

Trial Hearing
WITNESS: UGA-V40-V-0002

(Open Session)

ICC-02/04-01/15

1 International Criminal Court
2 Trial Chamber IX
3 Situation: Republic of Uganda
4 In the case of The Prosecutor v. Dominic Ongwen - ICC-02/04-01/15
5 Presiding Judge Bertram Schmitt, Judge Péter Kovács and
6 Judge Raul Cano Pangalangan
7 Trial Hearing - Courtroom 3
8 Tuesday, 1 May 2018
9 (The hearing starts in open session at 9.33 a.m.)
10 THE COURT USHER: [9:33:07] All rise.
11 The International Criminal Court is now in session.
12 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:33:26] Good morning, everyone. Could the
13 court officer please call the case.
14 THE COURT OFFICER: [9:33:34] Thank you, Mr President.
15 The situation in the Republic of Uganda, in the case of The Prosecutor versus Dominic
16 Ongwen, case reference ICC-02/04-01/15, and we are in open session.
17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:33:45] Thank you.
18 I call for the appearances of the parties. First, Mr Zeneli for the Prosecution please.
19 MR CHOUDHRY: [9:33:57] It's Mr Choudhry.
20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9.33:58] Mr Choudhry, of course.
21 MR CHOUDHRY: It's Kamran Choudhry, your Honour.
22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:00] My apologies.
23 MR CHOUDHRY: [9:34:02] Not at all. We're often confused, in fact. Here today
24 with Mr Benjamin Gumpert, Ms Sanyu Ndagire, Mr Hai Do Duc, Ms Colleen Gilg, Mr
25 Kwong Lau and Ms Ramu Fatima Bittaye. Thank you.

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:15] Thank you very much. And for the
2 Legal Representatives of the Victims, Mr Manoba.

3 MR MANOBA: [9:34:18] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours. Joseph
4 Manoba, James Mawira, Francisco Cox, Maria Radziejowska, Priscilla Aling and
5 Megan Hirst.

6 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:33] This calms me a little bit down that you
7 also have problems with the people that are coming for you.

8 And the second team, Mrs Massidda, please.

9 MS MASSIDDA: [9:34:42] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours. For the
10 common Legal Representatives team today in courtroom, Orchlon Narantsetseg,
11 Caroline Walter, Laura Mahecha and myself Paolina Massidda.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:34:55] Thank you. And for the Defence,
13 Mrs Bridgman.

14 MS BRIDGMAN: [9:34:58] Good morning, Mr President, your Honours. Abigail
15 Bridgman today with Chief Charles Achaleke Taku, Thomas Obhof, our client
16 Mr Ongwen is in Court and lead counsel sends his apologies, he's unable to join for
17 the first part of the victims' case.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:35:14] Thank you very much.

19 During the next few days, we all know that we will hear the testimony of victims
20 represented by the Legal Representatives of the Victims, followed by the experts
21 being called by both teams representing the victims and this has been authorised, this
22 testimony, by virtue of decision 1199.

23 The Legal Representatives are now calling V2 as its next witness, and before
24 commencing the Chamber notes briefly that protective measures were granted to this
25 witness via decision 1227 and that the VWU recommends no further protective

1 measures. As counsel have already been informed, the VWU has also determined
2 that certain special measures are necessary to assist the witness in his testimony.

3 Now I address you personally, Mr Witness. Good morning. On behalf of the
4 Chamber, I would like to welcome you to this courtroom.

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6 (The witness speaks Acholi)

7 THE WITNESS: [9:36:23] (Interpretation) Thank you very much.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:36:25] Mr Witness, there should be a card in
9 front of you with the solemn undertaking to tell the truth. Could you please make
10 this undertaking by reading the card out aloud.

11 THE WITNESS: [9:36:46] (Interpretation) I solemnly declare to say the truth, the
12 whole truth and nothing but the truth.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:36:56] Thank you, Mr Witness. I explain now
14 to you the protective measures that the Chamber has put in place for your testimony.
15 First of all, we have face and voice distortion. That means that no one outside the
16 courtroom can see your face or hear your voice during your testimony. We will also
17 use a pseudonym. In accordance with that, we will all refer to you only as
18 "Mr Witness" as I am doing at the moment. This is to make sure that the public does
19 not know your name.

20 And when you answer questions that will not give away who you are, we will do so
21 in open session. Open session means that the public can hear what is being said in
22 the courtroom, but they can't hear, as I have already explained, your voice and see
23 your face.

24 When anything is discussed or asked which could reveal your identity, we do this in
25 private session. Private session means that there is no broadcast and no one outside

1 the courtroom can hear your answer.

2 Before we start, I have a few practical matters. Everything we say here in the
3 courtroom is interpreted and written down. It is therefore important to speak clearly
4 and at a relatively slow pace. And please start only speaking when the person
5 asking you a question has finished.

6 And one last thing, if you have any questions yourself, please raise your hand and
7 then we are aware that you want to address us and we will give you the floor.

8 Have you understood all that? It was a lot of information, I know.

9 THE WITNESS: [9:38:47] (Interpretation) Yes, I have understood.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:38:49] Thank you very much. We then start
11 with the examination. I assume Mr Manoba, a short remark, try -- please try to limit
12 the recourse to private session as much as possible. Looking at your summary of the
13 expected evidence, I think whenever it comes to mentioning names and places, this
14 could be circumscribed in general terms. So "The teacher", for example, could be
15 said instead of a name. "The village where I live now ..." You see what I mean, the
16 principle. So I think this is in the interest of everyone and also it's of course in the
17 interest of the public and in the interest of transparency. So you can start then,
18 Mr Manoba.

19 MR MANOBA: [9:39:48] Thank you, Mr President.

20 Mr President, your Honours, before I begin I just thought that I should inform you
21 that I am very acutely aware that the purpose of this witness is really to establish the
22 traumatic experience that he went through, however, we have to ask some questions
23 to put it in context, so ...

