

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT  
OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR

WITNESS STATEMENT

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WITNESS INFORMATION:

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Last Name: AYO

Gender: Female

First Name: Dorcas

Father's Name: Bosco OKELLO

Other names used:

Mother's Name: Miriam APIO

Place of Birth: Agwede Village, Bar Parish,  
Abok Sub-County, Oyam County,  
Oyam District, Uganda

Passport / ID number: [REDACTED]

Date of Birth/Age: 09/09/1992 (23)

Nationality(s): Ugandan

Ethnicity: Lango

Religion: Catholic

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Language(s) Spoken: Lango

Language(s) Written: Lango

Language(s) Used in Interview: Lango & English

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Occupation: Farmer

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Place of Interview: Lira, Uganda

Date(s) and Time(s) of Interview: 20/04/2016 10:07 – 10:50, 11:05 – 13:06, 13:48-14:50,  
21/04/2016 11:17 – 12:45

Names of all persons present during interview: [REDACTED] (Investigator), [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] (Assistant Investigator), [REDACTED] (PSE), [REDACTED]  
(Interpreter) and Dorcas AYO (Witness)

Dorcas AYO

AYO D

[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Signature(s): AYO DOKHS 21/4/2016  
[Redacted] 21/4/2016 [Redacted]  
[Redacted] 21/4/2016 [Redacted]  
[Redacted] 21/4/2016 [Redacted]  
[Redacted] 21/4/2016 [Redacted]

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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] and [REDACTED] told that they are a Psychosocial Expert and an Interpreter, respectively, 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 Northern Uganda in 2002-2004. I was informed that the OTP is contacting me because they believe I may have information relevant for establishing the truth.
4. I agreed that the interview would be conducted in Lango. I fully understand and speak Lango.
5. The investigators explained to me that I do not have to answer to their questions. The investigators explained to me that they are seeking to find out the truth. I agree to tell the truth and that my answers to their questions are as complete as possible and reflect the best of my knowledge and recollection.
6. I was informed that any information I give to the OTP, including my identity, may be shared with 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. The investigators have explained to me the reasons and importance of keeping my contacts with the OTP confidential, which I fully understand.
8. Having understood all the above issues, I confirmed my willingness to answer the investigators' questions.
9. The investigators explained to me how the interview was going to be conducted. I was told that I needed to be as accurate as possible in my account and that I should state when I do not know the answer to or do not understand the question. I

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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.

10. 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.

### Background

11. I was born in Agwede village, Bar Parish, Abok Sub-County, Oyam County, Oyam District on 09 September 1992. I went to Itubara Primary School until Primary 3. In the beginning of 2002 my family and I fled to Obangangeo in Loro Sub-County because of the intensified rebel activity. By rebels I mean the rebels of KONY. I went with my Mother and Father and my brother and sister. I continued studying in Obangangeo Primary School until Primary 4. We stayed with my Mother's brother. My Father grew tired of living so far away from home and told my mother that he wanted to return. My mother did not want to leave because she was concerned that there were still rebel activities and that we were too young to run. My father insisted and one day collected our entire luggage and put it on a *boda boda* and went to Abok Camp.

### Move to the Camp

12. My Father rented a grass thatched hut in Abok Camp. My Mother was not happy and she wanted us children to remain behind but on 06 June 2004 we followed my father to Abok Camp. I remember the date because the rebels attacked two days later on 08 June 2004.

### Attack on Abok Camp

13. During the morning of 08 June we just stayed in the hut because we were not used to the camp yet. Some people who had gone home and others who had gone to the market at Ngai returned at around 4 pm.
14. We were staying at a hut near the barracks. I estimate that it was around the same distance as the orange tree outside. The investigators tell me that is around 25 metres away. Three men who had been outside the camp passed by our home on their way to the barracks. They spoke to the army leader and I could hear what they were saying.
15. They said that they had seen some rebel soldiers crossing the road and were surrounding the camp. The government soldiers said that the rebels must be going to another location such as Iceme because it was so early in the day. These men went up to the camp leader and told him to inform the rest of the camp that some

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suspicious looking people were around the camp. The camp leader mobilised the people together to inform them to be ready because the rebels might come. I did not go to this meeting but my Mother and Father did. However I did see the people being mobilised and I could hear what was being said.

