to my home in Abok to collect grass to thatch my hut in the camp. As I was returning to the camp that day, I think between 4 and 5 pm. I met young children who were bathing in a swamp. They told me: "you are going, but we have seen soldiers in the vicinity of your home". They were children of families in the camp, but I do not know them. They said that they had seen soldiers who looked like rebels.
22. When I reached the camp, I told the people I met in the camp what the children had told me. I told them that rebels were around and that the rebels could attack the camp. That evening I was not feeling so well so I went to bed early. I had barely

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slept when I heard an explosion. Some people were still outside. I think it was about 8pm or so.

23. There were other people sleeping in the same house. There was one young man with his wife; he was a nephew to me. His name is AMODO Charles and his wife AKELLO Milla. She was heavily pregnant. There was also a small boy, called EBONG in the house. He was shot in the arm during the attack from where he was hiding under the bed. I know this because I saw it and I also later met him at the Lira Hospital receiving treatment.

### **Abduction**

24. As gunshots were being fired, I hid inside the house, behind some metal things. We had closed the door. But the rebels came and broke the door. They were KONY's rebels; I know this because they abducted me that night. Some of them were grown up men; some looked like children and were carrying guns. I can say this because some were tall some were short. I cannot tell their number: I did not count them. They were very many, some flashing torches.
25. They came in and talked in Acholi in loud threatening voices, saying "Get up from where you are hiding! What are you still doing inside?" We went outside the house. They said: "carry these things and walk, quick!" So they took myself and AMODO and gave us the loads to carry. They did not take AMODO's wife because she was heavily pregnant. Generally the rebels did not take pregnant women. AMODO and his wife were both in another room. They took AMODO and left her. But it could have also just been her luck that day.
26. The rebels were tall, well-built men, wearing greenish military uniform. People in the camp were crying; other rebels were killing people in the camp, huts were burning; there was a lot of commotion in the camp. At that moment I did not see anyone being killed, but after I returned I was told of many people who had been killed during the attack.
27. At first the rebels gave me a load of beans to carry. A short distance away, they took the beans and gave me a goat to carry. Then after some distance, they gave me a second goat to carry so that I carried two goats. One goat was on my head and the other goat was put in a piece of cloth and the cloth was tied around my neck and across my shoulder and the goat hanging in the piece of cloth on my side. The beans had been given to someone else to carry.
28. I saw the rebels setting houses on fire. There were so many abductees, so many girls and boys. I did not count the people but they were many. We then left the camp and walked a long distance in the direction of Gulu. While walking, the rebel

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behind me was poking my back with the butt of his gun. At this point I could not bear the load anymore. I told them I was too tired: they also could see that I was tired. Towards the end of the second swamp, the goats were taken from me and given to other girls to carry. They then gave me a big bag to carry. It was fairly heavy. I crossed the third swamp with this bag. The first swamp was called Dwaliro and the second was called Akello Alyek, and then a third swamp whose name I do not know. It was quite a distance between the first and second swamp. The third swamp was really remote, deep in the bush. We passed forests to get there. I cannot estimate the distance.

29. The bag was so heavy that I could not carry it anymore. The rebel took it from me and then started hitting me with the butt of a gun on my body indiscriminately, on my head, my back... everywhere. They cut me with the machete on the back of my head; on my left shoulder; above my right eye and on my back.
30. As the one person was beating me, the others were passing. The man beating me was not telling me anything while beating me. But he held my neck and tried to strangle me as he used his other hand to continue beating me on the head. I did not hear any express order to the man to beat me or kill me, but I think he wanted to kill me. I then became unconscious. When I became conscious again, it was about dawn, I saw that I was bleeding from my nose, mouth and on my body. I crawled away from the place and moved away. There was no one around.

