

1 International Criminal Court  
2 Trial Chamber V  
3 Situation: Central African Republic II  
4 In the case of The Prosecutor v. Alfred Rombhot Yekatom and  
5 Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona - ICC-01/14-01/18  
6 Presiding Judge Bertram Schmitt, Judge Péter Kovács and  
7 Judge Chang-ho Chung  
8 Trial Hearing - Courtroom 1  
9 Thursday, 1 December 2022  
10 (The hearing starts in open session at 9.31 a.m.)  
11 THE COURT USHER: [9:31:46] All rise.  
12 The International Criminal Court is now in session.  
13 Please be seated.  
14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:32:06] Good morning, everyone.  
15 Court officer, please call the case.  
16 THE COURT OFFICER: [9:32:10] Good morning, Mr President. Good morning,  
17 your Honours.  
18 This is the Situation in the Central African Republic II, in the case of The Prosecutor  
19 versus Alfred Rombhot Yekatom and Patrice-Edouard Ngaïssona, case reference  
20 ICC-01/14-01/18.  
21 And for the record, we are in open session.  
22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:32:29] I ask for the appearances of the parties.  
23 Ms Henderson, first.  
24 MS HENDERSON: [9:32:33] Good morning, Mr President, Your Honours. The  
25 composition of the Prosecution remains unchanged since yesterday.

- 1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:32:38] Thank you.
- 2 Ms Douzima.
- 3 MS DOUZIMA: [9:32:45](Interpretation) Yes, Mr President, the victims of the other  
4 crimes are represented by Gabriella dos Santos, Mouhia Asso, and myself,  
5 *Maître* Douzima.
- 6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:32:59] Thank you.
- 7 Mr Suprun.
- 8 MR SUPRUN: [9:33:01] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours.
- 9 The composition of the team representing the former child soldiers remain the same.  
10 Thank you.
- 11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:33:09] Thank you.
- 12 I turn to Ms Dimitri.
- 13 MS DIMITRI: [9:33:12] Good morning, Mr President. Just a slight change.  
14 Ms Guissé is upstairs working on other matters. The remaining composition  
15 remains the same.
- 16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:33:18] Okay. Thank you.
- 17 Mr Knoops.
- 18 MR KNOOPS: [9:33:21] Good morning, Mr President. Good morning,  
19 your Honours. Good morning, everyone in the courtroom.  
20 Good morning, Mr Ngaiissona. We all clearly see you on the screen. We hope to  
21 see you soon again in this courtroom.
- 22 Mr President, our team is in the same composition as yesterday.
- 23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:33:36] Thank you very much.
- 24 And for the record, indeed, Mr Ngaiissona is following via video link from the  
25 detention centre. And in light of the medical recommendation and the request by

Trial Hearing  
WITNESS: CAR-OTP-P-1813

(Open Session)

ICC-01/14-01/18

1 the Ngaiissona Defence, the Chamber exceptionally allows, of course, Mr Ngaiissona to  
2 attend the hearings today and tomorrow remotely via video link.

3 And also, very importantly, good morning, Mr Witness. Do you hear and  
4 understand me well?

5 WITNESS: CAR-OTP-P-1813 (On former oath)

6 (The witness speaks French)

7 (The witness gives evidence via video link)

8 THE WITNESS: [9:34:15](Interpretation) Good morning to you. Yes, I can  
9 understand you very well.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:20] Very well.

11 Also, then, I give the floor to Ms Casiez.

12 MS CASIEZ: [9:34:25] Thank you, Mr President.

13 QUESTIONED BY MS CASIEZ: (Interpretation)

14 Q. [9:34:33] Good morning, Mr Kouroupe-Awo. We met briefly last week for the  
15 courtesy meeting, but I'd like to introduce myself once again. My name is Lena  
16 Casiez and I work in the Defence team for Mr Alfred Yekatom Rombhot.

17 I am going to be putting a number of questions to you today and I hope that I will be  
18 able to finish today, that is my aim. So let me start without any further ado.

19 I know that you met the investigators of the OTP on a number of occasions, and you  
20 will recall also having met my colleagues in Bangui, Wilhelmina Whittingham and  
21 Régis Tiangaye.

22 A. [9:35:28] Yes, indeed.

23 Q. [9:35:32] I'm going to be giving you the references for the case record. So the  
24 recording is at tab 2, CAR-OTP-2123-0525, and the transcript is to be found at tab 3,  
25 CAR-D29-0006-1190.

1 So, Mr Kouroupe-Awo, on a number of occasions I will be referring to the interview  
2 that you had with my colleagues from the Defence, and I will quite simply ask you to  
3 confirm what you said. With a view to going a little bit faster, we are not going to  
4 bring up the transcript on each occasion. So if you do need to look at it, we will be  
5 able to do so, but in order to save time, it will not be systematically brought up on the  
6 screen.

7 Do you follow what I mean?

8 A. [9:36:41] All too well.

9 Q. [9:36:44] So we are going to start immediately. I'm going to go back in time,  
10 and I'm going to be talking about the period during which the Seleka were in Mbaïki  
11 and more generally in the region.

12 You provided some clarification to my colleagues during your interview, namely, at  
13 page 1196 and 1197, where you said, when you were speaking about the first team of  
14 Seleka, quote: "I was told that the team that was present was very aggressive  
15 towards the Christian population. They were very aggressive to the people and to  
16 their property." End of quote.

17 Can you confirm that.

18 A. [9:37:31] Yes, I can confirm that.

19 Q. [9:37:37] At page 1202, you spoke about measures and specific acts, and you  
20 said firstly that the Seleka would dictate certain measures. Does that mean that it  
21 was they who decided upon the measures in an arbitrary manner; is that correct?

22 A. [9:37:59] That is correct.

23 MS CASIEZ: [9:38:04] Sorry, I didn't see you. So they answered it.

24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:38:05] Well, the answer has given already -- has  
25 been given already, so ...

1 MS HENDERSON: [9:38:09] It's not an objection, your Honour. I'm just wondering  
2 if we can have the line numbers as well so that we can follow as quickly to the point  
3 and we know what --

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:38:18] When -- when Ms Casiez refers to the  
5 former statement, the paragraph is enough, I think. When she refers to transcript,  
6 then, of course, it's always advisable to have the exact reference. Thank you.

7 MS HENDERSON: [9:38:29] Thank you.

8 MS CASIEZ: [9:38:46] So, just to be clear, here I'm referring to the Defence interview.  
9 So I have the pages. I don't have every time the line, so I think it's enough.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:38:56] Yeah, I also would think it's enough.  
11 We'll find our way through, I think.

12 MS CASIEZ: [9:39:04] Thank you, Mr President.

13 Q. [9:39:07](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, let me continue.

14 So still at the same page, 1202. You gave an example of the Seleka who had, for  
15 example, ordered the markets to be closed for a period of 48 hours in Mbaïki. Can  
16 you confirm that.

17 A. [9:39:31] Yes, I can confirm that.

18 Q. [9:39:40] Do I understand from that that people were not aware upfront, and  
19 that from one moment to the next they were stopped from going to the market and  
20 were not able to ask -- to buy basic things that would enable them to cook; is that  
21 correct?

22 A. [9:40:02] Yes, that is correct.

23 Q. [9:40:06] Still at the same location in your statement. You said that in some  
24 villages the Seleka would go by night outside of the urban perimeter to hold up  
25 certain families. Can you confirm that.

1 A. [9:40:25] Yes, I can.

2 Q. [9:40:28] You then talked about the second Seleka team in Mbaïki. And you  
3 said, at page 1203, that there were elements from that second team that were still  
4 committing acts of abuse against the population in Mbaïki and also a little further  
5 afield from the town of Mbaïki, up to 20 kilometres afield. Can you confirm that.

6 A. [9:41:08] I would like to say before I confirm that when you speak of the first  
7 team of Seleka and the second team of Seleka, the very first team of Seleka that was in  
8 Mbaïki was in my absence. I wasn't yet appointed in Mbaïki at the time. I took up  
9 my position from the first week of the month of July of the year 2013, and it was that  
10 team that I found. It would seem to me that the team that I had found then was the  
11 second team. The first team had been very aggressive and had been moved out  
12 upon instruction of the hierarchy. The team that I found when I came was, it seems  
13 to me, the second team.

14 Q. [9:42:06] Thank you very much for this point of clarification. It is indeed  
15 important to pinpoint the moment in time, and I thank you very much for that.  
16 Now, tell me if I'm mistaken, but at page 1206, I believe you are still referring to the  
17 second team, the second Seleka team, when you say that they were difficult to control,  
18 and when they would fire in the town, one would not know why they could start  
19 shooting from 6 p.m. until 10 p.m., or maybe from 10 p.m. in the evening until the  
20 next morning. We did not know why they were shooting.

21 Can you confirm.

22 A. [9:42:52] Yes, I can confirm.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:43:01] Perhaps shortly.

24 Ms Henderson, I understand now you wanted the lines. However, this is, may I say  
25 so, very typo-friendly. And, actually, I recognise quickly what Ms Casiez is citing

1 from. For example, now, you quickly see that it's somewhere down the lower side of  
2 the page. So to spare a little bit of time and -- well, we assume that there will be no,  
3 let's say, misquotations. There is an assumption for that.

4 Please.

5 MS CASIEZ: [9:43:40] Thank you, Mr President.

6 Q. [9:43:42](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, I didn't indicate to you at the outset  
7 that we were speaking the same language and that I need to wait before putting  
8 questions to you. And if you could also wait a little bit before you answer. I'm  
9 often asking you to confirm, and then you provide a very brief answer that overlaps  
10 with the translation of my questions. So I would be grateful to you if you would be  
11 mindful of that.

12 So let me continue. I'm going to now be speaking a little bit about the consequences  
13 of the behaviour of the Seleka in Mbaïki. And you speak about this at page 1204 and  
14 1205, where you talk about those people, all confessions -- all confessions, "Those  
15 people who", quote, "had left Mbaïki and had sought refuge far away in the forest and  
16 had even gone to Congo-Brazzaville, far away towards the frontier, and also further  
17 afield in Sangha-Mbaere."

18 THE INTERPRETER: [9:45:03] Message from the interpreter: Could counsel please  
19 slow down when she is quoting at speed.

20 THE WITNESS: [9:45:07](Interpretation) Yes, I do confirm.

21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:45:13] It's only when you are quote, yeah, so that  
22 we are a little bit slower then, perhaps then.

23 MS CASIEZ: [9:45:21] Of course, Mr President.

24 Sorry to the interpreters. I am going to slow.

25 Q. [9:45:32](Interpretation) At page 1212, you speak - and this is the expression that

1 I'm using - of the mode, the way in which the Seleka functioned, and you say, quote,  
2 that:  
3 "They would go from far -- to far afield for reprisals. They would go from camp to  
4 camp. And certainly in their midst, there were Seleka who were Muslims hailing  
5 from the locality, therefore, from Mbaïki, who knew the places where people who  
6 sought refuge well. They were used to going there. They were used to farming  
7 there and conducting other activities. They knew those locations well. And it was  
8 they who had taken the other armed Seleka to said locations with a view to catching  
9 up with certain people and firing at them." End of quote.

10 In this excerpt, you specifically talk about Bangui-Bouchia. I'll come back to that at a  
11 later stage. But was this the way in which the Seleka functioned? And then you  
12 can answer about Bangui-Bouchia and possibly any other *localité*.

13 A. [9:47:13] Yes, I can confirm that that is the case in Bangui-Bouchia and even in  
14 Mbaïki.

15 Q. [9:47:34] And do I understand correctly what the situation was when I say that  
16 the people from the localities, especially the Christians, went to seek shelter in  
17 makeshift camps in the bush, and that the Seleka, who were Muslims hailing from  
18 Mbaïki, would help Seleka who were not from Mbaïki to locate said people and go  
19 and kill them; is that correct?

20 A. [9:48:05] That is correct.

21 Q. [9:48:15] I thank you.

22 And amongst those Seleka teams, do you know how many of them hailed from  
23 Mbaïki, proportionally, compared to those who did not, who came from outside of  
24 Mbaïki?

25 A. [9:48:38] Could you repeat your question.



1 Q. [9:48:44] Of course. I understand, from what you have just confirmed, that  
2 there were Seleka amongst the Muslims who were locals from Mbaïki and there were  
3 Seleka who hailed from elsewhere. Do you have an idea of the number of Muslims  
4 from Mbaïki who were a member -- who were members of the Seleka or who joined  
5 the Seleka?

6 A. [9:49:21] I'm not in a position to have an idea of the number of Seleka Muslims  
7 who were local and who had joined those Seleka who hailed and had come from  
8 elsewhere.

9 However, the local Seleka and a number of Muslims were indicators -- were  
10 informants for the Seleka, and they would do this in rather a discreet manner.

11 Q. [9:50:08] Thank you. I have a written document before me from the mayor,  
12 Mr Mongbandi. And the reference for my colleagues is CAR-OTP-2107-6303,  
13 paragraph 33, where it is indicated, and I quote: "When the Seleka arrived in the  
14 town, its men selected certain influential and tradesmen and gave or sold them  
15 weapons, AK rifles and automatic rifles, not traditional weapons. Mahamat Issaka,  
16 notably aka Max; Olmozame Mana; Mahamat Siki Fateh, alias Débat; and Abdelkarim,  
17 president of the young Muslims." End of quote.

18 Now, is this something that you also noted? Do you have any information in this  
19 regard?

20 A. [9:51:48] When I took up my position, I was informed that the Seleka were  
21 arriving in Mbaïki, and the ones who were arriving had provided certain members of  
22 the Muslim colony with weapons of war. Amongst the names that you have just  
23 provided, I had heard the name of a certain Débat.

24 As to the other names, it is possible that they might have been provided with  
25 weapons, but when the Muslim community was transferred from Mbaïki to Bangui,

1 in their absence, and at the residence of an imam, that is to say, a religious chief, or  
2 leader, who was living in Baguirmi neighbourhood - I no longer recall his name - at  
3 his residence, a weapon of war, a Kalashnikov had been discovered.

4 Q. [9:53:42] I thank you for this additional information and for the confirmation.  
5 I'm going to be reading to you another part of this document. It is a little bit lengthy,  
6 but I'm going to be putting my question to you just after I've read it.