24 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:40:18] Yes, of course, again studying the
25 summary of the expected evidence, this was also to be expected and you have already

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1 indicated correctly that you have to establish the basics, but of course we are, I think,
2 both saying that you have to concentrate yourself on the life after the victim and the
3 witness has returned to the -- from the bush.

4 MR MANOBA: [9:40:48] I'll do my best, Mr President.

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:40:51] Yes, I think we have understood that.

6 But this would be without any having any basic for that -- for any harm that he might
7 have suffered, it would be difficult to understand. So please continue.

8 MR MANOBA: [9:41:07] Thank you, Mr President.

9 QUESTIONED BY MR MANOBA:

10 Q. [9:41:12] Good morning, Mr Witness.

11 A. [9:41:13] Good morning.

12 Q. [9:41:14] Mr Witness, we will try to cover some areas, areas about life in the
13 camp, the abduction, the training that you may have experienced, a few questions
14 about people who tried to escape during your time in the bush, your life in the bush,
15 your escape and then the experiences post this escape.

16 As we start, Mr President, I would like to go into private session, briefly.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:41:59] Of course.

18 Private session.

19 (Private session at 9.42 a.m.)

20 (Redacted)

21 (Redacted)

22 (Redacted)

23 (Redacted)

24 (Redacted)

25 (Redacted)

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1 (Redacted)

2 (Redacted)

3 (Redacted)

4 (Redacted)

5 (Redacted)

6 (Redacted)

7 (Redacted)

8 (Redacted)

9 (Redacted)

10 (Redacted)

11 (Redacted)

12 (Open session at 9.44 a.m.)

13 THE COURT OFFICER: [9:44:06] We are in open session, Mr President.

14 MR MANOBA: [9:44:15]

15 Q. [9:44:17] Where were you living around this period 2004?

16 A. [9:44:28] I used to live in Abok IDP camp.

17 Q. [9:44:36] Can you explain to this Court why you were living in this camp?

18 A. [9:44:50] We moved to the camp in the year 2003. It was between April and
19 May. I do not recall properly because I was still young. And the LRA rebels used
20 to come to our village very regularly, sometimes three or four times in a week. I had
21 a brother who used to sell in a shop. We moved to the camp because there were
22 government soldiers who were guarding the place, and we thought we would be safe
23 in the camp.

24 Q. [9:45:36] What was life like in the camp for you?

25 A. [9:45:48] Life was not easy for us for the reason that sometimes our elderly

1 people would leave the camp to go and look for what to eat, but the soldiers, the
2 government soldiers who were guarding the camp would stop them and tell them not
3 to go because of insecurity. For that reason, such a day we would sleep without
4 food.

5 Sometimes we would also leave to go to school, but the soldiers would stop us and
6 make us return to the camp. Sometimes we would stay for two or three days
7 without going to school because the soldiers would stop us, and for that reason we
8 did not have consistent studies.

9 Q. [9:46:38] Thank you, Mr Witness.

10 Does anything ring a bell to your mind that happened on 8 June 2004?

11 A. [9:47:02] That was the day that I was abducted and I moved with the rebels to
12 the bush. I saw many houses being burnt. I was seeing from the side, the side of
13 the camp, since I was already taken by the rebels and we were being kept at the side.

14 Q. [9:47:25] How old were you around this time?

15 A. [9:47:33] I was 12 years old.

16 Q. [9:47:41] You mentioned that this is the day when you were abducted. Where
17 were you when they actually found you?

18 A. [9:47:59] I was, I was sleeping inside the house on that day. I recalled that
19 day I started feeling a bit sick around 3 p.m., so I went and lay down. When I was
20 lying down I fell asleep. About 8 p.m., it was already dark, I woke up and
21 found -- and started hearing gunshots.

22 I left the bed and realised I was the only one who had remained in the house. The
23 door was open, everybody had fled. I also came out and decided to flee. But one
24 person came from behind the house and held my hands. When he held my hands, I
25 thought it was one of the government soldiers who was trying to rescue me. He

1 held my hands and took me under some tree and found so many people who had
2 been abducted and put there.

3 Four of the people were guarding us. And houses were being burnt from the camp.
4 For us, we were seeing from the side. We could still hear gunshots going on.
5 When they guarded us for almost 20 to 30 minutes, one of the guards fired, fired shots
6 up, and those who were in the camp came to us.

7 When they came back to us, they started telling us to leave, to leave very fast and
8 move. They herded us, and we were half running, half walking while they were
9 beating us. One of the women was crying, talking about her child which had
10 remained behind. They asked the woman, "Do you want to rest?" Then they got
11 the woman and cut her neck and she died. They told us that whoever starts
12 misbehaving will die that like woman.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:50:50] Mr Taku.

14 MR TAKU: [9:50:51] May it please your Honours. In a prior decision you had
15 determined that he was a victim, participating victim on the basis of the material that
16 was before you. And I think the purpose of this testimony, as you've already said in
17 your decision and again here is to say what happened to him, what he feels, not to
18 provide again additional evidence about what may have happened, the attacks and
19 all of the things which are completely irrelevant to this process.

20 And, your Honours, my colleague has given sufficient background as to what
21 happened to him, but when he's now started talking about other people who may not
22 be participating victims in this case, we do not know, we've seen the evidence, the
23 proof of evidence sent to us, we have not seen the names of the participating victims
24 that he actually submitted to us or to the Court who were involved in this process in a
25 way.

1 But with this particular witness, your Honours, your Honours have given guidance,
2 you allow him to the give the background material specific to him. But for him to go
3 ahead to say they did this in the camp, this is completely inappropriate for the
4 purposes for which you permitted victim participation.

5 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:52:17] Okay. Any comments? It's not
6 necessary, but if you want to, Mr Manoba, or somebody from the Prosecution.

