

Signature(s): *Cynthia OGDLA* *[Redacted]* *[Redacted]* 17/9/2015
[Redacted] 17/09/2015
ELENA ELAWMAY *[Redacted]* 17/09/2015
[Redacted] 17/09/2015
[Redacted] 17/09/2015

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WITNESS STATEMENT

Procedure

1. I was introduced to [REDACTED] and Elena EGAWHARY and told that they are investigators with the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) of the International Criminal Court (ICC). I was introduced to Psycho-social expert [REDACTED] interpreter, [REDACTED] and told that they are with the OTP of the ICC.
2. The investigators explained to me what the ICC is and described its mandate. They explained the role and mandate of the OTP within the ICC.
3. The investigators explained to me that they are investigating events that took place in Northern Uganda since July 2002. I was informed that the OTP is contacting me because they believe I may have information relevant for establishing the truth.
4. The investigators explained to me that I am currently being approached in the context of the investigation of the OTP and not within the context of my application as a victim. I understand that the OTP is an independent organ and that this statement has a separate purpose to that of my application as a victim.
5. I was told that I have the right to be questioned in a language that I fully understand and speak. I confirm that Lango is a language that I fully understand and speak. I confirm that the language used by the interpreter in this interview is Lango.
6. The investigators explained to me that this interview is voluntary and that I may end it at any time.
7. I was informed that any information I give to the OTP, including my identity, might become subject to disclosure to the parties of the proceedings at the ICC; in particular the Judges, Accused persons, the Counsel of the Accused and the legal representatives of the victims.
8. I was informed that I might be called to testify before the Court. It was brought to my attention that ICC trials are held in public and explained to me that, as an exception to the principle of public hearings, the judges may apply protective measures to those testifying if circumstances require.
9. I am currently willing to appear as a witness in Court, if called to testify. I understand that disclosure of my identity and information I have provided may take place whether or not I am called to testify.

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

Background

14. I was born in 1949 in Abok, Ngai. I started my education in 1960 until 1968 when I sat for my Primary Leaving Examination. I then went to Teso College in Aloet and sat for my O'Level Exams in 1972 then I stopped going to school because my father could no longer afford my tuition. At the time, it was possible to join the teaching career without a formal certificate in educational training so I was requested to teach at Bar - Rio Primary School, where I taught for 6 years. I stopped teaching and became a farmer.
15. Abok has always been my home but due to the insurgency, I would move away from time to time but I would always return. Part of the place where the Abok IDP camp was later located was on my land.
16. When life became difficult in the villages, people would run away from their homes and then come and sleep at my homestead. In 2003, people would come and just sleep anywhere until the camp was formally established in 2004. During this time, the people noticed how well I was working with them and trusted me so they asked me to become a camp leader. The decision to elect me as the IDP camp leader was taken in consultation with the community.

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Description of Abok IDP Camp

17. I am not good at drawing a sketch but I know that the camp secretary had a list of the composition of the camp, including a sketch. The secretary can provide this to the OTP.
18. The camp was built at the intersection of two roads; one road running from Bar-Rio in the North to Ngai in the south and then a second road running from Odyek-cami in the East and to the West Dwaliro. I had two homesteads on either side of the road to Bar-Rio and to Ngai on the south side of the camp. The camp was protected by government soldiers and the barracks was located to the south-west side of the camp. The barracks was about 800 meters from the road.

History of Abok Camp

19. People first started to flee to Abok village in 2003 because their villages were under attack. The people were coming from Odyek-cami, Iceme Sub-county, Lalogi/Alogi, Dwaliro, Bar-Owelo, Ariba, Ocamburu, Wii-Gweng, Ilobo, Aboloneno at the border of Acholi and Lango, Aweki and Akwal.
20. The people fleeing to the camp told us that life in their villages had become unbearable because they were under frequent raids from the LRA. The LRA were abducting people, looting, destroying their houses and even killing people. These people chose Abok because it was a trading centre with all facilities like water, schools and there was also a place where the army could be positioned. There was also a main road with easy access to Ngai Sub-county which was the administrative centre at the time.
21. Prior to the influx of people to Abok in 2003, there were no attacks in Abok. People lived peacefully; farming and rearing livestock until 1987. After 1987, when the LRA started, people would often spend nights in the bush for fear of being abducted by the rebels.