7 Quote: "In Mbaïki, there were two groups of Muslims. Some did not want to be in  
8 possession of weapons. They said that they were only concerned about conducting  
9 trade. Others wanted and liked to be in possession of a weapon. Those who  
10 wanted to be in possession of a weapon behaved as if they were members of a  
11 powerful group. It was they that I would refer to as the arrogant. These are the  
12 Muslims who subsequently went to Bangui-Bouchia to wreak revenge for what had  
13 happened there. These were young coffee tradesmen who wanted weapons and  
14 who had obtained AK rifles from the Seleka." End of quote.

15 For my colleague, that was paragraph 38.

16 I have a somewhat similar question to put to you. Is this something that you heard  
17 about? Did you note it yourself? Did you glean any information in this regard?

18 A. [9:55:16] Of course. In Mbaïki there were two Muslim communities, the first of  
19 which was by far the more numerous and influential. It was the Muslim community,  
20 Chadian Muslim community.

21 The second community comprised Muslims hailing from Mali and hailing from Niger.  
22 The community that was the more agitated was the first of the two. And when we  
23 talk about Bangui-Bouchia, those who had gone to Bangui-Bouchia, well, I can't say  
24 specifically that they were members of the two communities.

25 However, when leaving for Bouchia, the deputy mayor who was killed in Mbaïki was

1 part of that delegation. And they weren't necessarily people who were interested in  
2 coffee who had gone to Bangui-Bouchia, but to my knowledge, they were a group of  
3 Seleka headed up by the colonel who was in Mbaïki at the time, who had gone to  
4 Bangui-Bouchia to wreak revenge for the death of two Muslims who lived in  
5 Bangui-Bouchia for a great length of time. And these people had been killed by  
6 Balaka, which I wasn't able to verify as we were not able to catch the perpetrators.  
7 And it was those two Muslims from Bangui-Bouchia who were in possession of one  
8 or two weapons of war.

9 And the Balaka, who were informed of the matter, had gone to kill those two Muslims  
10 in order to get hold of those two weapons in question so that they would have the  
11 means to be ready for any future happenings. And that is why those two Muslims  
12 met their death, they were killed. And the Seleka from Mbaïki had gone to  
13 Bangui-Bouchia to wreak revenge.

14 Q. [9:59:56] Thank you, Mr Kouroupe-Awo, for these answers. You were thinking  
15 ahead and anticipated my next subject, which is indeed Bangui-Bouchia. But before  
16 moving on to that, I have one question remaining.

17 You said that upon their arrival, the Seleka had -- well, this is from memory. You  
18 said two minutes or so ago that they had distributed or provided some Muslims from  
19 Mbaïki with weapons. Was this something that was common knowledge, that  
20 people talked about, namely, that Seleka had given weapons to some Muslims from  
21 Mbaïki?

22 A. [10:00:52] The population of Mbaïki, the indigenous population, often talked  
23 about these weapons of war that had been given and that had allowed -- or that  
24 should allow Muslims to defend themselves should there be an aggression. Then  
25 this population would circulate the information amongst their members but did not

1 say so out loud because they were afraid they could be spotted.

2 Q. [10:01:57] Thank you very much.

3 I am now going to talk about Bangui-Bouchia, i.e., paragraph 29 of your statement.

4 This is the first time I mention your statement, so I'll give the reference. It is tab 17 of  
5 the Defence -- the Prosecution folder, CAR-OTP-2118-0929.

6 And for the Court record, I'm going to talk about "the statement", but I am always  
7 mentioning the first statement of the witness.

8 So I'm going to show you a document on tab 1 of the Defence folder,

9 CAR-D29-0016-0056. It is a document that can be made public.

10 Mr Kouroupe-Awo, I think it is a document that mentioned the incident in

11 Bangui-Bouchia that you have mentioned. I'm going to let you read part of it, but

12 I'm going to read it out loud for the record, and you shall tell me whether this is the  
13 incident you are talking about.

14 Could we scroll down so that we can see the middle of the page.

15 Here, there is a paragraph that starts with: "It was during the night of Wednesday 2

16 October, when two men with weapons erupted in the village of Bangui-Bouchia and

17 shot down two people from Chad: Mr Zacharia Hamid and Mr Abdoulaye Taïr."

18 Does that mean something to you, sir, and is that the incident you were mentioning?

19 A. [10:04:27] I am certain that it is this event, but I did not know personally these

20 two Muslims. They lived in Bangui-Bouchia and had been there for a long time.

21 They had -- they had married women in Bangui-Bouchia and had children in

22 Bangui-Bouchia. But I'm certain that this is the event because there was no other

23 such event committed by Anti-Balaka. Because, to my knowledge, what I was told

24 was that Anti-Balaka members who were in the forest had come to the village on that

25 particular night and had acted to obtain the weapons that they had heard about.

1 Q. [10:05:43] Thank you very much. We can maybe stop displaying the document  
2 \*on the screen.

3 In your declaration, when you mention this incident at paragraph 29, you say: "I  
4 heard rumours according to which the group who had perpetrated the murders in  
5 Bangui-Bouchia belonged to Rambo."

6 When you talked with my colleagues in Bangui, you went further. In page 1209, you  
7 said: "I did not have specific information about the perpetrators. It was just  
8 rumours."

9 Can you confirm this.

10 A. [10:06:29] As I said earlier on, at that point I did not have any information about  
11 Rambo, but I knew that there was in a specific area, including Bangui-Bouchia. In  
12 the forest of Bangui-Bouchia, I knew that there were men who were training with  
13 weapons of war, and they may have been Anti-Balaka. But I did not have  
14 information about Rambo at that particular point in time.

15 Q. [10:07:26] Thank you, Mr Kouroupe-Awo.

16 Somebody that has been met during the investigations of the Prosecutor said that,  
17 following the crimes committed by the Seleka, and I'll quote in English:

18 (Speaks English) "The local population in Bangui-Bouchia started a resistance  
19 movement and killed two well-known Muslim traders."

20 (Interpretation) So for reference, I'm talking about CAR-OTP-2088-2225. And it was  
21 about in response to the crimes committed by the Seleka based in Pissa.

22 Have you heard rumours according to which the local population in Bangui-Bouchia  
23 had started a resistance movement and may have been responsible for these murders?  
24 Is that something you had heard of?

25 A. [10:08:32] Personally, no. The only thing I knew was that, after the murders in

1 Bangui-Bouchia were two Muslims were the victims. The Seleka of Mbaïki had gone  
2 down to Bangui-Bouchia. They had gone through camps to go after the population  
3 that had run away in the forest, and it is during that raid that four people were killed.  
4 I went to Bangui-Bouchia. I myself went there with a priest and with a journalist or  
5 a correspondent of Radio Ndeke Luka because, from the information I had received, a  
6 mass killing was announced. Allegedly there had been a lot of victims, maybe 30 or  
7 40. But when we went to Bangui-Bouchia to see if the information that had been  
8 given to us was correct or not, none of the people we met was able to give us details.  
9 But at least four names had been mentioned.

10 MR KNOOPS: [10:11:34] Sorry, Mr President.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:11:34] Yeah, I see. There's a problem obviously  
12 with the video link. Let's figure this out.

13 MR KNOOPS: [10:11:40] Thank you.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:11:40] And also, Mr Knoops, since we have a  
15 short gap, if you see a reason, or your client, to confer with each other, please let us  
16 know, then we will give you the opportunity, of course.

17 MR KNOOPS: [10:11:52] Thank you very much, Mr President.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:12:03] Then let's have a short break because they  
19 have to seem to fix it.

20 THE COURT USHER: [10:12:11] All rise.

21 (Recess taken at 10.12 a.m.)

22 (Upon resuming in open session at 10.20 a.m.)

23 THE COURT USHER: [10:20:10] All rise.

24 Please be seated.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:20:23] Well, I can't resist the temptation to make

1 this remark. So we have a perfect video link to a thousand kilometres away to the  
2 witness to Bangui, and we are happy, the Chamber's happy that the 1 kilometre to the  
3 detention centre also seem not to be insurmountable.

4 Ms Casiez.

5 MS CASIEZ: [10:20:47] Thank you, Mr President.

6 Q. [10:20:54](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, the good news after these few  
7 minutes of break is that in your last answer, you answered actually seven or eight of  
8 my following questions, so we are going to save time. So thank you for all the  
9 details.

10 I just need one clarification. The journalist who was a correspondent for Ndeke  
11 Luka, is he Martial Boboya?

12 A. [10:21:38] Yes, he is the one.

13 Q. [10:21:43] Thank you. And when you met my colleagues - on page 1211 - you  
14 specified that locally you had been given four names, and then later, when people  
15 who had fled to the forest came back, other names were mentioned, and the figure of  
16 11 people killed during the Seleka reprisals was the last figure. Is that what -- is that  
17 your recollection?

18 A. [10:22:22] Yes.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:22:23] Ms Henderson.

20 MS HENDERSON: [10:22:27] Yes, sorry to interrupt. It's not an objection. It  
21 would be too late anyway. But it's now a few times that the witness has been  
22 referred to the Defence interview. We are now in about page 22 out of 93. I just  
23 want to flag that the Prosecution would have no objection to this interview going in  
24 under Rule 68(3), provided, of course, that the conditions are met. I'm not sure how  
25 much longer my learned friend wanted to continue with the interview for, but that

1 also may economise and allow your Honours to see the full interview.

2 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:22:59] Actually, interestingly enough, I also  
3 thought about it. So there is no legal impediment for that. However, it would  
4 have -- this would have been made, I think, earlier.

5 But, Ms Dimitri, do you want to say something about it? We could shorten it  
6 significantly. I also thought about it.

7 MS DIMITRI: [10:23:24] Thank you, Mr President.

8 To be honest, I'm caught off guard. So I would like to look at it, weigh it with my  
9 client. So I think it's not going to be a lengthy cross-examination -- examination by  
10 Ms Casiez. And at this stage, we are not making -- we are the party who took the  
11 interview. We are not making the request to have it under Rule 68(3), but maybe if I  
12 have more time, I could come back with a more constructive answer, but right now,  
13 my suggestion is we continue.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:23:56] I understand. I also agree with you.  
15 But thank you for the point, Ms Henderson, the legal point.

16 In future instances, I think -- then the Chamber would prefer that we have this -- that  
17 we do this on the spot, immediately before starting with the questioning, and then we  
18 can do it this way. But since you are saying it's not a -- we are not going the next six  
19 hours through the statement, perhaps we leave it at that.

20 But a very good point, Ms Henderson. Actually, when I saw this over a hundred  
21 pages, or 86 pages or something, I thought, why not, yeah. But that's a very good  
22 point. But I think for the moment we simply continue.

23 And you pick -- obviously, you pick certain things up that you thought are the most  
24 relevant for your cause. Please continue.

25 MS CASIEZ: [10:24:44] Thank you, Mr President.



1 Q. [10:24:46](Interpretation) My last question on this topic, Mr Kouroupe-Awo:  
2 Do you agree that this assault and the retaliation was mediatised immensely and in  
3 the region people talked a lot about it?

4 A. [10:25:14] When the information about these killings circulated in the Muslim  
5 community, and more specifically, the Seleka, it was the correspondent of Radio  
6 Ndeke Luka who was seen quite negatively as being the one who had circulated this  
7 information to the central headquarters of Ndeke Luka in Bangui. Therefore, this  
8 correspondent feared for his life, and he had asked me, therefore, to go with him to  
9 Bangui-Bouchia in order to obtain more information, in order to give some feedback  
10 to his hierarchy. And that is why this correspondent had gone there. Nevertheless,  
11 the information regarding these killings had circulated within Mbaïki and even in  
12 Bangui.

13 Q. [10:27:00] Thank you, Mr Kouroupe-Awo.  
14 I'll shift to another topic. I'm going to talk about Safa. You mentioned it in  
15 paragraph 30 of your statement, and I have one clarification I need from you.  
16 You said, as a retaliation, the Seleka killed four people. Could you please confirm if  
17 that is the case, that these four people were part of the civilian population.

18 A. [10:27:39] The four people who were killed by the Seleka who came from  
19 Boda -- the Seleka coming from Boda, after going through Mbaïki, they went to Safa  
20 to find out who were the perpetrators of robberies. Sheep had been stolen, sheep  
21 that belonged to the chief, the Seleka chief of Boda, and he had given or asked his  
22 in-laws to look after his sheep. And when the Seleka team reached Safa, they  
23 shot -- the local civilian population started shooting on the population and killed four  
24 people.

25 I personally went there, and I was accompanied by one or two priests. And I

1 personally transported the last body that had been half burnt. And I transported the  
2 body to the church, the Catholic church of Safa. And I took from my pocket a little  
3 bit of money to pay young people to bury this burnt -- half burnt body. And it was,  
4 indeed, civilians, a civilian population.

5 Q. [10:30:15] Thank you very much for this further clarification.

6 Now, concerning Mbata, you have covered this quite extensively in your statement,  
7 but I have just two or three questions to put to you. You made mention at  
8 paragraph -- of houses that had been burnt down or destroyed in Mbata. That's  
9 paragraph 33. So at 1214, page 1214, you talked about the fact that houses had been  
10 burnt down by the Seleka.

11 Now, I would like to understand correctly, the houses that you referred to at  
12 paragraph 33 of your statement, are these the houses that were destroyed or burnt  
13 down by the Seleka?

14 A. [10:31:02] Yes, indeed, by the Seleka who had left from Mbaïki. They had  
15 burnt down approximately 70 huts.

16 Q. [10:31:22] Thank you. And if I have understood correctly from your statement,  
17 these were Muslims from Mbata who called the Seleka for them to come. I  
18 understood that from your statement.

19 Does the same apply for Safa, for example, that it was namely the local Muslims who  
20 asked or warned the Seleka for them to come?

21 A. [10:31:49] In Mbata, it was the local Muslims who had informed the Seleka from  
22 Mbaïki. But in Safa, it was rather the family in-law of colonel -- the Seleka colonel  
23 from Boda who had informed the colonel, saying that part of the sheep that had been  
24 entrusted had been stolen by youngsters from the region.

25 Q. [10:32:38] Thank you. And in Bangui-Bouchia, you said that the Seleka heard

1 about this. And to your knowledge, was it the Muslims from Bangui-Bouchia who  
2 called the Seleka for that specific incident of Bangui-Bouchia?

