

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE PROSECUTION
OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS
OF INTERNATIONAL LAW COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY
OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA SINCE 1991

WITNESS STATEMENT

WITNESS INFORMATION:

Name: MEMISEVIĆ Nurif
Last First Middle

Date of Birth: 29 March 1948 Gender: MALE

Ethnic Origin: Muslim Religion: -----

Occupation: Current: Representative of the refugees of Srebrenica in the municipality of
Lukavac Former: Worker in a mine in Srebrenica.

Language spoken: Bosnian.

Language written: Bosnian.

Date(s) of Interview(s): 19 January 1996

Interviewer: Jean-Rene RUEZ

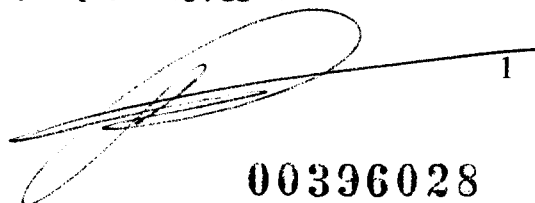
Interpreter: Adisa KARAMURATOVIC

Languages Used in Interview: English - Bosnian.

Names of all persons present during interview(s): -----

Signed/Initialed: *Memisevic Nurif*
Adisa Karamuratovic

Jean-Rene RUEZ



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WITNESS STATEMENT:

I was born in Bljeceva, in the municipality of Bratunac, and used to live there. The village where I have my house was part of the Srebrenica enclave. I lived there with my wife and my eight children.

When we got the information that the people were leaving the town which was about to fall, it was already late in the evening. The people of my village went towards Pale in the Srebrenica municipality. I was the president of the local community, so I sent the women and children to the UN base in Potocari.

I must add that I don't belong to any political party and that I had this position only to be helpful to my local community. When I was elected in 1985 I was elected both by Serbs and by the Muslims and I always tried to help both communities, even after the war started, and that I have nothing against the Serbs in general.

I don't recall the precise date of the fall of Srebrenica but that day, at about 1300 hr, I remember that we heard the NATO planes striking.

Those who did not dare to surrender in Potocari stayed with us and we proceeded towards Susnjari where we met a huge group.

I was informed by two representatives of the people, SULJIC Osman and SALIHOVIC Fahrudin, that an agreement had been reached with the BSA and that a corridor would be open in the forest to allow us to go towards Tuzla.

The column started to move the next day at 0100 hr.

I assume that I was at the rear of the column. We went over Buljim mountain and arrived at Jaglici at 0500 hr.

There, the shooting suddenly started and the column was broken. We were fired at from machine guns and anti aircraft guns. We stopped and waited until 1400 hr. The shooting was continuous and we could not go further.

When the shooting stopped the groups started moving again.

We found the traces of the groups in front of us and followed their path.

We traveled like that until 1700 hr when we arrived above the village of Kravica, in the forest between Kravica and Kamenica.

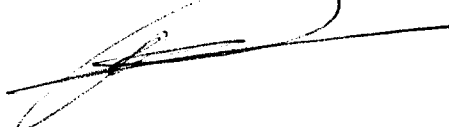
We got an order coming from the front of the column, to stop and take a break. We sat down. Five minutes later, we received another order that the civilians who were at the rear of the column should go first. I got up and started moving and passed by the column of people. I walked quickly during half an hour, passing by a lot of people. All of them were unarmed civilians and there was only one armed soldier every 50 meters guarding the sides of the column.

I was moving towards the front when a very strong shooting started again coming from all kind of weapons. I noticed a big tree and took shelter behind.

While I was there I saw many people falling down, hit by bullets. Everybody was dispersing and screams of pain from wounded people could be heard coming from all directions.

Nobody could help them.

Jean-René RUEZ



Muhammedović Durif²
A.K.

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I left and when I came back, one hour and a half later, I discovered that a lot of people had left to surrender.

The next day, the forest was surrounded by soldiers who started to shoot at us with machine guns and called us to surrender.

A lot of people run to the creek below the village. They were very afraid and many decided to surrender. My little group decided to flee and we hid in the bushes.

I saw only two armed Chetnick soldiers coming in Burnice towards the Mosque.

They shot in the air and called the people to surrender. The people called back that they were doing so. They said that they had the order to escort them. Most of the people surrendered that day and were led by the two soldiers towards Kravica.

I went back to the forest and found there MURATOVIC Ibrahim from the village of Bljeceva. He told me that many were still in the forest.

We separated and my group decided to go to Zepa.