7 MR MANOBA: [9:52:23] Mr President, I think his account simply leads into what
8 he suffered, so I don't see any problem with what he is telling the Court.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:52:33] Okay. Thank you for these remarks.
10 The Chamber has already explained the scope of questions that the LRVs can put to
11 Witness and the scope of the evidence that might be presented by LRV. That's
12 correct, Mr Taku.

13 And the Chamber has previously especially explained that the LRV may not ask
14 questions as a Prosecution, especially when related to the commission of or
15 Mr Ongwen's role in the commission of certain crimes, alleged crimes.

16 However, we have also said that this has to be decided on a case-by-case basis, having
17 in mind the purpose of presenting evidence by LRVs and, of course, the rights of the
18 accused to a fair trial.

19 I'm a little bit longer now so that this is not an issue that repeats itself. Because of
20 that, I explain it a little bit in length.

21 At the core of this evidence by this witness is, according to the evidence summary
22 that you gave, Mr Manoba, his life after his return and the harm he continues to suffer,
23 especially the trauma he still experiences, if we have understood this correctly. But
24 you cannot speak about trauma and harm without knowing where it comes from.

25 Also the reactions of, possible reactions of family, of community, of teachers, of fellow

1 pupils, for example, towards the witness can only be understood if you know at least
2 basically what has happened during his time in the bush.

3 So we allow the question, and you may continue. But as I have already said,
4 Mr Manoba, you keep in mind that you focus your examination on the life of the
5 witness after his return from the bush, but you have -- it's correct what you're saying,
6 the victim, the witness was in a narrative, and this leads now to I think also his
7 personal involvement in certain acts, I would assume.

8 So please continue, Mr Manoba. I hope that it is cleared now, the question, that it
9 does not pop up again so to speak.

10 MR MANOBA: [9:54:55] Thank you, Mr President.

11 Q. [9:54:59] Mr Witness, what happened to this woman that you saw? What is it
12 that you saw with this woman that you have described?

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:55:17] I think he has said this already I would
14 say.

15 MR MANOBA: [9:55:20] Much obliged.

16 Q. [9:55:24] Mr Witness, how does this make you feel, what you saw what
17 happened to this lady?

18 A. [9:55:44] I was young at the time. It instilled a lot of fear in me. I had never
19 seen someone hacked to death in my life.

20 Q. [9:56:00] How were you treated when you were taken to the bush by the rebels
21 that you mentioned? How did they treat you?

22 A. [9:56:22] They did not mistreat us, the younger people, but when you were
23 older, you had it rough with them.

24 Q. [9:56:34] How long did you have to walk on the day you were abducted before
25 you could probably take your rest?

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1 A. [9:57:09] That day when we were abducted, we walked throughout the night.
2 And even when it was daybreak we continued walking up to about 2 p.m., then we
3 rested beside a water stream.

4 Q. [9:57:29] Were you given any food to eat?

5 A. [9:57:39] Being young, I was being given things to eat, but the rest of the
6 abductees were not being given anything.

7 Q. [9:57:53] Were you made to join the fighters, were you initiated to join the
8 fighting or the fighting force of the LRA?

9 A. [9:58:14] Yes, I was trained.

10 Q. [9:58:24] What were you trained to do, Mr Witness?

11 A. [9:58:34] I was trained on how to march, how to assemble the gun and how to
12 shoot a target.

13 Q. [9:58:49] How long did this process take for you?

14 A. [9:58:57] It took two months. But within these two months it was not easy.

15 Q. [9:59:09] Can you explain what was not easy for you again?

16 A. [9:59:16] To start with, I was young. But every day I would be whipped six
17 strokes of the cane. The elderly, the elderly people, like 25-year-olds, would be
18 whipped 12 strokes of the cane every day.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:59:44] May I shortly, Mr Manoba.

20 MR MANOBA: [9:59:46] Yes.

21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [9:59:49] Why would that be? Why would they
22 whip you each day?

23 THE WITNESS: [9:59:56] (Interpretation) We were told that is the part of the
24 process of removing the civilian attitude from us and making us soldiers.

25 MR MANOBA: [10:00:13]

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1 Q. [10:00:14] Were you also given special clothings to put on in this new life that
2 you were introduced to, clothing and shoes?

3 A. [10:00:35] I was not given, because all the clothes were very large on me. So
4 what they did, they cut a piece of cloth from one of the trousers and it was given to
5 me. Even the shoes were very large, so I didn't have any.

6 Q. [10:01:06] Mr Witness, were you forced at any time to kill a person?

7 A. [10:01:23] Yes. There was a time I was forced and I killed a person. I was
8 given to kill a person who had escaped and was re-abducted. And I was picked
9 because I was young, so that was meant for me to be used to know what to do. And
10 I was informed if I escape, I would also be killed. So they gave me to kill this person
11 as a way of instilling that fear in me.

12 Q. [10:02:00] And how did this make you feel?

13 A. [10:02:19] Because of the life in the bush, it scared me, but when I did it and
14 after that I forgot about it.

15 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:02:35] May I shortly, Mr Manoba.

16 MR MANOBA: [10:02:38] Yes, Mr President.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:02:41] Without mentioning a name, the person
18 you killed, was it a young person, an older person? Was it a boy, a man, a girl, a
19 woman?

20 THE WITNESS: [10:02:57] (Interpretation) This person was a male person. He
21 was slightly older than me, I think, by about three years.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:03:10] And how did you kill the person?

23 THE WITNESS: [10:03:18] (Interpretation) I was made to hit the back of his head to
24 death. We hit him together with another person. He was a little older than me.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:03:30] Please continue, Mr Manoba.

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1 MR MANOBA: [10:03:32]

2 Q. [10:03:34] Mr Witness, is this the only incident that you were forced to be
3 involved in in killing another person, another human being?