3 A. [10:33:00] For the incident of Bangui-Bouchia, it was not the Muslims who had  
4 called the Seleka. After the attack and killings of the two Muslims, information to  
5 that effect had circulated, and the Seleka from Mbaïki were in the know. I knew that  
6 there were no longer any Muslims in Bangui-Bouchia. However, there were in  
7 Bouchia approximately 10 kilometres afield -- afar. So was it the Muslims of Bouchia  
8 who had informed the Seleka from Mbaïki? Or, as there had been an attack, was the  
9 information just being circulated verbally and the Seleka in Mbaïki had come to hear  
10 of it?

11 Q. [10:34:25] Thank you. Now, for Mbata specifically, do you recall whether the  
12 local Muslim Seleka from Mbaïki took part in those acts of retaliation, such as  
13 Abdulsalam Amuzamil (phon), Débat, whom we mentioned earlier, and others?

14 THE INTERPRETER: [10:34:51] The interpreter does not have the spelling of the  
15 names.

16 THE WITNESS: [10:34:55](Interpretation) The Seleka from Mbaïki who had left for  
17 Mbata, well, I would not be in a position to tell them of a part, unless the deputy  
18 mayor of Mbaïki, who was killed, had told the team one of the trucks, and he was  
19 there too. He had accompanied that team of Seleka to Mbata and had returned.

20 THE INTERPRETER: [10:35:44] The witness's sentence was confusing.

21 MS CASIEZ: [10:36:11] I have a message from the interpreter that the witness's  
22 sentence was confusing.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:36:19] That -- to determine if -- no. The  
24 interpreters can tell us if they have not understood anything or would want  
25 clarification so that they can interpret better. But if, let's say, to analyse the content

1 of an answer, I think it's not up to them. So because of that I did not say anything,  
2 did not intervene.

3 Please continue. If you want a clarification, and you think you need one, then, of  
4 course, you're entitled to. But otherwise we simply continue.

5 MS CASIEZ: [10:36:51] Okay. Thank you, Mr President. It was clear for me, so I  
6 continue. Thank you.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:36:56] Yeah.

8 MS CASIEZ: [10:37:03](Interpretation)

9 Q. [10:37:04] Let me turn or change subject, Mr Kouroupe-Awo. You told my  
10 colleagues, page 1232, and I quote:

11 "I would like to tell you that the Seleka were assimilated amongst the local Muslim  
12 community. And I say that because wherever there were Seleka elements, whether it  
13 be in Pissa, in Mbaïki, or in other villages, every time the Seleka would come and set  
14 up, it was with the Muslims. It was at least at the residence of one Muslim." End of  
15 quote.

16 Could you confirm, or would you like to confirm and provide any information in this  
17 regard.

18 A. [10:38:03] I can confirm what I said, because it was common knowledge  
19 amongst the population that when Seleka teams arrived in a given village, the first  
20 thing that they would do was to seek contact with the local Muslim population or  
21 community. And that was common knowledge amongst everyone.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:38:57] Ms Henderson.

23 MS HENDERSON: [10:38:59] I'm not sure if it's a transcription or an interpretation  
24 issue, but I just want to read out the portion once more that my learned friend,

25 Ms Casiez, put to the witness, because the last sentence was not correct, at least on the

1 English version. So I'll read that out in French.

2 THE INTERPRETER: [10:39:19] Message --

3 MS HENDERSON: [10:39:22](Interpretation) "I say so because wherever there were  
4 Seleka elements, whether it be in Pissa, in Mbaïki or in other villages, every time that  
5 the Seleka would come and set up, it would be with the Muslims. It would be with  
6 the Muslims that they would set up."

7 (Speaks English) And, your Honours, that's at lines 427 of page 1232. Thank you.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:39:50] Okay.

9 MS CASIEZ: [10:39:52] Just to clarify, a couple of lines later, it's written:  
10 (Interpretation) "It was at least at the residence of a Muslim. It was at least at the  
11 residence of a Muslim."

12 THE INTERPRETER: [10:40:04] Please don't mix languages.

13 MS CASIEZ: [10:40:07] So just to be sure, I -- I mean, I summarised not to cite the  
14 entire page, but ...

15 MS HENDERSON: [10:40:09] Thank you. I apologise. Thank you. I didn't see  
16 those lines.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:40:12] Please continue.

18 MS CASIEZ: [10:40:15] Yes.

19 Q. [10:40:23](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, still with regard to the link  
20 between the Muslims from Mbaïki and the Seleka, you said, and here we are at  
21 page 1237 -- 1237-1238: That there was an agreement and that many had been very  
22 happy at the arrival of the Djotodia time.

23 I'm just -- you said that there were Muslim women who were speaking to their  
24 neighbours, to their Christian neighbours to say that, "Whatever the case may be,  
25 soon we will be taking all of your fields, all of your possessions. We'll be taking all

1 of it." End of quote.

2 Can you confirm, and is this the type of exchange that you noted or that was reported  
3 to you?

4 A. [10:41:26] Yes, these are things that were indicated to me. And on a number of  
5 occasions, these were not only women saying such things. In the entire Muslim  
6 population, some people, especially amongst the youngsters, people would, you  
7 know, say such things. They would take the liberty of saying such things.

8 Q. [10:42:05] Thank you. And how did the Christian population react in the face  
9 of these words, the retaliation of Bangui-Bouchia, Mbata? How did the local  
10 population react?

11 A. [10:42:29] In Safa, the local population did not react. Firstly, there were no  
12 longer any Muslims on location, and secondly, in Mbata, as I said earlier, a Muslim  
13 had fled into the forest trying to reach Congo, and he had been caught up with and  
14 killed in the forest. That's with regard to Mbata.

15 In Bangui-Bouchia, there were no longer any Muslims there. So there was no  
16 reaction. There we are.

17 Q. [10:43:44] Thank you. Last Monday you said -- at a given moment in time, you  
18 said there was hatred amongst the communities. And then at page 1271 of your  
19 interview with my colleagues, you said: "The population of Mbaïki felt hatred  
20 towards the Seleka and to all those who supported them."

21 Is this something that you confirm -- can confirm, and is it something that you noted?

22 A. [10:44:27] Yes, that is how things unfolded.

23 Q. [10:44:42] Thank you. I'm going to be changing subject matter again. At  
24 paragraph 53 of your statement, you say: "I believe that the attacks against the  
25 Chadians was the continuity of the conflict implicating the Chadians \*elements of

1 MISCA in Bangui because people were accusing them of undertaking manoeuvres  
2 and only supporting members of their community whilst neglecting the [Chadians]."  
3 Do you mean hereby that those people, namely, the local population, were attacking  
4 or taking things out of the -- of the Chadians because of what was going on --

5 THE INTERPRETER: [10:45:40] Overlapping speakers.

6 THE WITNESS: [10:45:43](Interpretation) Yes, because in Bangui, information had  
7 circulated to the effect that Chadian soldiers were attacking the civilian population  
8 and that there had been many victims locally. The indigenous population started to  
9 observe mistrust towards the Chadian community. And may I reiterate that the  
10 hatred that the indigenous population had towards the Muslims was more directed  
11 towards the Muslim Chadian community.

12 MS CASIEZ: [10:47:07](Interpretation)

13 Q. [10:47:09] Thank you, Mr Kouroupe-Awo.

14 I'm going to be showing you a press article. This is tab 4 of the Defence,

15 CAR-OTP-2001-4274. If we could please bring it up on the screen.

16 And, Mr Kouroupe-Awo, in order to save a little bit of time ...

17 Could we please scroll down a little bit in order to enable the witness to read through  
18 the text somewhat.

19 And I would like to know whether this is what you are referring to when you talk  
20 about the acts of abuse conducted by the Chadian MISCA.

21 I see that you have sat back in your seat. Were you able to familiarise yourself with  
22 this text, and is this what you are referring to when you talk about the Chadian  
23 MISCA and the impact that it had upon the population of Mbaïki?

24 A. [10:48:52] Yes. The first paragraph that I have read summarises what  
25 happened.

- 1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:49:06] Ms Henderson, it's not quite clear what  
2 the witness is referring to, actually.
- 3 MS HENDERSON: [10:49:16] I was going to say, your Honour, perhaps just to state  
4 for the record what the first words of that paragraph are, because later we won't  
5 know what was on the screen.
- 6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:49:25] Indeed, indeed, because on the screen  
7 there are four paragraphs.
- 8 MS CASIEZ: [10:49:29] Yeah, I was going to ask the same thing.
- 9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:49:33] Yeah.
- 10 MS CASIEZ: [10:49:34] Thank you, Ms Henderson.
- 11 Q. [10:49:35](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, could you just provide us with the  
12 first two words of the paragraph that you have read in order to provide us with an  
13 indication when you say that, "yes, it does correspond." That will just give us an  
14 indication, please.
- 15 I'm just going to read you an excerpt, and I'm going to let you confirm to me whether  
16 this was what was being said in Mbaïki.
- 17 THE INTERPRETER: [10:50:22] Could counsel please indicate where she's reading  
18 from.
- 19 MS CASIEZ: [10:50:24](Interpretation)
- 20 Q. [10:50:27] This is the second -- this two-way game that the certain  
21 elements -- Chadian elements of the MISCA were getting involved.
- 22 THE INTERPRETER: [10:50:38] The interpreter could not see where she is reading  
23 from. She needs to tell us.
- 24 MS CASIEZ: [10:50:43](Interpretation)
- 25 Q. [10:50:44] The Chadian elements from the MISCA, without authorisation from



1 the *état-major*, evacuate --

2 THE INTERPRETER: [10:50:51] Too fast.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:50:52] Well, that's now much too long, and also,  
4 it's a newspaper article. So I think the main point is that we simply ask the witness  
5 what he knows about it. And it's too cumbersome, this one. We can -- let's say, the  
6 probative value of a newspaper article is very low on the face of it. And normally  
7 we can put it to a witness if the witness seems to appear -- is mentioned in the  
8 newspaper article. But now to start to read this out now, the witness has said  
9 that -- has made a statement with regard to this Chadian MISCA. I think that's  
10 enough. We don't dwell into that further. We were not making a reading lesson  
11 here now.

12 MS CASIEZ: [10:51:46] Thank you, Mr President. I move on.

13 Q. [10:51:53](Interpretation) Thank you, Mr Witness. Mr Kouroupe-Awo, I'm  
14 going to be changing subject matter now.

15 I'm going to now be talking about the arrival of Mr Yekatom in Mbaïki, and I shall do  
16 so stage by stage.

17 Now you've already talked about this to my colleague, and I'm going to be putting  
18 questions to you that are most specific possible for us to be able to move forward.

19 All right?

20 On Monday, you already spoke at length, and specifically about the exchange  
21 between Yekatom and the Colonels Anour and your first interaction yourself with  
22 Mr Yekatom over the telephone. Now, I would like to confirm or have you confirm  
23 something. You told your colleagues -- or my colleagues from the Defence, at page  
24 1218-1219, that Rombhot told you that he wanted to meet the Seleka in order to  
25 discuss matters with him. And you went on to say, and I quote: "Apparently, he

1 had even talked about reconciliation." End of quote.

2 Can you confirm that?

3 A. [10:53:05] Yes, I can confirm that, because Rombhot and Colonels Anour were in  
4 the same year -- recruitment year in the army. And it might be that, as having been  
5 in the same year, Rombhot didn't want them to have any conflict, and he wanted  
6 them to negotiate their departure into the bush of those Seleka that had been present  
7 in Mbaïki. I believe that that's what it means.

8 Q. [10:53:56] I thank you. Now, at paragraph 45 of your statement, and also in  
9 your testimony on Monday, you spoke about your meeting in Pissa, and you say that  
10 you went there in the company of a pastor \*and Antarez, and you say that they were  
11 both part of a religious platform with an imam.

12 Now, let me refresh your memory. Is the pastor or priest that you are referring to  
13 with this religious platform --

14 THE INTERPRETER: [10:54:40] The interpreter did not catch the names that were  
15 said at great speed.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:54:46] Obviously, again, an intervention by this  
17 interpreter. Could you please repeat the name, because this is important at the  
18 moment.

19 MS CASIEZ: [10:54:57] Of course, Mr President.

20 (Interpretation) For the pastor, Mobia, M-O-B-I-A, and for the imam, Aboubakar  
21 Diakite.

22 THE WITNESS: [10:55:19](Interpretation) I can confirm the name of the pastor,  
23 Mr Mobia, but I no longer recall the name of the imam who represented the Muslim  
24 community within that platform, but I do know that the Catholic church was  
25 represented, the Protestant Church in its entirety was represented, and the Muslims

1 religion was represented by an imam.

2 MS CASIEZ: (Interpretation)

3 Q. [10:56:07] Thank you. On Monday you said, at 10:12, when speaking of the  
4 elements who were present in Pissa during your meeting with Mr Yekatom, you said  
5 that some of them had threatened you.

6 When you met my colleagues, page 1222, you said: "I was not really well received  
7 by those elements who were present, because they said that they were not aware of  
8 the meeting and that they did not want for there to be any negotiations." End of  
9 quote.

10 Can you confirm?

11 A. [10:57:02] I can confirm.

12 Q. [10:57:14] You then explain your discussion with Mr Yekatom, page 1223 on to  
13 1227, and you go on to specify, and I quote: "In face of the situation that prevailed,  
14 maybe we should have taken a step back and no longer refused the -- Rombhot's  
15 going to meet their colleagues in Mbaïki." End of quote.

16 Can you confirm?

17 A. [10:57:58] Yes. Because there was a great deal of tension. The Seleka -- the  
18 Anti-Balaka were becoming more and more numerous because of those people who  
19 had invented themselves Anti-Balaka, and we had to enter negotiations. We had to  
20 enter negotiations. Maybe this would enable us to reach an agreement which would  
21 have enabled us to protect all the communities there in Mbaïki. I can confirm.

22 Q. [10:58:51] And in that meeting, did you also confirm to my colleagues that, in  
23 the end, Mr Yekatom did all he could to avoid the population -- to avoid the  
24 population in Mbaïki being affected; is that correct?

25 A. [10:59:17] It is correct.

1 MS HENDERSON: [10:59:24] Your Honours, I would like a page number, at least for  
2 that.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:59:28] For that, yes, indeed.

4 MS CASIEZ: [10:59:31] Of course. Sorry.  
5 (Interpretation) It is page 1227.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:59:40] Perhaps here I would also like to have a  
7 line.

8 MS CASIEZ: [10:59:57](Interpretation) Page 1 to 7 -- I'm sorry, lines 1 to 7.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:00:06] Yeah. You know, as I said, the typo is  
10 good, so if you have a view on that.  
11 Break until 11.30.