I looked for somebody who was from Zepa to show us the way. I found ALIC Ohran who was from Zepa and who joined us. Mehmed who was a teacher went with us.

We decided to return to Srebrenica area and from there to Zepa.

We first returned to Susnjari. We came to a creek above Susnjari and noticed that the village was burnt and that the cattle was walking around. We didn't see any soldiers so we went to seek for some food in the village. After we found what we needed we started to walk.

We spent a day in the forest above the village and observed the movements of the Chetnicks.

We continued towards Bukovic mountain to reach Suceška.

During the night we found another group led by Sefik from Bajramovici. Among them I knew also Mensur from Srebrenica.

All together, we crossed the river Jadar and went to the village of Bektici.

We arrived at the forest Susica. From there, we could see Zepa and heard heavy artillery fire.

We went to the village Vukoljin stan where we met MALAGIC Hamdija who is the commander of the Mountain Battalion of Glogova.

With this unit, we went to Zepa where we stayed until the same event happened like in Srebrenica.

The Zepa safe area fell.

I fled with Hamdija's unit of twenty men. We left three days after the Chetnicks entered Zepa.

We went back and arrived in the village of Suceška where we collected some food.

We continued and arrived in Susnjari where we stayed for a rest.

Then, we followed the path made by the column which had previously fled Srebrenica.

We had walked for about four days.

Coming down the Buljim mountain we found a lot of skeletons and parts of bodies of those who were killed on the way.

Close from the spot of the first ambush, we found three survivors who had stayed there, hidden for about forty days. They refused to join us.

We then arrived in the forest where the second ambush occurred in order to try to identify some bodies. Bodies were still all around. I recognized the bodies of two men who were with

Mensur Hamdija

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Jean-René RUEZ

me at the beginning at their clothes and their bags. I searched for my brothers but did not find any of them.

We did not count the bodies we saw but I would estimate that there were about two to three thousand bodies.

We arrived in Burnice and downhill, I saw the same bodies that I had seen the first time. Nobody had moved them.

Hamdija sent three men to the creek to check if bodies were still there. They said at their return that there were even more bodies in the creek than along the road.

We arrived at the asphalt road near the Jadar river between Kasaba and Konjevic Polje where the intersection of the road leading to Cerska is.

We arrived in Cerska village. Later, we found in Babici and Kurjaci many people who were still hiding there. They were in a very bad condition. I recognized in that group MUJIC Pasan from Pale, Srebrenica municipality. He told me that he previously saw my son in Kamenica, Zvornik municipality, and that he was in poor condition. I left Hamdija's group and decided to seek for my son.

In Kamenica I found many people but not my son.

I went back nearby Cerska and found eight people. Among them I recognized Vejsil BEGANOVIC, Salih SALIHOVIC, Mevlo RAHIMIC and Osman whose family name I don't know and who is from the village of Hrntici.

We went together towards Vlasenica.

During the night we were spotted by the Chetnicks and Osman was shot.

I ran and bullets passed by. I could see the tracers. I arrived in a cornfield and lost the others. I stayed a hole day there, just laying in the grass. In the evening I went back and traveled for four days before arriving at Udrac mountain. I met people there who told me that Salih arrived there the day before. I found him together with a huge group of about five to six hundred.

The next day the Chetnicks started shelling and fired at us with Armored Personnel Carriers. Than they searched the mountain.

We stayed hidden and than went to the village of Babici. Near of a water tap, we found six bodies of civilians near the tap. We noticed armored vehicles and left and decided to return to Srebrenica.

We arrived in the Pobudje area in the village of Paljevic and than went to the village of Glogova. We passed the asphalt road to go to Glogova and everything was calm on the road.

During the night I went to my village of Bljeceva. I went to the place where UNPROFOR was in the village. There was nobody and the village was burst down. Only a few houses were not burnt. My two houses were fortunately not but everything, even the sink in the kitchen had been looted.

After that we went to the village of Milacevici in Srebrenica municipality. That village was not burnt. We found some food and stayed in the forest above the village. From there we could see civilians escorted by soldiers looting the villages around. When the looting was completed the soldiers shot three times in the air and everybody left the place with the goods that they had found. It was an organized looting. I watched them during three days and noticed that they did not stay in the villages during night time.

I abandoned my machine gun for a hunting rifle and grenades and went back to my village to my house where I spent the night in the attic.

Jean-René RUEZ
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was our army but decided to wait for the evening. We saw a soldier and decided to capture him in order to make sure that he was one of our soldiers.