4 A. [10:03:55] It happened several times. There was another time when I was
5 given a gun to use to kill a person.

6 Q. [10:04:09] Mr Witness, if you feel like not comfortable or you need some time
7 to take a break, then please show your hand as Mr President said. Do you
8 understand me?

9 A. [10:04:33] Yes, I do.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:04:35] But I think, Mr Manoba, we can
11 continue.

12 MR MANOBA: [10:04:39] Thank you.

13 Q. [10:04:43] Was this person or these people related to you or close family
14 members that you were forced to kill?

15 A. [10:05:02] The one I was given to hit was actually my friend, we were very
16 close friend and we would stay together while we were still in the bush. So we met
17 in the bush and he became my friend and -- but that's what happened.

18 Q. [10:05:24] Okay. During the time you were freshly abducted, was it common
19 for you to be homesick?

20 A. [10:05:43] Yes. Once in a while I would think about home, but at some point I
21 came to overcome it, because they would tell us they would give -- you know, try and
22 convince us with good things to forget home.

23 Q. [10:06:08] What did they tell you? How did they convince you, in other
24 words, to stay?

25 A. [10:06:27] When they loot good things, some edible food, they would take,

1 bring it to us. I would be one of the people who would be given. But other people
2 would not be given. So they would tell me not to worry. So -- because when you
3 try to escape, you would be killed. So I also minded about my life and I said maybe
4 I should stay.

5 Q. [10:07:01] Did you ever consider escaping from the bush?

6 A. [10:07:12] That idea never came to my mind, because I was young. Even
7 while inside there, it was difficult to escape. You could think of escaping, but the
8 group, the people would be all scattered in the bush, and they would re-abduct you.
9 And when they bring you back, the only thing is death.

10 Q. [10:07:41] Thank you, Mr Witness. I will now go to your life in the bush.
11 Where did you get or collect food from whilst you lived in the bush?

12 A. [10:08:06] Food were majorly looted from people, but sometimes when you
13 encountered the government soldiers, you would sometimes go back without food.

14 Q. [10:08:24] Do you remember any specific places you went to to gather food?

15 A. [10:08:34] I do recall. We went to a place called Abera, but we did not get
16 anything. We came to -- went to another place and with another person called
17 Oryek, Oryek was the one who got a few things, and we went back with him.

18 Q. [10:09:00] And how long did you live or stay in the bush?

19 A. [10:09:14] I spent two years and four months in the bush.

20 Q. [10:09:27] And during this time is it only Abera that you gathered food from,
21 or there are other places that you might have gone to collect food from?

22 A. [10:09:47] We also went to Otwal. We laid an ambush and we engaged the
23 government soldiers. It was at that place that I also got a gun, because I was young
24 and I was given a gun.

25 Q. [10:10:10] How can you describe the place you lived in the bush? Can you

1 describe it for us to understand the condition in which you lived in?

2 A. [10:10:34] Could you say the question again? Could you say the question
3 again? I did not understand.

4 Q. [10:10:40] I am asking you to describe the condition of the place that you were
5 living while you were in the bush.

6 A. [10:11:01] The life in the bush, if there is food, then it's easy. But if there's no
7 food, life becomes very difficult. We would move very long distance to go and
8 collect water or drinking water for that purpose.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:11:22] I think, Mr Manoba, you could move on
10 to his escape, which I think is in its detail not so important given the purpose of this
11 evidence, and then his return and continue to his life after his return I would say.

12 MR MANOBA: [10:11:41]

13 Q. [10:11:49] Mr Witness, do you recall when you escaped?

14 A. [10:12:02] Yes, I recall. I escaped on 14 October 2006. I escaped from Kona
15 Agula. We entered a government ambush. The person who was leading us was
16 called Labalpiny, but he was shot. So I fell down to take cover and escaped.

17 So when I escaped, I found a certain hole near an anthill and I entered into this hole.

18 The soldiers continued firing, but for me, I did not fire. The shooting continued past
19 8 p.m. It went on until about 10 to 11 o'clock and they stopped firing.

20 I remained in that hole up to around 3. While I remained in the hole, at a certain
21 point I got out and started moving. I was now feeling that I needed to go home. I
22 walked and crossed a certain road, I still had my gun with me and was wearing a
23 uniform, an army trouser and a vest. I dropped the gun because I did not see the
24 need anymore, because it would lead me to problems. So I crossed that road, but I
25 could not know the direction to home because I was still very young. I just

1 continued moving.

2 And I would see the changes now taking place, I would see daylight coming, because

3 from there in the bush you would only know whether it is morning when you see

4 daylight. So I moved and went to a certain forest and entered into that forest and

5 slept in that forest. That was already about 4 to 5 a.m. in the night.

6 I spent a whole day in that forest up to the next day. In the morning at 8 in the

7 morning I continued with my movement, got a water point, I was feeling thirsty and I

8 collected some water from this well and also bathed with that water.

9 I continued moving. I did not know where exactly I was moving to. I continued

10 moving until night fell again and I came across a certain school. While I was still at

11 home that school, my grandmother would go to this school. I recognised this school.

12 But again, I was a bit scared because I thought I would again come across another

13 group and they would abduct me or I would meet government soldiers and they

14 would kill me, so I continued walking through the bush.

15 Then I came across another road, but still I did not know the direction exactly which

16 one I should take. I crossed this road. Something told me that I should just

17 continue moving. I think it was God's grace leading me now at that point. I moved

18 up to a certain point and came across to a neighbour's place whom I had known

19 before my abduction. So when I came to that home, I quickly realised that this area

20 now is my home area. I continued moving and reached our village where we would

21 stay before we moved to the camp.

22 I found my father's trouser, the one that he would use to go to the farm. It was

23 hanging up. I removed my military trouser and put on my father's trouser that he

24 would use. The one, the military trouser, I went and dropped it in the pit latrine.

25 I was so hungry, I was feeling very hungry because I spent three days without food

1 except that water which I drank from that well.