12 MS CASIEZ: [11:00:14] Yes.

13 THE COURT USHER: [11:00:16] All rise.  
14 (Recess taken at 11.00 a.m.)  
15 (Upon resuming in open session at 11.30 a.m.)

16 THE COURT USHER: [11:30:41] All rise.  
17 Please be seated.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:30:59] Ms Casiez, you still have the floor.

19 MS CASIEZ: [11:31:06] Thank you, Mr President.

20 Q. [11:31:10](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, I am now going to talk about the  
21 meeting at the St Jeanne d'Arc church. First question: Do you agree that the main  
22 issue -- the main question behind this meeting was, now that the Seleka have left, how  
23 can we organise ourselves to protect the Muslim population? Was that the case?

24 A. [11:31:48] That was the case. But -- yes, that was indeed the case mainly. But,  
25 incidentally, it was a question of protecting the entire population in order to avoid

1 other issues.

2 Q. [11:32:25] Thank you for this clarification.

3 When you met my other colleagues, you said, on page 1239, that the security, the  
4 safety of the Muslim community could no longer be guaranteed by the prefect  
5 because you had no weapons, no aide-de-camp, and on page 1248, that there was a  
6 brigade commander that was with one or two elements. There were two or three  
7 elements in the police that had no weapons. Therefore, they were doing nothing.  
8 They were only there to document things, but they were not there to intervene.  
9 Does that summarise well how things were in Mbaïki at the time of the meetings?

10 A. [11:33:34] Yes. At that point, the defence and security forces, the police, the  
11 gendarmerie, and some elements of the forest guards that were assimilated, who were  
12 present, they could do nothing. They could do nothing in the situation at the time.  
13 So, in a way, there were -- it was a situation where you would just do with what you  
14 had.

15 Q. [11:34:22] Thank you. Am I right to say that at the time of that meeting, the  
16 Sangaris had arrived already? They arrived two days before the departure of Seleka,  
17 but the MISCA was not there yet?

18 A. [11:34:42] The MISCA? I don't see exactly when they arrived, but it seems to  
19 me that the MISCA, the Congolese MISCA was already there. And a few days  
20 before that meeting, there were a few individuals of Sangaris who had arrived in  
21 Mbaïki and who had gone back.

22 Q. [11:36:07] Excuse me. When you say that "gone back", do you mean they had  
23 gone inside the church during the meeting? Or what do you mean by that?

24 A. [11:36:24] I want to say that the Sangaris had reached Mbaïki and then had gone  
25 back to where they had come from, i.e., Bangui.

1 Q. [11:36:45] Thank you for this clarification.

2 Let us talk now about the meeting in the St Jeanne d'Arc church. You mention it in  
3 your statement, and you give a list of the people who were present. At paragraph 52,  
4 you talk about the representative of the young people. Amongst them \*there was  
5 Abdulsalam Amuzamil, the representative of the Muslim youngsters?

6 A. [11:37:31] There was indeed a representative of the Muslim youth amongst them,  
7 the president. And there were also at this meeting other reputable Muslim  
8 community people.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:37:52] Mr Witness, just kindly, please wait a  
10 couple of seconds with your answer so that the interpreter can catch up. Thank you  
11 very much.

12 Ms Casiez.

13 MS CASIEZ: [11:38:03] Thank you, Mr President.

14 Q. [11:38:08](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, do you recall the presence of a  
15 nun, Sister Charlotte?

16 A. [11:38:25] I no longer remember that.

17 Q. [11:38:43] No problem. You'll see that I'll go on giving you names. If you  
18 don't know, say so. If you do know, say so too.

19 At paragraph 51 of your statement, you say that Coeur de Lion was with Mr Yekatom.  
20 Do you remember that he didn't enter the church but stayed outside of the church?

21 A. [11:39:13] I know that in the church, Mr Rambo was there with two or three of  
22 his lieutenants, but I did not specifically know Coeur de Lion. I had seen him maybe  
23 once or twice. The first time was during a meeting at the town hall in Mbaïki, and a  
24 captain and a number of members of Sangaris were also present, and in the presence  
25 of well-known people in Mbaïki.

1 Q. [11:40:34] Thank you again for this clarification.

2 I'm going to try and wreak your memory. One of the imams in Mbaïki,

3 Mr Aboubakar Diakite, has testified here and given evidence, and he has summarised

4 the speech that Mr Yekatom gave in the church. And he said that, during that

5 speech, Mr Yekatom said: "I, Rambo, have grown up amongst Muslims, and all

6 those who want to harm them need to leave. I don't want the population to be

7 affected." And this is at transcript 106 in French, page 8.

8 Do you remember him saying this inside the church?

9 A. [11:41:46] That specific sentence, I don't recall it. However, on that occasion,

10 we were trying to obtain from him softer words in order to secure -- to make the

11 population feel more secure.

12 Q. [11:42:30] Thank you. I'm going to quote another two sentences, and you'll tell

13 me whether you remember those as part of the speech.

14 Do you recall that he mentioned the work of the gendarmerie and the police saying

15 that: "Without any police and gendarmerie, the country cannot be in peace, and

16 when I want to do things, I first turn to the Sangaris before I start working"?

17 Do you remember that?

18 A. [11:43:07] I don't remember that anymore.

19 Q. [11:43:19] Thank you. Do you remember -- and that's my last quote of

20 Mr Yekatom in the church on that day.

21 Do you remember him referring to an incident during which he had surrendered to

22 MISCA, people who were fleeing, so that they could be protected in PK9, because on

23 the road to Petevo people were throwing stones at them and beating them up?

24 A. [11:43:55] I don't remember that either.

25 Q. [11:44:16] Regarding somebody else in the church, do you remember that the

1 leader of the Muslim said that they all wanted to leave, nobody wanted to stay?

2 A. [11:44:35] Yes. It might have been the delegate, the representative of the  
3 Muslim community who is from Chad.

4 Q. [11:44:57] Thank you. When you met my colleagues - it's page 1258 - you said  
5 that after the meeting the temperature went down; that people who had been wound  
6 up just came down -- calmed down in terms of temperature. Can you confirm this?

7 A. [11:45:27] I confirm that things calmed down, i.e., the temperature came down,  
8 so to speak. Not -- because during the meeting in Jeanne d'Arc, we had reached an  
9 agreement between the three parties, i.e., the prefect and its administration, the  
10 Muslim community and the Rambo team. That's not at all the case.

11 It was rather because when the meeting was over in the Jeanne d'Arc church, after the  
12 meeting we went to the bus station of Mbaïki, and there, there was a very dense  
13 crowd waiting, and there a message was given, delivered to this crowd. They were  
14 told that no one in either community should assault the other community. Should  
15 that be the case, the perpetrators of such act would be sanctioned. And that's what  
16 calmed everybody down. Those who had thought about acting otherwise and who  
17 thought that, with the arrival of Rambo, they would be given an order that they could  
18 start assaulting, and since that was not the case, from then on the tension came down.  
19 And people were afraid. They feared for themselves.

20 Q. [11:48:40] Thank you very much for these clarifications.

21 The person I mentioned earlier on, Mr Aboubakar Diakite, said to this Court and in  
22 his statement: "What we noticed was that the Anti-Balaka were not overall pleased  
23 with the meeting and pleased with what Rambo had said, because what they wanted  
24 was to kill and plunder."

25 Just after Rambo's speech, they started saying: "We don't agree with what Rambo has



1 said. He has to let us do what we want." It's transcript 106, page 8, and for the  
2 statement, it's CAR-OTP-2104-0274.

3 Did you notice such reactions amongst the young people of the Anti-Balaka after the  
4 speech made by Mr Yekatom? Did you notice people who were unhappy?

5 A. [11:50:04] Yes, I heard such words. I heard them myself. So much so that, I  
6 was myself accused by the population, who were saying that it is because of the  
7 prefect that Rambo has made such a speech.

8 And regarding Rambo himself, he was blamed for -- he was blamed and it was  
9 alleged that he had received from the Muslim community money in order to \*take a  
10 step back.

11 Q. [11:51:17] Thank you again for these clarifications.

12 Another person met by the OTP -- I refer you to CAR-OTP-2056-0412. That person  
13 explains that the members of Mr Yekatom say that he is corrupt and throw stones at  
14 him and insult him. Do you remember that, and do you remember the fact that  
15 Mr Yekatom was insulted and that people were throwing stones at him? Do you  
16 remember that?

17 A. [11:52:04] Mr Yekatom had left the venue of the meeting of the bus station while  
18 I was present. And while I was there, I did not notice that stones were thrown at  
19 him. But the allegations about his \*taking a step back and the fact that he may have  
20 been corrupted by the Muslim population, \*yes I did hear that being said with my  
21 own ears. And some people even said that it was the prefect, i.e., myself, who had  
22 influenced Rambo during his speech so that -- because I was entirely in favour of the  
23 Muslims. So they were accusing me of corruption.

24 Q. [11:53:25] Thank you, Mr Kouroupe-Awo. I'm going to change to another  
25 topic.

1 In paragraph 53 of your statement, you say that -- before the arrival of the Anti-Balaka  
2 members, you say that the Chadian members had discussed with the Chadian  
3 authorities in order to discuss their evacuation. If I am not mistaken, and you can  
4 correct me, when you meet my colleagues, on page 1244, you were more precise as to  
5 the time it happened. Because you said that these meetings had happened one or  
6 two weeks before the meeting in the church -- in the cathedral.

7 THE INTERPRETER: [11:54:26] Says the interpreter.

8 MS CASIEZ: [11:54:29](Interpretation)

9 Q. [11:54:30] So I would like to know if these meetings one or two weeks before the  
10 meeting at the cathedral, was you with the Muslim community or the Muslim  
11 community on its own. But could you maybe let us know what are the different  
12 stages leading up to the meeting in the cathedral.

13 A. (Overlapping speakers)

14 MS CASIEZ: (Overlapping speakers)

15 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:54:49] Just a second.

16 Ms Henderson.

17 MS HENDERSON: [11:54:51] Your Honour, it's to do with the procedure being  
18 followed, because this interview, or the transcript of interview with the witness is not  
19 in evidence. It hasn't entered via Rule 68(3). It's now being put as a fact that he  
20 said these things. Of course, the Prosecution has no doubt that he has. The  
21 Prosecution has had the chance to listen to the audio and verify the transcript, but it  
22 comes back to our point, that maybe counsel has had the chance to consider it, and  
23 that if we want to depart from the witness having said these things and that being  
24 accepted by the Court, then it can simply go in 68(3), and the Prosecution would have  
25 no objection to that.

1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:55:29] Ms Dimitri.

2 MS DIMITRI: [11:55:30] Thank you, Mr President.

3 The problem is that this interview was not part of the familiarisation package. So the  
4 time it would require for the witness to read it, familiarise himself with it, it's in my  
5 opinion, it wouldn't be -- it wouldn't expedite the current proceedings. And, second,  
6 I know it's not in evidence, and this is exactly what Ms Casiez is doing. She's just  
7 citing extracts and asking him to confirm so they become in evidence.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:55:58] Yeah, I understand. So, however, as I  
9 said before the break, in future instances, we would really prefer if the parties -- if  
10 both parties have conducted interviews, that we -- to have an equal footing here, that  
11 we have both statements into evidence. And, of course, you can put to the witness.  
12 The witness can say, "No, I haven't said that." So, yeah, you can continue.

13 But Ms Henderson has a point. It would have been -- it would have shortened  
14 significantly and also broaden a little bit the basis of the testimony of this witness.  
15 Mr Vanderpuye.

16 MR VANDERPUYE: [11:56:41] Sorry, just quickly, Mr President. It could simply  
17 be put to the witness whether or not he has a recollection of what he said, whether he  
18 stands by what he said. He doesn't necessarily need to read the whole thing through  
19 to know what he said to the investigators. If he recalls it, and certainly if there is  
20 anything they put to him as a result of that, he can clarify as well.

21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:57:01] Well, 86 pages, it's difficult. And,  
22 normally, we have the procedure. We don't want to change that now. But you  
23 have a point. It is not -- what you are saying would not be impossible, so to speak.  
24 But it's 86 pages. And, normally, the procedure is, indeed, that the witness has the  
25 opportunity to reread it, and then we have a much better foundation for this

1 procedure.

2 Continue.

3 MS CASIEZ: [11:57:25] Thank you, Mr President.

4 Q. [11:57:27](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, do you want me to repeat my  
5 question, or can you answer it?

6 A. [11:57:39] I can answer it now.

7 The decision that was made to ask the hierarchy, be it from the administration or  
8 from the Chadian representation in Bangui, i.e., the Central African Republic, we are  
9 talking about the embassy, that decision was taken and discussed during the meeting  
10 in St Jeanne d'Arc. It is only on that occasion. And I had informally negotiated  
11 with some Muslim dignitaries and asked them to approach the Chad embassy so that  
12 when trucks coming from Chad would reach Bangui, that some \*elements could be  
13 put at the disposal of the Muslim community in Mbaïki in order to take them to  
14 Bangui and maybe elsewhere, at least temporarily, while waiting for things to calm  
15 down some day because the tension was too high. And many people, especially  
16 young people, who were improvising themselves as Balaka, were about to assault the  
17 Muslim community, the Muslim population.

18 At no point at the time have I organised meetings before that meeting at Jeanne d'Arc  
19 on this topic. And during the meeting in Jeanne d'Arc, I had the support of the  
20 bishop, the HCR representative, the DRC representative. And they were all present  
21 at this meeting. And that's how we were organised.

22 Q. [12:01:07] Thank you very much for these points of clarification.

23 So if I quote something or if I believe that I have understood something and that it is  
24 not the case, it is absolutely the time for you to say so. So I thank you very much for  
25 that.

1 Now, at paragraph 53 of the statement, you say that before the meeting at the  
2 church -- now, wait a moment.

3 "Before that meeting, just to be sure, the representative from the Muslim community  
4 from Mali had also told me that they would leave with the Chadian Muslims if the  
5 latter were being evacuated." End of quote.

6 Now, when you met with my colleagues - and these are pages 1243-1244 - you went  
7 on to specify, when speaking about a representative of the community of Mali, quote:  
8 "He told me that by virtue of Muslim solidarity, he could not remain. The others  
9 and -- could not stay unless it would -- otherwise it would be badly interpreted -- or  
10 misinterpreted." End of quote.