### **Beginning of the attack**

16. I stayed in our hut and I slept because it was already 7 pm. Not long after I had gone to sleep I heard a gunshot from the direction of the swamp. The gunfire increased and we secured the door to our hut and lay on the floor. A UPDF soldier came and squatted by our door and he was shooting at the rebels. We kept trying to leave the house but he told us not to come out that if we tried he would shoot us. He then ran away when the fighting got heavier and there were many rebels in the camp.
17. At around 9 pm the rebels overpowered the government soldiers. The rebels were shouting and blowing whistles to mark their victory. I believe that the soldiers had been overpowered because most of the soldiers had been moved earlier that day and only a few had remained at the barracks. The rebel men were saying in Acholi "if you find a woman bring her here and I will hit her on the head". The rebel women were saying "If you get a man bring him here and I will hit him in the head." I could tell the difference between a man and a woman's voice. I can understand Acholi because it is very similar to Lango and I can tell the difference between them. We were still in the house at this stage.


### **Rebels come to the house**

18. I was in the house with my father, mother, brother and sister. We tried to come out of the house but there were so many rebels and we met three at the door and they came into the house. It was difficult to look at them because we were lying on the floor but I saw that they had long hair and were wearing combats like the government soldiers wore. They all had guns and they spoke Acholi. I could not tell how old they were. They told my Father to give them money. One of them was beating my Father with the butt of a gun. He was hitting my father so much we thought he was going to be killed. The other two rebels then started looking through our belongings and removed money and clothes. They did not take anything else, and then they moved to next house.
19. My Mother and Father left our house and ran to some bamboo shoots and lay down. I followed them to the bamboo stumps. There were many people there lying on top of each other.

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### Burning of the houses

20. After the rebels had looted things they started setting the houses on fire. I could see this with my own eyes. They were using matches to light the fires. I could not count how many rebels were setting fire to the houses but I could see their faces. They were setting houses on fire on both sides of the road.
21. The bamboo shoots we were hiding behind also caught fire. My Mother grabbed me by the hand and ran with me to a bathroom around five metres away which had not caught fire. Then the bathroom caught fire from the fallen bamboo and a house which was pressed up against the bathroom. My Mother ran away leaving me there. I could not leave because of the heat of the fire and I fell on my stomach. The bathroom was made of grass and collapsed on me. I was burnt there in the bathroom. I was seriously burned on my arms and my entire back from head to toe as I had fallen on my stomach. I still have the scars and they are visible on my arms and back.
22. There were still a lot of gun fire and if I stood up I could have been hit.
23. My Father heard me crying and he came and carried me back to where the bamboo was. I was still conscious and my body was burning. There were big blisters on my skin and when I rolled on the ground in pain near the bamboos their sharp edges burst the blisters.
24. We stayed around the bamboo stumps, my mother was very upset because she had not wanted us children to come to the camp and she was scared that I would die. Three mambas with government soldiers came at around 2 am. I know that it was the mamba that arrived because my Mother was so upset with my father and saying that she wanted to stand up and let them shoot her because my father had forced her to bring her children to the camp and now one of them was burnt and going to die. My Father forced her to lie down. My sister who follows me had tried to flee and she was grazed by a bullet on the forehead. My brother was still a baby so he was not harmed. If any of us stood up we would have been shot by the mambas.
25. The rebels heard the mambas coming and they ran away. The mambas started firing into the camp. They kept firing until around 4 am when it was almost light. When they thought that there were no more rebels they got out and started to walk around the camp.


### Aftermath

26. The government soldiers took people who had died in their houses and brought them to an open place in the road where the mamba was. I saw three people who

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had been hit on the head amongst the dead. I could see that the back of their heads were smashed. My Father had told us previously that he had heard from people who had remained behind when we had fled in 2002 that the rebels would hit kill people by hitting them on the back of the head. That they would place the victim's chin on a log and then strike the back of the head until it was smashed. That is what it looked like happened to these people.