2 When I put on my father's trouser, I went to the garden that we previously farmed, I
3 found a cassava garden. Because of hunger, I started uprooting the cassava. I did
4 not know who the owner was, but later on I realised, I came to know that it was my
5 father's cassava garden.

6 While I was in the garden I would see someone who was trying to look at me from a
7 distance. I became afraid. I thought I should pick a stone. I did pick the stone,
8 but he did not see that I was holding that stone. We kind of faced off at some point.
9 I kept on looking at that person. Then I realised that that was my father, then I
10 called him "Father, father". He could not believe. He did not know it was me. So
11 he came to me, but I told him "Please, do not cry. I am now back home. Here I am,
12 do not cry anymore."

13 So he took me from that garden where I was uprooting cassava and he took me to the
14 bush inside again and for him he left me there in that bush and went back to the camp.
15 I asked him -- he asked me whether we should go to the camp, but I told him, no, I'm
16 not going back to the camp because what happened in the camp was really, really
17 bad.

18 So he hid me in the bush and told me to wait for him in that bush. So I remained in
19 the bush for some time, then I felt something telling me that maybe he was going to
20 bring the government soldiers to collect me because while I was in the bush we were
21 told when you escape, the government soldiers would kill you.

22 So I moved away from the bush where he left me and returned to the cassava garden.
23 He came back and went to the place where he left me. He didn't find me. He
24 moved and came to the cassava garden where he found me. I -- when he came to the
25 cassava garden he came with a razor blade and a shirt. He said he was going to

1 shave my head, but the razor blade couldn't finish the work because of my hair and it
2 became blunt. So he told me now he is not going back to the camp. We stayed in
3 the cassava garden together with him until morning. He was feeling a bit scared of
4 me because he thought I was going to do something on him. So we were all seated
5 each one observer very carefully the other. We were just facing each other like this.
6 We stayed the whole day, the whole night until morning.
7 Then my father went back to the camp, came back again with three more razor blades
8 and shaved my hair. Then he took me and told me "Let's go to (Redacted)" because my
9 mother was in (Redacted). So he would farm from Abok and he would bring the food to
10 (Redacted) and that's where my mother was.

11 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:21:22] Mr Witness, I'm interested in one thing.
12 You said that you had the impression that your father was scared about you a little bit
13 at least. How did you feel about this, if you can recall it?

14 THE WITNESS: [10:21:49] (Interpretation) At that time when he came and found
15 me in the garden, I picked a stone trying to use it as a weapon. I think that's why he
16 was scared of me.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:22:03] He had recognised that you had this
18 stone; is this correct?

19 THE WITNESS: [10:22:15] (Interpretation) When he just arrived, when he just
20 arrived in the garden he saw me and then when I also started trying to pick the stone,
21 that's when he recognised. So when he picked me to take me to (Redacted), we reached
22 home and my mother put an egg in front of the door and I stepped on the egg and
23 also poured water in front of the door on the roof in front of the door and it would
24 flow on me. Then my grandmother came and said, "Oh, he's really lost weight.
25 I think life in the bush was so hard." That pained me a lot and I just wept. So when

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1 I wept, they also realised that I was really saddened and they all came out to me and
2 my mother just consoled me and I kept on crying, crying and then at some point I
3 stopped.

4 Then on Sunday my grandmother convinced me to go to church with her. I did not
5 refuse. I went. I said there is no problem. But I do not have a good clothe to put
6 on. So they picked a shirt and gave me and we went to church.

7 So when we went -- when we were now in the church my grandmother stood up and
8 greeted people just as you would do in the church that I greet you and people
9 responded. Then she said "I want to introduce to you my grandchild who was
10 abducted and I thought I was not going to see him again." That incident shocked me.
11 I stood up. There was nothing I could say. I just started crying. When I shed tears
12 I got out of the church because everyone, even those who were standing outside were
13 running to come and see who I was. I came out of the church and went straight
14 home. I went, reached home and I slept.

15 MR MANOBA: [10:24:49] Mr President --

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:24:51] I also have other question which I think
17 is quite fitting here. Mr Manoba, yes.

18 MR MANOBA: [10:24:55] Can I just -- Mr President, I think this might be
19 identifying information, people who were in the church at the time.

20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:25:09] We have a procedure in place to solve
21 this and we can discuss it. Yes, it might be, but it's of course also very, let me say
22 very peculiar, very interesting. Even from the emotional aspect, it's very moving
23 also so to speak. So perhaps I have a question which is related to that.

24 Mr Witness, your grandmother, when she addressed this, did you have the
25 impression or didn't you have the impression that it was meant to be good for you in

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1 hindsight if you look back to it?

2 THE WITNESS: [10:26:07] (Interpretation) I think in her heart she was doing it
3 with a good -- in good faith, but it touched me because everyone, even those who
4 were outside, were coming to see me. Something just came to me and, you know,
5 overtook me and overwhelmed me and I realised I was just crying. I think in her
6 own mind, in her own heart she was thinking she was doing something good for me.

7 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:26:39] This is, this was exactly what I was
8 heading at, so to speak, but sometimes good intentions do not turn out to have good
9 results.

10 Mr Manoba, please continue. I think we should simply continue and leave it like
11 that in open session.

12 MR MANOBA: [10:26:55]

13 Q. [10:26:57] Mr Witness, just to backtrack a little bit, why did your father want to
14 shave your hair?

15 A. [10:27:18] My hair was overgrown and for the two years that I was in the bush
16 I never shaved even once and it was so bushy.

17 Q. [10:27:32] Thank you.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:27:36] Perhaps I think since I fully assume that
19 we don't come back to the father, so to speak, Mr Witness, do you have still contact to
20 your father?

21 THE WITNESS: [10:27:57] (Interpretation) Yes, I have contact with him. I even
22 speak to him because there's nothing wrong that he did to me.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:28:06] So would you say it's a close contact like
24 if you observe it in other families like a relationship that you would expect between
25 father and son?