Abok Location

22. Abok is surrounded in the East by Otwal and Iceme, Ngai to the South, Lakwana to the West and Lalogi to the North West.
23. Prior to the division, Abok was in Apac District and Oyam was under Apac. Then Apac and Oyam were split into two districts. Abok and Ngai were then placed under Oyam District. Abok has always been known as Abok but the idea of Abok-A only arose as an administrative requirement and the next part which should have

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been called Abok-B was named Ilodo. My village is Abok-A, but the sub-county is Abok. Aboke is a sub-county in Kole District.

24. The decision to make Abok a separate sub-county was made at a meeting at the sub-county level where it was discussed that Ngai was very large and should be split into two separate sub-counties comprising Abok and Ngai. The first meeting was in 2003 and the second meeting to split Abok from Ngai was in 2010. The first chairperson of Abok Sub-county LC III was elected in 2011.

Camp Administration and registration

25. In 2004, the camp was officially established and the population of the camp was about 7,360 but then it went up to 13,000. The exact number is in the list that was kept with the camp secretary.
26. I was the camp leader and as a camp leader, I worked with NGOs to collect data on the camp composition in co-ordination with Block leaders within the camp and the camp secretary. The NGOs needed the data to plan how to provide assistance to the camps. The secretary of the camp was Nelson Opio OGAL. The blocks were numbered from A to R. I do not remember the names of all the block leaders but I can remember OBONG Johnson; OCEN Tom; OPIO James; Martin Mwole OGWAL- Block A; ALWAI Charles; ALUK William – Block C; OKELLO Augustine – Block J; OYUKU Wilson; ADONG Joan – Block Q. The compositions of the blocks were not the same; some were larger than others.
27. The registration in the camp started after people had been allocated plots to build. Once, the buildings were completed, households were divided into blocks. The registration of people in the camp started once there was distribution of relief items as we wanted to avoid other people taking advantage of the relief. The registration was done according to blocks and the numbers per household.
28. The relief to the camp came mainly from World Vision and the International Committee of the Red Cross. Some of the items distributed were beans, maize flour and cooking oil.

Attack on Abok IDP Camp

29. I remember that the attack on Abok took place on 08 June 2004 at about 8:45pm. I know that it was on 08 June 2004 because I wrote it in my diary. This day stuck to my mind. I still have this diary. It is a pocket diary. I can provide this diary to the OTP at a later date because I did not carry it today. The rebels came and moved as if they were going to cross the road that goes to Ngai but then they took the road that leads to Abok Primary School in the direction of Ariba. I cannot remember the

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number of the rebels but there were a lot. I was amongst the people who saw the rebels and the community was alerted, word was also sent to the barracks. Some of the soldiers left to follow the rebels but unfortunately the soldiers took the wrong direction and continued until Ariba but the rebels had actually branched to a swamp and hidden there, the camp was above the swamp. The rebels remained in the swamp until about 8:45pm.