11 It would be interpreted as if they had abandoned their other Muslim brothers. They  
12 had also to withdraw.

13 Do you have any recollection of having said that, and can you confirm it?

14 A. [12:02:50] Yes, I can confirm it, because there was such hatred towards the  
15 Muslim population. And I refer to it at an earlier stage. This hatred was directed  
16 mostly at the Chadian community. And as such, the Malians and those from Niger  
17 were not really disliked by the indigenous population.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:03:50] Well, not dislike or disliked?

19 MS CASIEZ: [12:04:00](No interpretation)

20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:04:01] Okay. Yeah. Thank you.

21 MS CASIEZ: [12:04:11](Interpretation)

22 Q. [12:04:11] Thank you, Mr Kouroupe-Awo.

23 Now, on the day of departure -- of the departure of the Chadians in the lorries, did  
24 you hear or see - I don't know whether you were there - see that the people in charge  
25 of the evacuation were obliging people to get into those lorries?

1 A. [12:04:38] Before the transport vehicles arrived, the entire Muslim population  
2 that had been informed of the arrival of said trucks had prepared themselves for their  
3 departure. And I say, and I underscore without any exception, the entire Muslim  
4 population of Mbaïki was at the ready to leave. Some had entrusted their homes to  
5 their neighbourhood or some of their possessions to their neighbours. And on the  
6 day of the departure, they had come to wait for the lorries.

7 What was noted was that the Chadian soldiers were not from MISCA or MINUSCA.  
8 These were Chadian soldiers who had come on those lorries, and they were helping  
9 their compatriots get on board, but they were a little heavy-handed towards those  
10 who wanted to get on board, either because some of them wanted to transport too  
11 many possessions, or because, physically speaking, some of them were not able to  
12 quickly climb into the lorries. And what is true is that the Chadian soldiers who had  
13 come to help their compatriots travel were quite heavy-handed.

14 Q. [12:06:59] Thank you for clarifying that point once again.

15 Now, was it clear for the population of Mbaïki that all the Chadian Muslims had left  
16 the town?

17 A. [12:07:20] Yes. The indigenous population of Mbaïki knew that the entire  
18 Muslim community was going to leave, but they were taken by surprise that the  
19 deputy mayor stayed behind. That one single member stayed behind.

20 Q. [12:07:50] Thank you. At paragraph 61 of your statement, you say that some of  
21 the Muslims tried to, without any success, enter because the anti-Muslim sentiment in  
22 Mbaïki was very strong, especially after it was reported that a church in Fatima had  
23 been attacked by Muslims -- some of the Muslims attempted to return.

24 THE INTERPRETER: [12:08:22] Correction.

25 MS CASIEZ: [12:08:23](Interpretation)

1 Q. [12:08:24] So this anti-Muslim sentiment that you talk about was within the  
2 non-Muslim community of Mbaïki; is that correct?

3 A. [12:08:32] Yes, that is correct. Because the Fatima neighbourhood is, for the  
4 most part, inhabited by those hailing from la Lobaye, generally, and from Mbaïki,  
5 more specifically.

6 Q. [12:09:09] Thank you. I have the transcript of a press conference conducted  
7 subsequent to the mission in Boda in May 2014 by Gaétan Moloto and others. But  
8 Gaétan Moloto was the head of the mission.

9 Now, I'm going to be providing the reference. And for the time being, I do not  
10 believe that we need to bring it up on the screen. We are talking here about tab 25,  
11 CAR-OTP-2127-6298. Now, quite simply, my first question to you: You were a  
12 member of said mission with Mr Moloto, Fidele Banale, José Ngoïta \*and Martial  
13 Boboya.

14 You were part of that mission, were you not?

15 A. [12:10:12] That is correct, because they were all members of the National  
16 Transition Council, and they came to impart messages of peace to the population.

17 Q. [12:10:48] Thank you. I'm now going to be referring to pages 6206 and 6306.

18 THE INTERPRETER: [12:10:57] 6306-6307, corrects the interpreter.

19 MS CASIEZ: (Interpretation)

20 Q. [12:11:03] And in this press conference given by Mr Moloto, there are a number  
21 of things indicated, namely, that Mbata and Pissa populations were very happy at the  
22 departure of the Muslims. And a bit further on, the population of Mongoumba is  
23 asking for those Muslims who have left under their own steam to never return.  
24 And you, who were still *préfet* after the events, would you agree with me to say that  
25 the anti-Muslim sentiment remained very strong amongst the local Christian

1 population of Mbaïki and la Lobaye, and that it even persists today?

2 A. [12:11:58] Yes. The anti-Muslim sentiment or feeling remained for quite some  
3 time amongst the population, especially in Pissa and in Mbata, also Bangui-Bouchia  
4 and Safa, because these are the villages where the Seleka had wreaked havoc. This  
5 sentiment had started to recede in Mbaïki centre because, even some of the  
6 inhabitants, some of the young people came to Bangui to meet some of the Muslims  
7 with whom they had lived previously. And these Muslims would give them things  
8 to go and sell in Mbaïki. So this feeling of hatred had -- was somewhat diminished  
9 in Mbaïki centre, but it had remained high in other localities.

10 Q. [12:13:49] Thank you, Mr Kouroupe-Awo.

11 Now, at an earlier stage, we briefly broached the subject of Mr Débat, and you said  
12 that you had heard things about him. To your knowledge, was he rejected by the  
13 population of Mbaïki because he had been accused of having masterminded a young  
14 person in Boda who was killed on a bridge towards Wakombo? Is that something  
15 you heard about?

16 A. [12:14:32] It was really because the local population was saying that he had  
17 received weapons from the Seleka and that he had readied himself to stand up to the  
18 situation when this situation would deteriorate and that, as a result, in his compound,  
19 he had Peuhl whom he had provided with weapons. So it was more for that reason  
20 that a hatred -- he had been the target of hatred. As for other cases, well, I'm not  
21 aware of that.

22 Q. [12:15:44] Thank you. I'm going to be talking about somebody else now. Do  
23 you know Mr Pombot Jean Pierre Dedieu Ibrahim, a Christian from Mbaïki who  
24 converted to Islam and who was a secretary of the Islamic community in the Central  
25 African Republic and in the area of or region of la Lobaye?



1 A. [12:16:16] Not at all.

2 Q. [12:16:36] Thank you. On Monday, and on a number of occasions, you spoke  
3 about people who would invent themselves as Anti-Balakas, and I'd like to come back  
4 to that.

5 With my colleagues in Bangui, you provided a very specific description of how one  
6 can describe an Anti-Balaka, and I would like you to provide us with further details.

7 It's at page 1216.

8 You say: "Well, it was difficult for me to know that there were Balaka in those  
9 villages because those Balaka are difficult to pinpoint. Apparently, the Balakas were  
10 a little bit of everybody. The Christian population, whoever, could, you know,  
11 invent themselves as a Balaka. And it was also the opportunity for some people to  
12 steal, to loot, and all of that. So they would invent themselves as a Balaka. And if  
13 they invented themselves as Anti-Balaka, they would be able to do the same as the  
14 Seleka had done. So all those who were Seleka, they would loot. If you invent  
15 yourself as a Balaka, you can then become a looter."

16 Now, do you remember having said that? Do you want to confirm that or add  
17 anything to it? But please wait a moment because my colleague has raised an  
18 objection.

19 MS HENDERSON: [12:18:17] Your Honour, it would be fair -- particularly because  
20 the whole interview was not in evidence, it would be fair, in our submission, for the  
21 next paragraph to be read as well to the witness for him to comment.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:18:25] Please let us know exactly what you  
23 mean. So for -- for the record also.

24 MS HENDERSON: [12:18:32] Shall I read the next paragraph on to the record?

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:18:35] Yes, please. Please.

- 1 MS HENDERSON: [12:18:36] I'll cite in French.
- 2 THE INTERPRETER: [12:18:37] Could the interpreter have the line number, please.
- 3 MS HENDERSON: [12:18:39] I'll just make sure I'm picking it from the right spot.
- 4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:18:40] And the line number, please, for the  
5 interpretation.
- 6 MS HENDERSON: [12:18:42] So my learned friend has cited to page 1216, from  
7 line 10 to 17, and I'm now going to read out line 18 to 21 in French.  
8 (Interpretation) "That's what it is. So it was difficult. Well, with the exception of  
9 those who were wearing uniform. Well, okay. These were Balaka, the army. The  
10 rest -- rest of it was a mixture of people. You can't know who was Balaka and who  
11 wasn't. But there were many Balaka. Well ..."
- 12 (Speaks English) And that's the end.
- 13 MS CASIEZ: [12:19:29] Thank you, Mr President.
- 14 Q. [12:19:31](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, I believe you followed and -- both  
15 the parts that we cited, myself and my colleague, and you confirm what you have  
16 already said with regard to this part?
- 17 A. [12:19:49] I can confirm. And I would say that, with the exception of those who  
18 were wearing uniform and who were deemed to be leaders, there were many other  
19 people who -- in particular, young men who wanted to pass themselves off as Balakas  
20 in order to make the most of the situation at the time. And let me underscore that  
21 that was looting.
- 22 Q. [12:20:56] Thank you. And have I understood correctly that this myriad of  
23 small groups or gatherings of individuals who were inventing themselves - how  
24 could I put it? - that movement or those groups would emerge when the Seleka was  
25 still in the region?

1 A. [12:21:29] They started to emerge when the Seleka was there, and then really  
2 became more prominent once the Seleka had left.

3 Q. [12:21:54] If we now talk specifically about Mbaïki, you said to my colleagues,  
4 page 1259, that at the time of the meeting in the cathedral, neither Mr Yekatom or his  
5 elements had yet set up in Mbaïki. Would you be in agreement with that?

6 A. [12:22:21] Yes. They had not yet set up in Mbaïki because they were based in  
7 Pissa. And until that day, until the evening preceding the departure of the Seleka,  
8 they were waiting for me to confirm to them that the bipartite Seleka and Anti-Balaka  
9 meeting requested by the team of Rambo. However, some elements had infiltrated  
10 in Mbaïki and others were on the outskirts between Mbaïki and Pissa.

11 Q. [12:23:33] Thank you. Now, to your knowledge, one of the \*ad hoc Anti-Balaka  
12 or self-defence groups in Mbaïki was led by a local youngster, Victor Kobo; is that  
13 correct?

14 A. [12:23:58] I no longer recall this name. But in Mbaïki, there was not a leader, a  
15 specific Seleka leader as such. It was only upon the arrival -- or specific Balaka. It  
16 was only upon the arrival of the Balaka from Pissa that movements started to appear.  
17 And until then, the people were hiding.

18 Q. [12:25:06] Thank you. I'm going to speak briefly about Boda. At paragraph 51  
19 of your statement, you speak of Coeur de Lion who was killed in Boda. A person  
20 met by the Office of the Prosecution - let me provide you with the reference,  
21 CAR-OTP-2127-0155, at paragraph 37 - says that, before leaving for Boda, I quote:  
22 "Coeur de Lion called the *préfet* into his office. He asked him for the weapons that  
23 the latter had on his person to take them to Boda. The *préfet* was looking for  
24 weapons belonging to the gendarmerie. The *préfet* refused to hand him over the  
25 rifles, and Coeur de Lion started shouting at him."

1 I see that you're frowning. I'd just like to know whether this corresponds to what  
2 you experienced.

3 A. [12:26:39] This is entirely false, because on the day that Coeur de Lion had taken  
4 the decision to go to Boda, we were just coming out of a meeting at the town hall in  
5 Mbaïki. When I withdrew, the Anti-Balaka group, headed up by Coeur de Lion,  
6 withdrew in order to lead discussions. And it was subsequent to that sub-meeting, if  
7 you like, that he himself had taken the decision to go to Boda.  
8 Coeur de Lion couldn't ask me for weapons because they, he and some members of  
9 the team, had disarmed a patrol team of the interior security forces, and those  
10 weapons -- they had confiscated those weapons. So Coeur de Lion never went to the  
11 *préfet*, nor did he call the *préfet* over the telephone to ask for any weapons whatsoever.  
12 This is entirely false.

13 Q. [12:29:04] Thank you. My last question on Coeur de Lion, because you met  
14 with my colleagues - and this is at page 1263 - you said, when speaking of Coeur de  
15 Lion, that he was very powerful. And you went on to say that there was a meeting  
16 with the Sangaris, and that it was on that day that I discovered that there was a  
17 certain individual, Coeur de Lion, who was Rambo's deputy, who apparently \*led his  
18 elements, he organised things. Can you confirm that today?

19 A. [12:29:45] I can confirm that when Coeur de Lion attended that meeting where  
20 the Sangaris were in attendance, he was seen as a leader. And as he was named as  
21 Rombhot's deputy, some people even went as far as to say of him that he was even  
22 more powerful and braver than Rombhot. That's all that I knew of him.

23 Q. [12:30:40] I thank you.

24 I'm going to come back to the mission with Moloto. I'm jumping around a lot, but let  
25 me reassure that, in reality, I'm not too far from wrapping up. Today for sure. Let's

1 see.

2 Now, let me come back to the mission with Moloto that we talked about earlier on.

3 I'd like to show you a document. The report is of the Parliamentary mission of peace  
4 and reconciliation in la Lobaye and can be found at tab 20 of the Defence folder,  
5 CAR-D29-0005-0392.

6 Could we maybe display page 0396. And I take this opportunity to thank you -- to  
7 thank you for displaying all those documents. Thank you.

8 So, on the first half of the page, Mr Kouroupe-Awo, I think you can read, "In this  
9 town" - we're talking about Boganangone - "In this town, the situation is quite  
10 specific: Peuhl populations have been massacred, found refuge with the Catholic  
11 priest of the Saint Daniel Comboni church. The Peuhl are being protected by the  
12 Anti-Balaka of Boganagone against the Anti-Balaka coming from la Mbi and Yaloke  
13 who are known for being more violent."

14 Are you familiar with this? Is this something that you have heard about, the  
15 situation in Boganangone?

16 A. [12:32:50] Of course. And I had personally given instructions to some  
17 dignitaries in Boganangone to ask them to assist these Peuhl populations, and this  
18 was done with the Catholic church leaders based in Mbaïki and, more specifically, the  
19 bishop. It is with their support that this instruction was given, and it worked well.