1 THE WITNESS: [10:28:31] (Interpretation) When I had just returned the
2 relationship was not close because everyone at home was scared because at that time
3 when I had just returned, if something saddens me, something annoys me, I become
4 overreactive. Even when a chicken crosses by, I would just kill the chicken. So
5 I was a bit aggressive. So people had to take me through, because there was no one
6 who take me through, counsel me to know how to live normally. So that kind of
7 thing was not there. But now things are much better. When I heard people were
8 filling the forms, participation forms, I filled and in that process I'm feeling much
9 better, but still it's not yet very good.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:29:23] Thank you.

11 Mr Manoba, please continue.

12 MR MANOBA: [10:29:27]

13 Q. [10:29:27] Mr Witness, earlier you were trying to describe what happened in
14 the church. How did the people react to the announcement that your grandmother
15 made about you?

16 A. [10:29:50] All eyes were turned on me. I was overwhelmed by so many
17 people who were looking at me. I wasn't used to. Even people who were outside
18 ran to look at me and to see me. I wasn't used to that.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:30:09] Mr Manoba, again, so would it be
20 correct if I said that you felt exposed by this what happened there, exposed that
21 everybody knew now? You wanted to get accustomed to the new situation and now
22 you were exposed to everyone that you were a person coming back from the bush
23 and having experienced all these things?

24 THE WITNESS: [10:30:48] (Interpretation) That is correct. I should have first be
25 informed that "Now we are going to church, I will do this and that, I will introduce

1 you to people", but it came all of a sudden and it was so much shock and I couldn't
2 take everything in. I was overwhelmed and I got angry.

3 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:31:12] Yes.

4 MR MANOBA: [10:31:14]

5 Q. [10:31:16] So what happened after seeing all these people running into the
6 church to see who is being talked about, what did you do?

7 A. [10:31:33] I stood up but all of a sudden something came over me and I found
8 myself crying. Even when I was moving on the road and going home I was just
9 crying. My grandmother didn't even tell me anything. She found me home. I
10 entered inside and lay down and I kept quiet. When I was lying down my
11 grandmother didn't even ask "What is happening to you?" She realised that I was
12 angry. It took long before she could talk to me.

13 Later on about 4 p.m. she came and started talking to me and consoling me, telling me
14 not to worry. Since it was not my intention to go to the bush, I was a victim, I was
15 only abducted. I told her "I don't mind being -- I have no regrets of what I went
16 through because it was not my intention, but the way you introduced me was wrong."
17 And that is how we concluded it.

18 When I was lying down and then the time for school came I was told that I would be
19 taken to school because at that time it was first term. I had stopped in primary 4. I
20 indeed went and when I reached school --

21 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:33:10] Let him, let him talk. It's the next in
22 the course of events.

23 And please don't mention names, Mr Witness. I think this is what perhaps
24 Mr Manoba wanted to tell you. But it's your story, please tell us what happened at
25 school then.

1 THE WITNESS: [10:33:32] (Interpretation) When I went to school the pupils who
2 were present in the church the day I was being introduced all turned to look at me
3 and everywhere I was passing they would call me rebel, rebel. They would call me
4 adui in our language, which means rebel. And then many of the pupils started
5 calling me rebel. Throughout the school everyone was calling me rebel.
6 So one day the headteacher summoned me to his office and he asked me "Why are the
7 pupils following you all the time?" And I told him that they are only stigmatizing
8 me and telling me that I am a rebel. The headteacher started asking me that I should
9 tell him how life was in the bush and then I refused to tell him. He persuaded me to
10 tell him how life was in the bush. He picked 500 shillings and gave me as a bait.
11 Then I decided to tell him. I started telling him how life was in the bush. When
12 I was telling him, he told me to leave. He told me to leave his office and go away.
13 I did left. When I left I went home. The next day --

14 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:35:26] Mr Witness, may I shortly. It is clear
15 that this moves you very much and perhaps you can calm down a little bit when I ask
16 you a question about that.

17 You told us that the headteacher wanted to know the story by you and then you told
18 him and then he chased you away. Did he tell you why he chased you away?

19 THE WITNESS: [10:36:01] (Interpretation) When I had explained to him from the
20 start to the end how I was abducted, how I lived in the bush, when I finished he just
21 told me "Go away" and told me "Hurry up and get out of here" and chased me. I
22 also left.

23 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:36:25] Mr Witness, since he wanted to know
24 from you what happened to you and then he chased you away, did you feel betrayed
25 by him sort of?

1 THE WITNESS: [10:36:44] (Interpretation) I was so angry. I felt betrayed because
2 I was inside and I was told all of a sudden to leave. I did not expect that I would be
3 chased away. If he had told me to go back to class I would understand, but he was
4 threatening me and chasing me away very rudely and told me to leave his office. I
5 obliged and left and just went straight home and lay down because my mother never
6 asked me any question. Every time I -- when I, when I reached, my mother never
7 asked me anything. She never asked me why I came back from school, what
8 happened.
9 So the next day I went back to school to study, but the headteacher of the school
10 during assembly, the headteacher called me in front of the pupils who were in
11 assembly and warned the pupils to be careful with me and said I was a killer and
12 warned the pupils not to be close to me. He said that whoever gets close to me
13 would die because I was a killer.
14 I went to class to continue studying, but I wasn't paying attention any more. I built a
15 wall around myself and secluded myself. I wouldn't even writing whatever was on
16 the chalkboard.
17 We went back home together with other pupils. The pupils who come from near my
18 home went and reported this thing home. My grandmother's people told me not to
19 worry, that they would shift me to another school and I would leave that school.
20 Indeed I was transferred from that school and was taken to another school. From
21 the other school I studied very well in the first term and then in the second term
22 everyone went to participate in athletics in that school where I was studying. When
23 it was time for athletics, the pupils from the school where I had left continued to call
24 me names and call me rebel from my new school. Others were shouting "LRA".
25 But I never -- I did not mind them. When they started calling me names from this

1 side, I would go away on the other side. But the pupils continued to insult me, but
2 they realised I was not care, I didn't care because in the school where I had gone they
3 were not, they were not stigmatizing me.