30. I know that the rebels went into the swamp because I later saw the tracks that they had left behind.
31. At the time when the rebels arrived, I was moving about in the camp and we thought the rebels were not coming to the camp. We thought that they were passing by to go and loot another place. I went back to my house to listen to a News programme called *Wilobo*. This News programme was always at 9:00pm and it hadn't started yet when at 8:45pm, the rebels started attacking the camp. I was in the house with my children Vicky, OKITE Moris and my wife APOLLO Faibi. When we heard the noise from the camp, we ran out of the house and saw that the camp was on fire. I then realised that the rebels were attacking the camp. On this realisation, I told my family that we should run. We fled and left the door ajar. As we were running, the rebels fired in our direction and we changed course and took the direction of Bar-Rio. The rebels fired again and we then hid in a place called Lela-Acol about 1.5 kilometres from the camp. We remained at Lela-col till daybreak when we returned to the camp to find out what had happened.
32. At this time there were only about 15 soldiers left to guard the barracks as the others had left the barracks earlier on to follow the rebels. The rebels started attacking the camp by setting the huts on fire so that it was lit and they could see clearly. People who tried to run were shot at. My house was not so close to where the rebels started burning the camp so I was able to flee. That same night at about 3am, the government troops arrived with a military vehicle called a *Mamba*. The *Mamba* arrived but went a different direction and once the rebels heard the shots from the *Mamba*, the rebels decided to flee.
33. As we were fleeing from the camp, I just saw that the camp was on fire. I heard a lot of cries from the camp; others were shouting, "*we are dead today*", "*come out*", "*these people are killing us today*".
34. I knew that it was the rebels attacking the camp because they were making noise and banging tins. We were used to this because the rebels often made noise and banged things as they were attacking a place. I know that it was the LRA rebels. I know that it was the LRA soldiers firing gun shots at us because the government soldiers could not fire at us and the few soldiers who were there were telling us to flee in order not to be captured. I know that the rebels were firing at us because they

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were chasing a soldier but when they failed to catch the soldier, they started firing at us.

35. I could distinguish that it was the rebels because the rebels were often in civilian clothes and others in uniform. I could tell that the rebels in civilian clothes were rebels because some of them were chasing us and no civilian would start chasing anyone at the time of the attack. Also, when I had seen the rebels earlier that evening, they were in large numbers and were going back and forth. Some of the rebels had guns and others had clubs. It was difficult to sometimes distinguish between the LRA uniforms and the UPDF uniforms because it was common knowledge that sometimes when the rebels killed government soldiers, they removed their uniforms. However I was able to distinguish on the day of the attack that it was the rebels because of their style of movement which was unique in the sense that they cross the road then jump back, in and out of the bush.

Return to the Camp

36. When we returned to the camp in the morning, we found many dead bodies; most of them were children. They had died from burns and other adults died from gunshot wounds. We counted the number of dead and there were 28 dead. Out of the 28 dead, there were children, women and men. I returned to the camp alone and my family joined later. We all arrived in one place where people had gathered.
37. I was leading the group of camp officials that walked through the camp and the secretary Nelson Opio OGAL recorded the number of the dead. Some of the camp officials were AYOO CP and OBWOR Richard who was the vice-chairperson of the camp. A report had already been sent to Ngai Sub-county so the sub-county officials had also arrived at the scene. At this time the dead bodies had not yet been gathered in one place except for two who had tried to hide in a pit latrine and were shot inside the latrine. Some of the dead bodies were inside the house, others were at the doorsteps as they tried to run and others were in the remains of burnt huts. I remember the names of some of the victims but I cannot remember the names of the children who were burnt to death in the huts. Some of the dead people I remember were ANYIMA Raymond, OKELLO David Peter, OGWANG Binardo, OBWOLO Francis, Ogweng Okello IWO, OKELLO IWO, Salome (last name unknown), Ogweng OUMA and OKAL Albino.
38. I saw all the dead bodies; the first one I saw was that of ANYIMA Raymond then OKELLO David Peter and then the child of ANYIMA Raymond. I remember that ANYIMA Raymond and OKELLO David Peter were shot dead in the pit latrine. I could tell that they had been shot because I saw the bullet wounds. OKELLO had a bullet wound on the waist and the side and ANYIMA was shot in the back and it

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came through the stomach. The child of ANYIMA Raymond was burnt to death in a hut.