20 Q. [12:33:44] Thank you. And every time you mention the bishop, since the  
21 beginning of your testimony, are you talking about Monsignor Perrin Guerrino, that  
22 is known under the name of "Rhino"? Is that him?

23 A. [12:34:02] Yes, it is him.

24 Q. [12:34:09] Thank you. And regarding this situation in Boganangone, I  
25 understand that there are some Anti-Balakas that come from -- from la Mbi and

1 Yaloke, i.e., from outside of la Lobaye. So can you confirm that there were  
2 incursions of Anti-Balaka from outside la Lobaye into la Lobaye?  
3 A. [12:34:42] Yes. Anti-Balaka members from the prefecture of Ombella-M'Poko,  
4 and more specifically from the sub-prefecture of Boali, Yaloke and Bossembélé, and  
5 they would lead incursions in the sub-prefecture of la Lobaye, like Boganda. But not  
6 very often in Boganda, but more often in Boganangone and Boda. And it was them  
7 who had really stirred things up in those sub-prefectures, and they had influenced  
8 young people in Boda and they had encouraged them to improvise themselves as  
9 Anti-Balaka. So it was more under the influence of Anti-Balaka of these outer  
10 regions that youngsters were acting. They were agitated, and they would disturb  
11 the prevailing situation, calm situation for the Muslims communities and indigenous  
12 communities.

13 MS HENDERSON: [12:36:32] Thank you to Ms Casiez, your Honour. It's just a  
14 remark that it would perhaps be useful to the Chamber to know what the time period  
15 is for this and also the witness's basis of knowledge.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:36:37] Perhaps you can pick that up.

17 MS CASIEZ: [12:36:45](Interpretation)

18 Q. [12:36:46] Mr Kouroupe-Awo, I think you have heard my colleague.  
19 Regarding the specific situation in Boganangone, I see that it's in May 2014. When  
20 you talk about these incursions of Anti-Balakas coming from other regions in some of  
21 the villages of la Lobaye, when exactly are we talking about? What period are we  
22 talking about?

23 A. [12:37:17] When in Boda -- I can't remember the specific month, but it was from  
24 the beginning of 2014 that Anti-Balaka from these outer regions came to Boda,  
25 Boganangone and Boganda. There was more specifically one that I remember. I

1 remember his pseudonym. We called him 88, and it was very often him who would  
2 come.

3 Q. [12:38:23] Thank you. And the second clarification that was asked for is how  
4 do you know that? I know that we have mentioned your chain of command and  
5 indicators and how it worked, but could you maybe tell us a few words about it.

6 A. [12:38:50] When I started looking into the conflict between communities in Boda  
7 with an extension in Boganangone, I would very often come to stay in Boda because  
8 there was no sub-prefect. And the population, everybody was talking about all  
9 those things done by the Anti-Balaka, coming from outside, from Ombella-M'Poko,  
10 and more specifically from this 88. And the police -- the enforcement officers,  
11 gendarme and policemen, that were still present in Boda would give me information  
12 during that time. And with the enforcement authorities, we were trying to catch this  
13 so-called 88, but he seemed to be unattainable and a magician, a so-called magician,  
14 very difficult to catch, very elusive.

15 Q. [12:40:34] Thank you very much for these clarifications. Once again, on  
16 paragraph 77 of your statement, you talk about the murder of the mayor of -- the  
17 murder of Adamou Dewa, mayor of Nola. And you say that he was killed by some  
18 people coming from PK25 in Boda and that this information was given to you by  
19 Youssoufa. Are we talking about Nana Youssouf?

20 A. [12:41:08] That is who we are talking about, the brother of the person who died.

21 Q. [12:41:21] Another witness that the Prosecutor met, CAR-OTP-2102-0235,  
22 paragraph 36, explains that it is also Youssoufa who told him. And he says that  
23 Youssoufa said that Massako Louis, Mokonzi Melvy, Nzokpian Cyril, Demou Nestor,  
24 Guereko Etienne, and Dopani Firmin were involved in the assault. Did Nana  
25 Youssouf also give you these names?

1 A. [12:42:23] Nana Youssouf resided where his brother had been killed, and he is a  
2 former resident of the area. And, therefore, he could indeed have known those  
3 people who had acted. And since that had occurred during daytime, he was in a  
4 position to have noticed them.

5 The name that I still remember is the name of Nzokpian. I said that he was also very  
6 active in that area, 52 kilometres from Mbaïki, and he had been killed in Boda by  
7 MINUSCA because he had tried to be involved in Boda to benefit from the situation,  
8 to make the most of the situation, as all the others who claimed themselves as being  
9 Anti-Balaka.

10 Q. [12:44:02] Thank you. I'll come back to him in a minute. But before that I  
11 would like to listen an audio recording, tab 8 of the Defence folder,  
12 CAR-OTP-2042-3231. The transcription is at tab 9, CAR-D29-0006-0608. To remind  
13 you of the context, it is an interview -- your interview dating back to 10 March 2014.  
14 We can hear the entire recording that lasts for 1 minute and 20 seconds.

15 THE COURT OFFICER: [12:45:01] Your Honours, the transcript will be on the  
16 evidence 1 channel, and the video will be on the evidence 2 channel.

17 (Viewing of the video excerpt)

18 THE INTERPRETER: [12:45:29](Interpretation of the video excerpt) "The usual  
19 domicile has calmed down. Things seem to be happening well, despite the presence  
20 of Anti-Balaka. They came, but they did not trouble the situation."

21 And the interpreters do not have the script and apologise.

22 (Interpretation of the video excerpt) "There's another concern. All the conditions  
23 should be gathered to allow for all activities to resume, because, for example, children  
24 don't go to school; hospitals, people don't go there. So there are a few problems. So  
25 people really have to emphasise the reinforcement of security, especially at level of



1 MISCA, so that we can reassure the population so that normal and daily activities can  
2 resume, and so that we can put the country back on track."

3 MS CASIEZ: [12:46:48](Interpretation)

4 Q. [12:46:48] Mr Kouroupe-Awo, just to be certain, you are the person we hear on  
5 this interview?

6 A. [12:46:56] Yes, this is me.

7 Q. [12:47:05] And am I right to say that what you said at the time matched the  
8 analysis -- your analysis of the situation at the time?

9 A. [12:47:18] Yes.

10 Q. [12:47:18] And how the situation was evolving?

11 A. [12:47:26] Yes.

12 Q. [12:47:32] From what you say here, I understand that MISCA is there to secure  
13 the prefecture area. Did I understand correctly?

14 A. [12:47:47] Yes. MISCA's mandate was to secure the entire prefecture area.

15 Q. [12:48:02] When you met my colleagues, pages 1279 and 1280, you said, while  
16 talking about Mr Yekatom:

17 "From time to time, it could be me or it could be MISCA who would tell him: be  
18 careful, because the elements who are there and who claim to be under his orders are  
19 acting wrongly, and maybe he could go there and put things in order before 'coming  
20 back'."

21 Could you first confirm that that is what you said.

22 A. [12:49:00] Yes, I can confirm.

23 Q. [12:49:10] On Monday, at 12.38, you said, I quote:

24 "MISCA had information according to which in some places in the locality some  
25 people acted on behalf of the accused. I do not know how they considered

1 themselves, but they claimed they were under his command. And we discovered  
2 that in fact they were acting on their own behalf and not on behalf of the accused."  
3 So, just to clarify, because at another point, at 12.33, you said that MINUSCA, or  
4 yourself, were calling upon Mr Yekatom so that he could draw the attention of some  
5 of his elements who were perpetrating offences in some places in the locality.  
6 So let us clarify. When you said that Mr Yekatom was trying to restore order, he  
7 would do it with people who claimed to be under his command but who were not  
8 necessarily his elements. Did I understand you well?

9 A. [12:50:41] Yes, that is correct. Because in some places, I'm not confirming that  
10 all these people were elements coming from Rambo's team, but they claimed that they  
11 were acting on his behalf, and that is true. And when this information was given to  
12 him, he would go to that place to try and find out what was the situation and to find  
13 solutions locally, in his own way.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:51:47] Ms Henderson, using a gap?

15 MS HENDERSON: [12:51:48] Yes. Precision there in terms of what incidents we  
16 are talking about and how -- basically how the witness knew about this,  
17 fundamentally, is what would be of assistance in how to interpret this evidence.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:52:03] With regard to your last answer,  
19 Mr Witness, what is your source of information for that? If you may provide us with  
20 this information, too.

21 THE WITNESS: [12:52:22](Interpretation) If I talk about the village of Boboua that  
22 was located at 50 kilometres from Mbaïki where Nana Youssoufa resided - we talked  
23 about him a minute ago - from this village, I often received information about  
24 exactions carried out by the so-called Anti-Balaka. They would go into the fields.  
25 They would go into the forest and threaten people, and they tried to loot. So I

1 regularly received such information, because I carried particular attention to some  
2 localities that were often mentioned to me and where I was told about the actions of  
3 some young people in those localities. And this I tell you very truthfully, I used to  
4 receive regularly some information, and the source was the inhabitants of the locality  
5 themselves.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:54:02] Thank you very much.

7 Since I'm speaking now, perhaps I can use the opportunity. Perhaps it might  
8 be -- might make sense to shorten the lunch break today so that we have at least the  
9 chance to finish in the afternoon. That does not mean that Ms Casiez, necessarily,  
10 has to use two hours in the afternoon.

11 So let's now have the lunch break until 2 o'clock. It's 5 minutes.

12 Or do you have a question that is -- do you want to wrap something up at a certain  
13 point?

14 MS CASIEZ: [12:54:32] Thank you, Mr President. Actually, I have a specific  
15 example, one document --

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:54:38] Absolutely. I was too fast then. Of  
17 course, please.

18 MS CASIEZ: [12:54:43] Thank you.

19 Q. [12:54:44](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, it is related to what we are saying  
20 now. So I would like to show you a document before the break. It's tab 10 of the  
21 Defence folder, CAR-D29-0002-0086.

22 (Speaks English) And I'm not sure if -- I think it's confidential, so yeah.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:55:22] Not to be displayed.

24 MS CASIEZ: [12:55:24] Not to be displayed.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:55:25] But what is it, first of all, so that we

1 understand what we are talking about?

2 MS CASIEZ: [12:55:32](Interpretation)

3 Q. [12:55:33] So these are notes for -- a documentary for Ndeke Luka signed by  
4 Michel Martial Boboya, the journalist we mentioned earlier on, and the date is  
5 15 April 2014. Mr Kouroupe-Awo, it might be a bit difficult to read the whole thing,  
6 so I'm going to read, and then I'll have a question, because I want to know if this  
7 illustrates correctly what you were talking about regarding the collaboration between  
8 Mr Yekatom, yourself and MISCA.

9 So: "Fake Anti-Balakas are a danger for peace and security in CAR. That is the  
10 statement made by Alfred Rombo who is responsible of Anti-Balakas of  
11 Ombella-M'Poko and la Lobaye. \*He presented to the local authorities six men who  
12 claimed to be Anti-Balaka and five weapons and 10 rudimentary weapons at the  
13 residency in la Lobaye. This tour led him \*in turn to Batalimo, Mbata, Boboua,  
14 Bossako, Mbanza and Karama. This shows that these so-called militias have carried  
15 out robbery, looting and torture on the inhabitants of these villages. According to  
16 Alfred Rombo, the objective is to disarm these fake militias that affect the local  
17 population, and it is aimed at helping MISCA restore the freedom of circulation of  
18 people and their goods in the prefecture of la Lobaye and Ombella-M'Poko. And the  
19 local authorities have appreciated this initiative."

20 So it was a bit long, but I would like to know if this article illustrates correctly what  
21 you were just talking about.

22 A. [12:58:06] Perfectly.

23 Q. [12:58:11] (No interpretation)

24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:58:13] The witness obviously has a recollection  
25 on it because this is a specific incident mentioning certain villages, and he has said he

1 recalls it. So ...

2 MS CASIEZ: [12:58:28](Interpretation)

3 Q. [12:58:30] One last question. To your knowledge, the six people who are  
4 mentioned here, who claim to be Anti-Balaka and with hunting weapons, five  
5 hunting weapons, to your knowledge, are these people under the command of  
6 Captain Nzokpian that you were mentioning earlier on?

7 A. [12:58:55] Nzokpian was not a captain. He had improvised himself. He was  
8 claiming to be Anti-Balaka, and he was acting with a number of people in the villages  
9 that have been mentioned by the correspondence of Ndeke Luka.

10 I recall perfectly that at the residency of the prefect, I received people that Rombhot  
11 had brought back from a mission that he had carried out, and some weapons, very  
12 often malfunctioning, were also given then.

13 As regards the number, the figure of six, I cannot confirm, but I can confirm having  
14 seen these people in the vehicle belonging to Rombhot, and the weapons as well.  
15 That is true.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [13:00:03] Break until 2 o'clock.

17 THE COURT USHER: [13:00:06] All rise.

18 (Recess taken at 1.00 p.m.)

19 (Upon resuming in open session at 2.03 p.m.)

20 THE COURT USHER: [14:03:12] All rise.

21 Please be seated.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:03:26] Ms Casiez, you have the floor.

23 MS CASIEZ: [14:03:30] Thank you, Mr President.

24 Q. [14:03:33](Interpretation) Good afternoon, Mr Kouroupe-Awo. I have three or  
25 four matters to cover with you, and then I will have finished for today, let me

1 reassure you.

2 Now, on Monday you spoke about the arrival of Catherine Samba-Panza in Mbaïki,  
3 11.58, with Mr Le Drian, the French minister of foreign affairs. And I just have one  
4 specific question in this regard.

5 Would you agree that there was just one presidential visit with the minister -- the  
6 French minister of foreign affairs during that period? Do you agree?

7 A. [14:04:19] Of course, that was the only such visit.

8 Q. [14:04:27] Thank you. I will be playing a rather small -- a short excerpt of the  
9 video. I would just like to ask you to recognise somebody on the screen. This is tab  
10 18 of the Defence binder, CAR-OTP-2023-1636. And we will be playing five seconds  
11 of the video, from the minute 15:55 to 16:00. We do not need any sound, and we do  
12 not need any interpretation, specifically. I will let you have a look at the video and  
13 ask you if you recognise --

14 THE COURT USHER: [14:05:19] Counsel, before playing it, can it be played  
15 publicly?

16 MS CASIEZ: [14:05:22] Sorry, yes, it can be played publicly. And I think my  
17 colleague will play the video, if I'm not mistaken.