### Return

31. I then walked slowly as I was in pain. I followed the tracks that the rebels and the abductees had left. It was easy to see the tracks because it was a big group. I then came to a place where the rebels had left some clothes. The dress I was wearing had been torn. So I picked one of the dresses that I found there and put it on. Later on, after I had arrived back in the village, the owner of the cloth saw me wearing her cloth and said that was the cloth she had on her wedding.
32. I then arrived back at the camp where there were government soldiers with their mamba. I saw that all the huts that had been there before had all been destroyed by the fire. I cannot estimate the number of huts; they were so many. From the side of the camp where I was living, there were no huts left. Only houses with iron sheets survived. There were not many people left in the camp. I was so weak so the soldiers put me and other injured in their mamba and took us to Ngai health centre.
33. At Ngai health centre there was a lady who had been severely burned. One of her relatives hired a pick-up truck to take her to Atapara hospital. The people around persuaded him to take me as well as I was severely injured so he took me and other injured. When I was at Atapara, there were other injured people but I did not count

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them. Of those I knew, in addition to me, there was the severely burnt woman called AYO, one child and one man called OPIO David who had been shot in the thigh. One other man called OKEC from Bar Owelo also had a gunshot wound, but I did not get to see where on his body. He later on died following the injury. There was a lady with a child but I do not know her. She had come from somewhere else.

### **Recovery**

34. The other injured were taken to Apac hospital. But I and the ones I have spoken about stayed in Atapara. I stayed in Atapara hospital for about one week. I was put on a drip. After the week, one medical person who had heard of the problem that had taken place at Abok sympathized with me. As it was a private hospital, patients had to pay and I had no money. So the medical person sent for my son OKITE Elicent to come. OKITE came, picked me up and took me to Lira Referral Hospital. I stayed at OKITE's place in Lira which was close to the hospital and each day I went to the hospital to get my wounds treated.
35. I also saw EBONG, the little boy who had been shot during the same attack from under the bed at Lira. Hospital The boy is now living in Bar Rio with his mother. I do not remember the boy's other name. After about two weeks of treatment, the stitches were removed. I was not completely healed and I continued to be given injections. After about 3 months I started to feel better. But to date, I still feel the impact of the beatings. I cannot carry any load on my head because of the pain.

### **Return to Abok**

36. I stayed in Lira for about one month and then went back to Abok. When I went back to Abok, people in the camp told me of the people that had been killed during the attack. The people even talked about people who had fled into latrines and who were shot dead. ANYIMA Atari and one of his children who was one or two years old had hid in the latrine pit, but the rebels removed them from the pit and shot them dead. Very many other people were killed, such as OKELLO DP, EWOR Eriyazali, OKAL (I don't remember his other name) and his wife Maria AMUGE, both shot dead. There were many casualties but I do not remember all the names. The deceased were buried in the trading centre. I was not there when they were buried.

### **Life in Abok after the attack**

37. Immediately after the attack, as the huts had been burnt down, the people were sleeping in the open. Then the soldiers started to escort the people to go to the bush to look for materials to reconstruct their huts. I also found that an organisation, which I did not know, had provided people in the camp with tarpaulins to act as

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roofs to prevent rain but I did not get any because I was in Lira during the distribution. By the time I got back to Abok, people had started to rebuild their huts in the camp. Life continued in the camp because there were government soldiers to protect the camp. This time there were more soldiers to protect the camp than before.

38. My daughter AKELLO Evelyne was also abducted the night of the Abok camp rebel attack. She had a one year old child who had started to walk. The child was injured following the stampede in the camp on the day of the attack. The child was taken to hospital and is now living with me. To this date Evelyne has not returned from the bush.

### Closing Procedure

39. 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.
40. The investigators informed me of the protective measures that may apply during and after the investigation and/or trial proceeding.
41. 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.
42. I have given the answers to the questions of my own free will.
43. There has been no threat, promise or inducement which has influenced my account.
44. 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 Lango languages and 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

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Criminal Court and that I may be called to give evidence in public before the International Criminal Court.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: 05/02/2016

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**INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION**

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

Signed: [REDACTED] \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: 05-02-2016

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