4 The headteacher of the school where I left went and told the headteacher of the new
5 school, of my new school. Then I realised when I was summoned to his office that
6 he would ask me about that thing. I refused to go to his office. I refused to go to
7 school for two weeks.

8 When I went back after two weeks he never called me to his office again. But now
9 four pupils transferred from my former school to the school where I was and then
10 they continued to abuse me and stigmatize me and kept calling me names. But they
11 realised that I didn't care much as they called me names. Every time I took my book
12 for marking to the teacher, they would write my book "LRA" on the cover, they
13 would write "LRA" on the cover of my book. They would write the cover of my
14 book "LRA" and I would remove it, I would rub it. But the pupils got a marker and
15 they would use a marker to write which was not easy to remove or delete.

16 So one day the teacher summoned me and asked me why my book had LRA on it.
17 But I told him I wasn't the one writing, it was the other pupils who were writing it.
18 But the teacher never took any action on the pupils who were doing that. They
19 continued to write large letters "LRA" on my book.

20 But I found that life was now hard and refused to go to school. My mother took me
21 again and there was the sister of -- there was an aunt of hers who was living (Redacted)
22 and took me there and asked me to stay with her aunt there. I accepted to go and
23 live with my mother's aunt there. I went to live there. And her aunt was a teacher.
24 I lived in her household and then I continued to study primary 4, never mind my age.
25 I was already older than the rest of the pupils. The place was far away from the

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1 school where I was being called names, but in that school they used to wonder why at
2 my age I was still in primary 4. Life was again difficult. My mum's aunt would
3 require that I leave bed at 6 a.m., I first go and do some farm work and then go to
4 school later, and in the evening I should come back about 3 p.m. and go and do farm
5 work. That was a daily routine and life was not easy.

6 Later on I returned home. In the year 2008 I returned home and continued living
7 with my parents.

8 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:43:27] Mr Witness, may I shortly. Did you
9 finally manage to finish school?

10 THE WITNESS: [10:43:41] (Interpretation) No, I did not continue studying.

11 When I returned home I found my father did not have anything to eat. I stayed
12 home for a whole year to help with some farm work so that we can have some food.
13 And then in the year 2013, I sat in primary 7. But there was nothing home and I
14 could not go to -- for further education. I moved from NGO to NGO to seek help so
15 I could study, if they could take me for some vocational study to have some skills, but
16 I was not successful. Up to now, I am not able to do anything. I don't have any
17 skill. I did not continue with my studies.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:44:34] What you told us about what happened
19 to you in these different schools with the teachers and with the pupils, do you know
20 of any other boys who have been abducted and been in the bush and if the same
21 happened to them or something similar happened to them? Do you have any
22 knowledge about this?

23 THE WITNESS: [10:45:05] (Interpretation) I may not have knowledge on their
24 experience because when I returned, I went my way and the rest of those who are also
25 abducted went their way. For me, later on I was removed from Abok where I was

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1 living and was taken to (Redacted). When I left (Redacted), I went to (Redacted) again. If it
2 indeed happened to them, it could have happened but I have no knowledge of that.
3 But I know what happened to me.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:45:38] Thank you. We understand, I think.
5 Mr Manoba, please continue, I think you have relatively advanced, but this is a
6 witness who is, in my opinion, a clever person; he's narrating and we should let him
7 simply speak and that might speak for itself.

8 MR MANOBA: [10:45:57] I share your view, Mr President.

9 Q. [10:46:01] Mr Witness, how do the community members treat you?

10 A. [10:46:17] The members of the community never allowed me to play with their
11 children. They said I would teach their children with rebel activities.

12 Q. [10:46:29] How does that make you feel? Or how did it make you feel at the
13 time?

14 A. [10:46:40] It was very painful that as a young person I was not able to play
15 with my colleagues. It was not good that I had no friends to play with.

16 Q. [10:46:55] Mr Witness, do you have any siblings in your family?

17 A. [10:47:04] Yes, I do.

18 Q. [10:47:09] How did your siblings behave towards you when you had just come
19 back from the bush?

20 A. [10:47:24] My siblings feared me. Up to now they still fear me. They are
21 afraid of me.

22 MR TAKU: [10:47:33] Your Honour, I want some specificity because he narrated
23 how he moved from one location to another, the people he met in his family and
24 everything, but siblings, he should try to say exactly what he means in this context. I
25 accept --

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1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:47:49] I don't understand this as an objection.

2 But indeed, when you are talking about siblings, whom are you talking about?

3 Please again, no names, Mr Witness, but perhaps is it sisters, brothers, cousins,

4 whatsoever? Perhaps you can specify this a little bit.

5 MR MANOBA: [10:48:13]

6 Q. [10:48:14] Just, Mr Witness, sorry, please do not mention names, but as per the
7 guidance of the Presiding Judge describe the siblings that you are talking about.

8 A. [10:48:32] Both my sisters and brothers are afraid of me for reasons that when I
9 get angry, I'll -- I overreact. For example, if a chicken say steps on my feet, I would
10 hit that chicken to death. Even if a goat crosses my path, I would hit the goat to
11 death. When something just comes over me and tells me to do something, I just do it
12 in the heat of the moment.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:49:04] Is this still today the case that you
14 overreact like that?

15 THE WITNESS: [10:49:21] (Interpretation) When I went to some counsellors and
16 they started counselling me, I'm a bit calm; although I still feel some of them disturb
17 me. Right now when I get angry really, I hold on to it, I get angry and hold on to it
18 for long.

19 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:49:48] Have you got any psychological
20 treatment that could perhaps help you to cope with these problems?