All six approached the soldier. When we were close enough we called him asking: "who is this?" He replied that he was from Republica Srpska.

We all dispersed immediately but Ramiz did not realize because he was a bit deaf so he continued towards the asphalt road. He was captured. I don't know his family name but I know that he was from Cerska.

You ask me if Ramiz told me about what he experienced before meeting me and if he talked about a warehouse where he was kept prisoner. He told me that he was captured somewhere in Kravica area after he had surrendered with a large group of people and that he managed to escape when the building in which he was destroyed. He told me that he was in a separate room of the building and that only one other man managed to survive the event. He told me that it was a huge building but did not tell me what kind of building it was. He told me that the building had been destroyed by RPG rocket launchers.

We were only five left. We went back to the burnt down village of Olovske Luke. We found four non burnt houses. We went in one of them where we found plenty of food so we stayed during eight days in that house. On documents, we found out that the house belonged to Desimir IVANOVIC. Before we left we wrote our five names on the wall of a house and let him a message that we did not destroy anything and just ate the food because we were hungry.

We decided to cross the line behind us and go towards Kladanj.

After this trip we had the surprise to end again on the field where we found the body of "Hegel".

We found a kind of canyon with very steep hills. We managed to climb on the top. We saw the asphalt road going to Kladanj.

We arrived at a front line and did not know whose line it was. We had no problem to cross it. We sneaked through the bunkers and saw soldiers in them but did not check from what army they were. Arrived in a field we saw a man and cows. I had a hunting rifle so I decided to go and question this man to find out where we were. I approached him and he told me that the village nearby was Ravne and that his name was Mujo. I greeted him and introduced myself. I told him that I came from Srebrenica that I left 71 days ago. It was the 21 September 1995.

My son was captured while trying to cross the lines. He was taken to Batkovic camp and was later exchanged. Now, he is safe like my wife and my other children.

My two brothers, MEMISEVIC Sacir born in 1954 in Bljeceva and MEMISEVIC Mensur born in 1956 in Bljeceva, also tried to escape through the woods. I have no information about their fate. Both of them were civilians and never served in the army.

Memisevic Mensur
Jean-René ROUZ J.K.

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My father, MEMISEVIC Nurija born in 1919 went to Potocari. I know from my mother and my sister in law, who were together with him in Potocari that my father started there to talk with a Bosnian Serb whose name is CVIJETIN Tripic. This man arrived there with a water tank. He was from the fire brigade of Bratunac. He recognized my father and talked with him. That attracted the attention of soldiers who separated my father from the rest of the family. We don't know what happened to him but he never arrived on the free territory.

You show me a photo array showing civilian men and tell me that these picture were taken in Potocari and that these people are prisoners of the Bosnian Serb Army.

- On the picture "G", I recognize the man under the number "9" who has a black beret and a red pullover as being EFENDIĆ Mesa who is from Potocari. He is retired and he used to work in a mine there for twenty years.

- On the picture "G", I recognize the man number "13" as being NAZIF Krdzic called "Nasko". He used to work in a mine. He has a wife and no children.

- On the picture "K" and "L", under the number "15" I recognize the man carrying the red bag as being Hamza (first name). He also used to work in a mine.

- On the picture "Z", I recognize the number "38" as being HUSEJINOVIC Ibro from Potocari. He was a tractor driver.

- On the picture "Z", I recognize under the number "36" BESIC Salih from Pocus. He was retired before the war.

Since I arrived on the free territory I have no information on these men and I don't know where they are.

WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This Statement has been read over to me in the Bosnian language and is true to the best of my knowledge and recollection. I have given this Statement voluntarily and am aware that it may be used in legal proceedings before the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, and that I may be called to give evidence in public before the Tribunal.

Signed: *Memisevic Nurija*

Dated: *19.05.01996. 6*

Jean-René RUEZ

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INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

I, Adisa KARAMURATOVIC, Interpreter, certify that:

1. I am duly qualified and approved by The Registry of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 to interpret from the Bosnian language into the English language and from the English language into the Bosnian language.
2. I have been informed by MEMISEVIC Nurif that he speaks and understands the Bosnian language.
3. I have orally translated the above statement from the English language to the Bosnian language in the presence of MEMISEVIC Nurif who appeared to have heard and understood my translation of this Statement.
4. MEMISEVIC Nurif has acknowledged that the facts and matters set out in his / her Statement, as translated by me, are true to the best of his / her knowledge and recollection and has accordingly signed his signature where indicated.

Dated: 19.04.96

Signed: Adisa Karamuratovic

Jean-René RUEZ