18 Q. [14:05:29](Interpretation) -- ask you if you recognise Jean-Jacques Demafouth.  
19 (Viewing of the video except)

20 MS CASIEZ: (Interpretation)

21 Q. [14:05:51] Mr Kouroupe-Awo, this was rather fast, but did you see on the  
22 screen -- did you see the video, and do you know the individual who is on the screen?

23 A. [14:06:07] In blue? The person in blue looks like --

24 Q. [14:06:15] I'm rather interested in the person in front with the glasses with the  
25 white and black patched shirt. Do you recognise Mr Jean-Jacques Demafouth?

1 Otherwise, if you don't, I'll change questions.

2 A. [14:06:34] No, that isn't Jean-Jacques Demafouth. No.

3 Q. [14:06:47] No problem, Mr Kouroupe-Awo. I shall be asking you a  
4 supplementary question concerning Mr Demafouth now, and I'm going to be  
5 referring to the transcript 047, at page 78-79 in the French.

6 And just before referring to that transcript, could you just confirm that Mr Demafouth  
7 was present during that meeting with Madam Catherine Samba-Panza and  
8 Mr Le Drian.

9 A. [14:07:31] I don't remember because Jean-Jacques Demafouth was more present  
10 in Boda. But in Mbaïki, I don't remember.

11 Q. [14:07:48] No problem, Mr Kouroupe-Awo. There were a lot of people on that  
12 day, and so I was referring to the transcript 047. Mr Demafouth came to testify  
13 publicly here, and he said, and here I quote: "Mbaïki, on the day that we had been  
14 with the president in February, the Anti-Balaka killed one of the last Muslims who  
15 had stayed in the town but in a very savage way, and that had totally discredited  
16 what we were trying to do in Mbaïki on that day."

17 And he also clarifies: "The president even spoke about this Muslim in the national  
18 language to the population. Unfortunately, just at the time that we were going to  
19 leave, the Anti-Balaka elements went to take him and killed him." End of the quote.  
20 My question is as follows: Did Mr Demafouth -- what did Mr Demafouth say with  
21 regard to that? Or did it correspond with what you remember? Or was there  
22 nothing specific and nobody was killed on that day?

23 A. [14:09:16] In my opinion, it's false. It's false what was said by Demafouth.  
24 When the president arrived in Mbaïki, the meeting was held in front of the  
25 sub-prefecture with all the delegations and the populations grouped together in front

1 of the sub-prefecture. And I asked that the deputy mayor or somebody else -- if I  
2 asked whether the mayor or somebody else had been killed on that day, which would  
3 harm the organisation -- which would have harmed the organisation. So I would say  
4 that it is false.

5 Q. [14:10:19] Thank you for this clarification.

6 I'm going to show you another document, and this is tab 21 of the Defence binder,  
7 CAR-D29-0004-1175. Now, here we have your telephone exchanges with your  
8 number ending in 7925. For example, you are in contact from 22 January 2014, and  
9 then in the coming days, some days in February, and then a bit less than ten times  
10 between March and November 2014.

11 With regard to the best of your memory, does it correspond with the type of  
12 exchanges that you had with Mr Yekatom by telephone?

13 A. [14:11:35] I can't remember that exactly. But what is true is that I did call him  
14 from time to time when it was necessary so to do.

15 Q. [14:11:57] Thank you. I have the same document but with your number ending  
16 in 0014. And I will perhaps simply mention the reference, tab 29 of the Defence  
17 binder, \*CAR-D29-0004-1176. And with this number, this telephone number, there  
18 are a dozen calls between you on 24 January and 28 February. I imagine it's the  
19 same answer that you -- I mentioned a number, but I think that I can then change my  
20 questions.

21 A. [14:12:59] I would say again that from the day that I was called upon by Colonel  
22 Anour, at that time I had started to become attached to Rambo in order to try to  
23 facilitate the meeting which could be held between the Seleka and the Anti-Balaka.  
24 If that number is shown, then I can certainly confirm that I had telephone contacts  
25 with him and, in particular, with the aim of arranging the situation. Perhaps even to



1 point out the facts to him.

2 But what is true is that from that moment, when I was called upon by the two

3 colonels, I had started to be attached to Rambo.

4 Q. [14:14:37] Thank you, Mr Kouroupe-Awo.

5 Now, still on this cooperation between Mr Yekatom and you and the authorities in

6 the region, a priest from Mbaïki, who we met during our investigations, told us that,

7 at a particular time, Mr Yekatom had even taken steps with the prefect of Lobaye to

8 open the gendarmerie and to put gendarme back in it, and it was to return to state

9 authority. That was the aim. And he freed the Mbata brigade, Ngoto and la Scad.

10 He used the Anti-Balaka elements to make it possible to have the means to do so

11 because they did not have weapons.

12 Does that correspond also with what you remember?

13 A. [14:15:40] Not at all.

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:15:50] Witness, did you want to add something?

15 THE WITNESS: [14:15:58](Interpretation) Yes.

16 Mr Rombhot, he could travel to Mbata, to la Scad but without me being made aware

17 of it, really, because he didn't have to report to me on everything that he wanted to do.

18 He wasn't bound to me by any type of hierarchy, and as such, he could try to install

19 order as he desired but without him being obliged to report to me or to notify me

20 prior thereto. He had no obligation in this regard.

21 MS CASIEZ: [14:17:11](Interpretation)

22 Q. [14:17:13] Thank you very much for this clarification.

23 Now, you just said a moment ago with the telephone calls that you would call

24 Mr Yekatom when there was a need to do so -- when it was necessary, I think, you

25 said. And with my colleagues - this was on page 1281 - you stated that: "In

1 particular, there was never negative behaviour towards me."

2 Would you confirm that?

3 A. [14:17:44] Yes, I confirm it. I never had clashes with him and he with me. He  
4 never showed himself in a negative light.

5 Q. [14:18:05] Thank you very much.

6 So you would confirm that you never said to anyone, and in particular, you never  
7 said to the major of Mbaïki, Mr Mongbandi, that Mr Yekatom wanted to kill you;  
8 that's correct, is it not?

9 A. [14:18:22] No, I never did.

10 Q. [14:18:30] Thank you. I am now going to speak about the murder of Mr Djido  
11 Saleh. And you spoke about that with my colleague and you mentioned his name  
12 this morning as well. And on Monday you told us, at 12:05, and that there were  
13 indicators -- well, you described the event, and you stated that one or two were  
14 following the group. Do you remember the names of these one or two people who  
15 were following the group? There were one or two informers, you said, who were  
16 following the group.

17 A. [14:19:10] These were young people from Mbaïki. I can no longer remember  
18 exactly their names.

19 Q. [14:19:20] Thank you very much. And when you met my colleagues - and this  
20 is 1266 and 67 -- you said Djido Saleh had called you personally by phone to tell you  
21 that he had heard that there was a group of people who were going towards his  
22 domicile. Is that correct?

23 THE INTERPRETER: [14:19:51] That's pages 1266 and 1267.

24 THE WITNESS: [14:19:57](Interpretation) Yes, Djido called me.

25 MS CASIEZ: [14:20:03](Interpretation)

1 Q. [14:20:03] Thank you very much. And still at the same reference, you explain  
2 that you spoke to him on the phone and that you told him, and here I quote you:  
3 "Very well, this is what I told you. I advised you to leave. Even if you don't leave  
4 for Chad, you're going to stay in Bangui because you participated in operations  
5 towards Bangui-Bouchia and towards Mbata yourself. You have a weapon in your  
6 hand, and you went with the Seleka and you took one of your vehicles from the  
7 Seleka to go to this operation -- or you lent one of your vehicles to the Seleka."

8 THE INTERPRETER: [14:20:54] Corrects the interpreter.

9 MS CASIEZ: [14:20:55](Interpretation)

10 Q. [14:20:55] Is this what you said on the phone at the time?

11 A. [14:21:02] Yes, that's what I had said.

12 Q. [14:21:14] I'm still with my colleagues on page 1272. You also clarified that you  
13 yourself had seen him go once to an operation, once with a Kalash and one time with  
14 an arrow. Did I understand well what you said? Could you confirm that.

15 A. [14:21:40] Yes. I saw him behind a lorry -- or in the back of a lorry once with a  
16 Kalash and another time -- and once with a bladed weapon.

17 Q. [14:22:10] And on pages \*1267 and 1268, you said that you would regularly call  
18 the MISCA in order to say where the group was, and every time that somebody called  
19 you in order to inform you of the advance of the group, you would call the MISCA.  
20 Is that what happened? That's page 1267-1268.

21 A. [14:22:40] Yes, that is indeed what I did.

22 Q. [14:22:51] Thank you. And I'm not going to quote you directly because I'm not  
23 completely sure that I understand what you said at 1268. But what I understand is  
24 that, for you, they are organising themselves to go to the location at a particular time.  
25 You understand that in fact they haven't yet gone.

1 Do I understand that you then -- you were expecting action, you were expecting them  
2 to go, but, in fact, nothing happened; is that correct?

3 A. [14:23:26] Yes. When I informed them, at the same time I told them to hurry,  
4 but the situation was unfortunately that they reassured me that they were going but  
5 without travelling.

6 Q. [14:23:56] Thank you. I'm going to show you a video, and this is a video in  
7 which you are interviewed. And this is at tab 12 of the Defence binder,  
8 CAR-OTP-2058-0573, and the transcript is at tab 13, CAR-OTP-2118-0420, and this is a  
9 report from 18 January 2015. We are going to look at minute 29:51 to minute 30:53.  
10 I will let you look at it, and then I will ask you certain questions about it.

11 (Viewing of the video excerpt)

12 MS CASIEZ: [14:26:38](Interpretation)

13 Q. [14:26:39] Mr Kouroupe-Awo, you have seen the pictures and the sound of your  
14 interview. I've seen you smile. And you can see on the video the computer screen  
15 of the MISCA which shows the arrest scene with the person on the ground, and the  
16 journalist says in English: (Speaks English) "The peacekeepers arrested the culprits  
17 and handed them over to the police."

18 (Interpretation) Now, my first question is: When the journalist says "the  
19 peacekeepers", he's referring to MISCA, is he not?

20 A. [14:27:27] Yes, that's correct.

21 Q. [14:27:33] And you, you say: "They are free. They have been released. So  
22 they've been identified, and we have left them because the gendarmerie premises are  
23 not appropriate to keep over 20 people."

24 Do I understand from that, what happened was that the MISCA did not act at the  
25 time of the murder, but thereafter, it had identified and arrested over 20 people, but it

1 let them go because it didn't have the means within the gendarmerie to hold them; is  
2 that correct?

3 A. [14:28:17] I don't remember on that day, when the deputy mayor was killed, if  
4 the MISCA had arrested so many people and, furthermore, if they wanted to lock  
5 them up in the gendarmerie. I have some doubts because the MISCA went into the  
6 neighbourhoods to two or three destinations, going to the residence of the *préfet* and  
7 going via the gendarmerie brigade, the town hall, the house of young people in  
8 Mbaïki, and then other neighbourhoods. But as I had kept the residence, I learnt that  
9 the MISCA elements had followed the young people who were massed at the Balaka  
10 base between the town hall and the SOCATEL, towards where the *maison des jeunes*  
11 was, and some fled and others dispersed into the neighbourhoods. So I don't  
12 remember exactly that the perpetrators of the killings -- of the killing of this deputy  
13 mayor were arrested and then freed due to a lack of suitable premises to hold them.  
14 What I remember is that, even the gendarme who were at their post, two or three  
15 gendarme in the brigade, they were beaten up by MISCA elements. And two of  
16 them fled in order to join me at the *préfet's* residence.

17 So when we speak about having identified the perpetrators of the murder of the  
18 deputy mayor, I think that's somewhat dubious myself. That's it.

19 Q. [14:31:57] Thank you for these points of clarification, Mr Kouroupe-Awo.  
20 (Speaks English) Mr President, may I have just one minute to consult, please?

21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:32:07] Of course.

22 (Counsel confer)

23 MS CASIEZ: [14:32:33] Thank you, Mr President.

24 Q. [14:32:35](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, on Monday you said that you had  
25 been told that some of the attackers were in military garb and others were in civilian

1 attire. So that was at 12.05. When you met my colleagues, and that was at  
2 page 1270, you said: "There were people dressed in military garb and others simply  
3 wearing civilian attire. I was told that amongst the Balaka there are some women  
4 soldiers, and I was told that it was one of the military women who was in the group  
5 who cut off the penis of the deputy mayor."

6 Now, tell me, if I understand, that your informants told you that amongst those  
7 people wearing military garb, there was a lady who cut off the deputy mayor's penis.  
8 Is that what your informants told you?

9 A. [14:34:11] Yes. I was told that it was a military lady. There were not lots of  
10 women soldiers, but there was one woman soldier who was in the midst of those  
11 elements wearing uniforms. And they had standing by their sides people wearing  
12 civilian attire. It was that very lady who at the last moment cut off the genitals or the  
13 penis of the deputy mayor and inserted it in his mouth. That was what I was told,  
14 but I wasn't told that there were several ladies.

15 Q. [14:35:02] Thank you very much for this point of clarification,  
16 Mr Kouroupe-Awo.

17 Now, still at this moment of time when you met with my colleagues, and I'm now  
18 referring to page 1275 and 1276, you stated that at the gendarmerie, the company  
19 commander, and then you went on to add his name, Bemakassui, wanted to interpose  
20 but he couldn't. And you said later that when Djido was taken to the gendarmerie,  
21 he wanted to intervene when he saw the pressure, but he had to let go, and he had to  
22 let them bring him and execute him.

23 Can you confirm that the people to whom you spoke on the telephone told you this  
24 with regard to what happened?

25 A. [14:36:20] Yes, that is really what occurred. The crowd was such that the

1 company commander -- I don't know which elements he had by his side, but they  
2 couldn't do anything, and they had just let it happen. They gave in.

3 Q. [14:36:51] Thank you. I'm going to show you a photograph which is extracted  
4 from a video, and I'm going to ask you whether you recognise Mr Bemakassui on this  
5 photograph. And this is the tab 14 of the Defence binder, CAR-D29-0010-0013.

6 And for the record, it is a photograph which has been taken from video  
7 CAR-OTP-2059-0384, at minute 01:39.

8 Now, Mr Kouroupe-Awo, the image is not a very good quality. However, do you  
9 recognise Mr Bemakassui?

10 A. [14:38:14] Yes. The individual there in sport wear, or I'm not quite sure what,  
11 does indeed look like that company commander because he had that build.