39. Initially, we wanted to bury the dead in a mass grave but people opposed it and opted to take the dead bodies of their relatives back to their original villages; others were buried within the camp.
40. The rebels burnt many huts because they were built so close to each other, the lower camp lost about 160 huts and the upper side was not so damaged.
41. The rebels looted foodstuffs like beans, simsim, goats and other relief supplies like cooking pots from the camp.

List of Injured

42. There were several people who were injured during the attack for instance OPIO Jacob who was shot in the thigh and the bullet came out through the knee. The injured were taken to Ngai Health Centre III. I do not remember whether a list of the injured was made but the people who suffered injuries are still in the village.
43. After the attack, the government soldiers, the police, the Resident District Commissioner and the LC III chairperson came to the camp. They interviewed different people asking how the rebels entered the camp and what happened in the camp. They asked how the people were killed. I remember that the District chairperson was Ben OLWA and the army commander was called John (last name unknown). The police were moving around the camp and making notes but I do not remember any names. I believe that the police who came to Abok were from Aboke and Apac because Abok did not have a police post at the time.

List of Abductees

44. When I returned to the camp, I found out that people had been abducted. Some of them escaped and came back. I remember that OPIO Jacob and OPER Robson and some girls like ADUR Monica managed to escape that day and returned to the camp. I know that several were abducted but I cannot remember the exact number. The list of abductees is with the secretary because we opened a file on the incident. I remember that about 8 children were abducted but about 6 came back. When I say that children were abducted, I mean that they were seen as children to their parents but they were near adults ranging in the age group of 13 to 20s.
45. One of the abducted who returned was called OPER ROBSON told us that there was a rebel called OKELLO KALALANG who was the commander of the group that attacked the camp but OPER did not say who had ordered the attack.

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46. OPER also told us that they had managed to escape because the *Mamba* was chasing the rebels and they managed to escape during the confusion.
47. There were also people who were abducted prior to the burning of the camp and some of these have not returned to date.
48. Some of the returnees were taken to Rachele Rehabilitation Centre but I do not remember their names.
49. After the attack, there was a group of four people who arrived from Finland. They had first been to Apac and then came to Abok camp with the District LC V. They took pictures and offered clothing, cooking utensils and other food items. These people must have come to the camp about 6 days after the attack. I cannot distinguish whether they were a government arm or an NGO. We had a visitors' book which they signed. This book must still be with the secretary.

Reasons for attacking Abok

50. When the rebels came to the camp, their main aim was to kill the camp residents and loot foodstuff. When we started the camp, we got word that the rebels had said that Abok camp was like a bee-hive they were waiting to go and harvest honey from at the right time. To us this meant the eventual attack and burning of the camp. We were told this by one of the girl who had been abducted prior to the attack on the camp. She was abducted and taken up to a place where the rebels had stopped to cook. This abduction was before the Abok attack. Unfortunately, this girl has since died.

Personal Victimization

51. When I returned, I found that a few things like a radio and a pump for spraying crops had been taken but the rest of my property was intact. I cannot tell whether or not it was the rebels who had taken the radio and pump. OPIRA Justine and his mother who was my daughter in law were abducted but were released immediately. OPIRA could have been about 4 years of age.

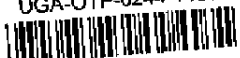
Closing Procedure

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

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applications. I consent to my personal data being shared with the Victims' Participation and Reparation Unit.

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


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

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

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


WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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

Signed: 

Dated: 17/9/2015

INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION

1. I,  certify that:
2. I am duly qualified to interpret from the Lango language into the English language and from the English language into the Lango language.
3. I have been informed by Cyprian OGOLA that he speaks and understands the Lango language.

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4. I have orally translated the above statement from the English language to the Lango language in the presence of Cyprian OGOLA who appeared to have heard and understood my translation of this statement.
5. Cyprian OGOLA has acknowledged that the facts and matters set out in his statement, as translated by me, are true to the best of his knowledge and recollection and has accordingly signed his signature where indicated.

Signed:  _____

Dated: 17-09-2015

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