27. I also saw bodies of a man and his son who had been shot while hiding in a toilet. Their bodies were brought to where the other dead bodies were gathered. The people who brought their bodies were the ones who said that it looked like they had been shot and that they had been found in the latrine.
28. There was a man who lived with his wife two huts down from ours. He was shot and burnt in the hut trying to get back into his hut to get his wife. The wife kept trying to get out of the hut but he did not want her to in case she got shot. As he was trying to keep her in the hut he was shot. I saw their bodies the next morning when they were brought from their hut which had completely burnt down. I heard people talking about what happened to them when they removed their bodies.
29. I saw these things because I was close to where they gathered the bodies and I was conscious at the moment but in a lot of pain. I was even asking people for water to pour on my body and to drink but they refused.
30. The camp was all burnt up; even the goats which had been tied to the verandas had been burnt. I saw the goats stuck to the verandas with my own eyes and I saw cows which had been shot lying on the ground.
31. The soldiers asked us that those who were not too badly injured should raise their hands and we would be brought to the hospital. So the people with broken arms or who had been burnt were taken to the hospital. Amongst the wounded I saw an old lady, Gwerina, whose head had been pierced by a bayonet. She had been a neighbour of ours.
32. The injured were supposed to be taken to the hospital on the mamba but since it was taking long, my father decided to take me on a bicycle Ngai hospital. Gwerina and another man who had been shot in the stomach were carried on two other bikes. This man had been shot before the attack because he had seen the rebels hiding in the swamp. I heard this because his father spoke to my father at the hospital.

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### At the hospital

33. I stayed in Ngai hospital from morning until evening but I did not receive any treatment. My Father's brother, who lived in Ngai, hired a car to take me to Atapara.
34. My skin was peeling off and looked whitish and I lost consciousness at Ngai hospital. At Atapara hospital, I was unconscious for about two weeks. When I woke up I was lying on my stomach. I could not get up and they could only hold me by the centre of my chest because everywhere else on my body was covered in wounds and if they touched me my skin would come off.
35. I started walking after about a month but not very far because I was afraid of the flies since I had open wounds. I stayed in the hospital for about three months while my father took care of me at the hospital. My mother came to see me at the hospital and told me about our relative who had been killed. She told me that one of the men whose head had been hit to death was my father's cousin. His name was AYOBO Bosco. She told me about other people who had died but I cannot remember who. At that time my wounds had started to heal but they still look whitish and reddish. My skin eventually healed but to date I still get pain especially when I'm exposed to the sun for long. The skin swells and then starts to peel off.
36. After the hospital I moved back to Loro to my mother's brother's house. I only returned to Abok in 2006.
37. On the day of the attack there were only around 30 soldiers based at the camp. I found this out the next morning after the attack because an army man called OKELLO Engola who is also known as Macodwogo, came to arrest the army leader for failing to protect the camp. OKELLO spoke with my father when he was bringing me to the hospital and asked why the army leader had transferred soldiers without having replacements ready.

### Clarifications

38. When I spoke with the investigators in September 2015, I told them that I was overcome by the fire and lost consciousness at the doorstep of our house. This is a mistake; I only lost consciousness when I went to Ngai hospital. I also said that I was burnt in our house but this is incorrect, I was burnt in the bathroom after the bamboo caught fire and fell on the bathroom where I was hiding with my mother.

### 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

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reparations. I was informed of the existence of the Victims' Participation and Reparation Section and its function, as well as of the procedure for applications. I consent to my personal data being shared with the Victims' Participation and Reparation Section.

40. I was informed that I may 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.
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 not been any form of coercion, duress, 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 Lango 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: AYO DOKAS

Dated: 21/4/2016

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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 Dorcas AYO 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 Dorcas AYO who appeared to have heard and understood my translation of this statement.
5. Dorcas AYO 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: 21/04/2016

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