12 Q. [14:38:48] Just to be very clear for the record, you are talking about the  
13 individual we see up close with a short-sleeved black top and a pair of shorts or pair  
14 of trousers which is beige or white; is that correct?

15 A. [14:39:09] Yes, that is correct.

16 Q. [14:39:18] Thank you. I'm going to be showing you another photograph at tab  
17 16 of the Defence binder, CAR-D29-0010-0012. And I would like to know whether  
18 you might know the individual on the screen who would be Mr Prince Mondounga,  
19 who is the grandson of Madam Mondounga, who is the former counsellor of the  
20 mayor of Mbaïki. Do you recognise this individual?

21 He is the grandson of the former counsellor - correction - of the mayor.

22 A. [14:40:20] This Prince person, I didn't know him, but I do know  
23 Mrs Mondounga who is a local person in charge of women's matters locally. But I  
24 do not know Prince personally.

25 Q. [14:40:48] Very well. No problem, Mr Kouroupe-Awo.

1 I'm going to be showing you a last document at tab 11 of the Defence binder,  
2 CAR-D29-0002-0080. And this is, like earlier, a documentary by Mr Martial Boyoya  
3 for Radio Ndeke Luka, which is specific on the assassination of Mr Djido Saleh. And  
4 this article dates back to 2 March 2014.

5 And in this article, in the middle of the page, one can read: "A few young people  
6 whom we met stated that their demonstration was to ask Djido Saleh to leave the  
7 town. According to them, three young demonstrators were wounded by him, which  
8 gave rise to the anger of these young people, who then killed him. According to  
9 sources, Djido Saleh had been actively participating in the exactions, killings and  
10 lootings in the villages of Bangui-Bouchia, Mbata" --

11 THE INTERPRETER: [14:42:15] And one other location that the interpreter did not  
12 catch.

13 MS CASIEZ: (Interpretation)

14 Q. [14:42:22] Did you also hear that three young demonstrators were wounded by  
15 Mr Djido Saleh which gave rise to the anger on the part of the demonstrators who  
16 subsequently killed him?

17 A. [14:42:36] I had heard that when the group of Anti-Balaka, young people had  
18 arrived at the residence of Djido Saleh, he had threatened to attack them. I did not  
19 receive any details as to the fact that he might have had a weapon in his hand and  
20 might have wounded one of them.

21 What I know and what is certain is that Djido Saleh, as for his active participation in  
22 the operation conducted by the Seleka at the time in the large villages of Mbata and  
23 Bangui-Bouchia, at the time when the Seleka departed, they -- it could only be costly  
24 to him with regard to the information that I had in his regard. And I had insisted  
25 that he leave the town, because I knew that people would attack him. But he didn't



1 want to because he had a wife who was pregnant, and he did not want to leave  
2 Mbaïki. With the exception of myself, his own parents or relatives had insisted that  
3 he leave, but he himself had refused.

4 Q. [14:44:32] (No interpretation)  
5 (Speaks English) Mr President, may I have just one minute to consult?  
6 (Counsel confer)

7 MS CASIEZ: [14:44:58] Thank you, Mr President.

8 Q. [14:45:02](Interpretation) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, we have been very rapid this  
9 afternoon, and, in fact, these are the questions or were some of the questions that I  
10 had for you.

11 (Speaks English) Mr President, I have no further questions for this witness.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:45:13] Thank you very much.  
13 Are there further questions by the Prosecution?

14 MS HENDERSON: [14:45:17] Yes, your Honour. Excuse me. I just have three  
15 points that I hope will take about 10 minutes in total.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:45:25] Yeah, fine.

17 MR KNOOPS: [14:45:26] Mr President.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:45:28] Yeah, Mr Knoops.

19 MR KNOOPS: [14:45:30] We have one question for the witness.

20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:45:33] Of course. That was my fault. I would  
21 have had to ask you first, but, however, I had assumed that you had no question. Of  
22 course, Mr Knoops is first.

23 MR KNOOPS: [14:45:42] We didn't anticipate any questions, Mr President, because,  
24 as the witness says, he was not interviewed about Mr Ngaissona.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE: [14:45:51] Indeed.

1 MR KNOOPS: [14:45:52] But the response of the witness this afternoon raised one  
2 additional question for our team.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:46:00] Yeah, go on, please.

4 MR KNOOPS: [14:46:02] Thank you.

5 QUESTIONED BY MR KNOOPS:

6 Q. [14:46:06] Mr Kouroupe-Awo, good afternoon. My name is Alexander Knoops.  
7 I am one of the counsel for Mr Ngaïssona. I have just one brief question to you, sir.  
8 This afternoon you told the Court - and it's in the English real-time transcript, page 69,  
9 lines 11 till 17 - that Mr Yekatom didn't have to report to you on everything he  
10 wanted to do, and he wasn't bound to you by any type of hierarchy.  
11 My question to you, sir, is: Did Mr Yekatom report to any of your colleagues,  
12 prefects or any other authority at all?

13 A. [14:47:16] I do not know whether he had to report back to any other figures of  
14 authority. All that I do know is that, occasionally, MISCA would call upon him, and  
15 he would go to the MISCA. And on his way back, he would stop by and say hello to  
16 me and tell me why he had been called by the MISCA. But as to Yekatom having  
17 relations with other people to whom he might have reported back, that is entirely out  
18 of my domain. I do not know.

19 MR KNOOPS: [14:48:12] Thank you very much, Mr President.

20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:48:14] Thank you, Mr Knoops.

21 Ms Henderson.

22 QUESTIONED BY MS HENDERSON:

23 Q. [14:48:22] Good afternoon, Mr Kouroupe-Awo. I just have some brief further  
24 questions for you. My first point relates to yesterday's hearing. That's -- for the  
25 record, that's transcript T-181, real-time, and I'm looking at page 46, line 11, to page 47,

1 line 5. You talked in your evidence about registers in parallel, ad hoc registers being  
2 published by third parties of their own accord and used to their own benefit within  
3 several communes.

4 Now, just to follow up with some questions about that. Firstly, are you referring  
5 there to communes of the Lobaye?

6 A. [14:49:13] Of course, I'm referring to communes of la Lobaye, but to other  
7 communes as well in numerous prefectures.

8 Q. [14:49:24] And just to be completely clear, what you're talking about here is  
9 forgery; is that correct?

10 A. [14:49:43] Yes. When mayors or those working with them, their deputies or  
11 other counsellors heading up secondary centres of civil status and workers get hold of  
12 registers that are not coded or encoded by the judiciary, and when they are not  
13 presented in the services of the civil status, they -- and when they use them to issue  
14 documents, then these are forgeries. But investigations would need to be conducted  
15 for some individuals to come forward with civil status documents that have been  
16 pointed out to be forgeries for the legal institutions to be able to investigate and find  
17 out.

18 But whilst the gendarmerie and the judiciary have not put their hands on those  
19 documents -- got their hands on those documents, then those perpetrators would  
20 have continued to issue them without the administration being in the know.

21 Q. [14:51:31] During your time as prefect of the Lobaye, were there any other  
22 allegations of illegal activity or corruption that came to your attention coming from  
23 the communes of the Lobaye?

24 A. [14:52:02] Yes. It might have been in the management of local finance. It  
25 could also have been in the issuance of civil status documents. And I recall that

1 there was a meeting which brought me together with the presidents of special  
2 delegations in the presence of the prosecutor of the republic who had intelligence  
3 specifically on the anarchical issuance of civil status documents, and the alarm bell  
4 needed to be rung and warn the presidents of the special delegations and all those  
5 working with him about such behaviour.

6 Q. [14:53:11] And from this meeting, did you get an idea of what the prevalence  
7 was of such instances of issuing false documents?

8 A. [14:53:42] Yes. Some communes, one or two, were particularly highlighted.  
9 And you know that when we are talking about a register that is used, it contains at  
10 least 50 sheets of civil status documents, maybe more. And when that official or  
11 officer of the civil status office manages to use all of those, then he would have issued  
12 a good number of false documents. And if he was able to do so after a year, after  
13 two years, you can imagine what the consequences would be.

14 Q. [14:54:42] Mr Kouroupe-Awo, you mentioned one or two communes that were  
15 particularly highlighted. Which communes were they?

16 A. [14:54:59] I remember more specifically the commune of Mbata.

17 Q. [14:55:14] Now, moving on to a different subject, I'd like to ask you about the  
18 relationship between Mr Yekatom and the mayor of Pissa, Roger Okoa Penguia.  
19 And this is of course based on your time as prefect in -- based in Mbaïki. Do you  
20 know what kind of relationship Mr Yekatom and the mayor of Pissa had?

21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:55:39] Ms Dimitri.

22 MS DIMITRI: [14:55:40] Mr President, I don't think it's the subject that was  
23 addressed during the line of questions of Ms Casiez. We are now opening on a new  
24 subject from the Prosecution.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE: [14:55:51] Ms Henderson, what is the basis of the question?

1 MS HENDERSON: [14:55:56] Yes, it harks back to a matter that was discussed  
2 yesterday in the witness's evidence at around pages 46 to 47 of the transcript there. I  
3 almost don't want to be too overt about it in front of witness, but there is a mention of  
4 this person's name there.

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [14:56:15] Yeah, now I recall. Yeah, please  
6 proceed.

7 MS HENDERSON: [14:56:22]

8 Q. [14:56:22] So the question, Mr Kouroupe-Awo, was what you were able to  
9 observe about the relationship between Mr Yekatom and the mayor of Pissa during  
10 your tenure as the prefect.

11 A. [14:56:42] I was a *préfet* and I was living in Mbaïki, the main town of the  
12 prefecture. The mayor of Pissa was in Pissa. I know that Rombhot had a base in  
13 Pissa. But as to the relations that Mr Rombhot and the mayor of Pissa entertained,  
14 I'm not in a position to say anything about that.

15 As to whether they were often together, whether they spoke to each other, whether  
16 they worked together, I'm not in a position to say.

17 I can talk about Rombhot, as far as I'm concerned, as the *préfet*. And as I said earlier,  
18 when he came to Mbaïki, \*he was not obliged by come by often to see me, but on  
19 occasion, he would pop by to say hello and talk to me about his activities.

20 As to the relations between Mr Yekatom and the mayor of Pissa, I really can't tell you  
21 anything at all in that regard. And I have never heard anything said about whether  
22 the mayor of Pissa and Mr Yekatom were acquaintances or not. I never heard  
23 anything.

24 Q. [14:58:21] Moving on to my last subject for today, and this relates to your  
25 testimony earlier in the day. For the transcript, it appears at real-time, today,

1 page 46, between about lines 5 and 8, or at least last time I checked, that's where it  
2 was. And --

3 MS DIMITRI: [14:58:43] I'm sorry, would you mind, because I'm following in French,  
4 if you could just give me the time stamp, if you don't mind. Thank you.

5 MS HENDERSON: [14:58:53] Yes, of course. It's time stamp 12:07:20.

6 Q. [14:59:02] You said there, Mr Kouroupe-Awo, that the indigenous population of  
7 Mbaïki were taken by surprise that the deputy mayor stayed behind, that is, after the  
8 other Muslims had left. Can you tell us, as best as you know, why was it -- why did  
9 you say that they were taken by surprise that the deputy mayor stayed behind?

10 A. [14:59:38] Indeed. With regard to the two events that I talked about, \*the  
11 movements of Mayor Djido in the Bangui-Bouchia operation, and this other  
12 movement to Mbata with the Seleka, this was very badly received by the indigenous  
13 population. They were of the opinion that Djido, who was considered to be a native  
14 son, even if he hadn't been born in Mbaïki, but had spent all of his life, could not  
15 participate in that game. It was like an act of treason.

16 So, whatever the conditions, there were people amongst the population who would  
17 attack Djido. And he Djido was well known by the entire population of Lobaye,  
18 because he supported the sporting activities and was even a member of the football  
19 league of the prefecture of Lobaye. And people could not imagine that one day he  
20 could behave in such a way.

21 So it was for that reason that the population was surprised that Djido remained after  
22 the departure of the Muslim population as if nothing at all had happened, as if he was  
23 neutral at the arrival of the Seleka until their departure.

24 Q. [15:01:46] And, Mr Kouroupe-Awo, my last questions follows on from that.  
25 What I'm going to do is, I'm going to refer to a part of your interview with the

1 Defence for Mr Yekatom. And part of this was already read out to you this morning,  
2 but I would like to read out a larger portion of that excerpt. And I'm simply going to  
3 ask you to confirm that this is what you said in the interview, much like you did this  
4 morning.

5 And, for the record, I'm referring to tab 3, CAR-D29-0006-1190, at page 1271. I'm  
6 going to read out lines 20 to 27 in French.

7 (Interpretation) "Could you consider that the attack of Mr Saleh was an isolated  
8 incident concerning the Anti-Balaka?"

9 Answer: "No."

10 Question: "That's to say?"

11 Answer: "Not isolated."

12 Question: "Could you explain a bit more."

13 Answer: "What I said was that the population had hate towards the Seleka and all  
14 those who were helping them."

15 (Speaks English) Mr Kouroupe-Awo, can you confirm that that is the conversation  
16 that took place between you and the Defence for Mr Yekatom in the interview that  
17 you had with them.

18 A. [15:03:44] Yes, I can confirm that.

19 Q. [15:03:48] Thank you, Mr Kouroupe-Awo, for your additional patience with my  
20 questions.

21 And that concludes my questioning, your Honour.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [15:03:54] Thank you also for having kept it short.  
23 And only one objection, we are very rarely on redirect questions.

24 Mr Kouroupe-Awo, this concludes your testimony. On behalf of the Chamber, I  
25 would like to thank you, that you have made yourself available as a witness in these

Trial Hearing  
WITNESS: CAR-OTP-P-1813

(Open Session)

ICC-01/14-01/18

1 proceedings and, may I say so, have presented us with remarkable expertise and

2 memory. On behalf of the Chamber, I wish you a safe trip back home.

3 THE WITNESS: [15:04:37](Interpretation) Thank you.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE: [15:04:38] This concludes, obviously, also the hearing for

5 today.

6 We resume tomorrow, 9.30, with P-1823.

7 THE COURT USHER: [15:04:51] All rise.

8 (The hearing ends in open session at 3.04 p.m.)