21 THE WITNESS: [10:50:05] (Interpretation) No. I have not got any help.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:50:09] Would you appreciate to get help in
23 that matter?

24 THE WITNESS: [10:50:22] (Interpretation) I would appreciate very much.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:50:27] Please, Mr Manoba.

1 MR MANOBA: [10:50:30]

2 Q. [10:50:31] Mr Witness, how do your parents relate towards you?

3 A. [10:50:45] Right now my relationship with my parents is okay. When I went
4 to your staff and you were speaking to me, I would -- I started doing things with
5 them together, but in the past they still feared me a lot.

6 Q. [10:51:09] If you look back, what would you say is the effect of your -- of the
7 abduction that you suffered on your life?

8 A. [10:51:28] It ruined my life. Right now my age mates who went to school
9 have a source of livelihood. I also wanted to be like them. When I was young,
10 I had so many ambitions, but when I was abducted all my dreams were shattered. I
11 couldn't go to school and my life is a total mess. Right now I'm -- I'm a beggar. I
12 beg for help. I beg for things if I want to get something. If this did not happen to
13 me I would be somewhere right now.

14 Q. [10:52:19] Mr Witness, earlier you said you went to some counsellors whom
15 you spoke to and they assisted you. Who were these counsellors?

16 A. [10:52:41] There was not any other counsellor other than you people who came
17 to talk to me when I was filling this form and you were advising me how I should live
18 in the community. You are the only people who have spoken to me. No counsellor
19 has spoken to me.

20 Q. [10:53:02] Mr Witness, did you report to any authorities when you returned
21 from the bush? Local authorities, I mean.

22 A. [10:53:19] No. I did not. But when I went to (Redacted) as is always the case
23 when you go to a new place, the local authorities must know. So when I went there,
24 my grandmother reported to the LC that I had arrived in (Redacted) and I was going to
25 live with them.

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1 Q. [10:53:48] Did you receive an amnesty certificate from those authorities?

2 A. [10:54:07] No, I did not receive an amnesty certificate because when I returned,
3 I would hear that if you are abducted by government soldiers or if civilians get you
4 and take you to government soldiers, that is when you would get an amnesty
5 certificate. For me, I escaped on my own. No one abducted me -- no one rescued
6 me and I did not get amnesty. And they told us that when you don't have amnesty,
7 you will not benefit from any support that is being given to former LRA abductees;
8 that is the reason why I don't have anything.

9 Q. [10:54:55] Have you nonetheless received any support, training as a former
10 abductee?

11 A. [10:55:15] No, I have not received anything.

12 Q. [10:55:30] The incidents that you described at the schools, these three schools,
13 did you have an opportunity to report them to any authorities? The incidents with
14 the teachers and the pupils.

15 A. [10:56:04] No, I did not because I did not know where to report them at the
16 time.

17 Q. [10:56:11] Mr Witness, what does it mean to you to be able to tell your story to
18 the Court?

19 A. [10:56:37] I am happy that I am finally sharing my story with the Court
20 because this is my experience, this is what I went through.

21 Q. [10:56:45] Finally, what do you expect from this Court? What would you
22 expect from this Court?

23 A. [10:57:02] My expectation is for justice. That is all.

24 MR MANOBA: [10:57:09] That's all for this witness.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:57:12] Mr Witness, I have one last question.

1 You told us already that you would appreciate it if you got psychological support.

2 Do you think of anything else that could help you in your life to cope with what you

3 have gone through and to cope with the consequences of what you have gone

4 through?

5 THE WITNESS: [10:57:41] (Interpretation) Yes, there is. Even if someone is

6 50 years old and still has interest in studies, he can go to school. I am begging that if

7 someone can help me and sponsor me to study, even if I learn one or two words in

8 English, it can help me in the future. You never know what is there in the future.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:58:11] Thank you, Mr Witness. I assume that

10 Mrs Massidda, you don't have any questions to the witness?

11 MS MASSIDDA: [10:58:18] No, your Honour. Thank you for asking; we don't

12 have any questions for this witness.

13 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:58:23] The Prosecution, any questions?

14 Mr Choudhry? Now correctly.

15 MR CHOUDHRY: [10:58:28] No questions, your Honour.

16 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [10:58:30] So it would then be the turn of the

17 Defence, but we have first a break until 11.30. Thank you.

18 THE COURT USHER: [10:58:38] All rise.

19 (Recess taken at 10.58 a.m.)

20 (Upon resuming in open session at 11.31 a.m.)

21 THE COURT USHER: [11:31:35] All rise.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:31:43] Mrs Bridgman, you have the floor.

23 MS BRIDGMAN: [11:31:54] Thank you, Mr President.

24 Q. [11:31:58] Good morning, Mr Witness.

25 A. [11:32:03] Good morning.

1 Q. [11:32:08] I'm going to ask you a few questions about what you've just told us
2 this morning. You said in your testimony that your brother's shop was attacked
3 three to five times a week. Was your brother present when these activities
4 happened?

5 A. [11:32:31] He would be present, but he would flee. Usually he would hide
6 some of the items. But the fact is, most times the rebels would come, in a week they
7 would come at least three to five times a week.

8 Q. [11:33:02] What kind of items were the rebels interested in?

9 A. [11:33:11] The most important thing to them was money and food items and
10 also abductions, abducting people to go and work.

11 Q. [11:33:33] So before fleeing, he would see these rebels, is that correct?

12 A. [11:33:42] For us, we would not now sleep in the house. We would go and
13 sleep in a different place. We leave our home and go and sleep in another area.

14 Q. [11:34:02] When these things happened, would your brother report to any of the
15 authorities?

16 A. [11:34:15] He did not go to report to any leader, because these people would go
17 to any, any person, even those leaders that you're talking about. They would just go
18 to them and loot whatever they're interested in, irrespective of whether this is a leader
19 or not.

20 Q. [11:34:41] So if the leaders were also aware, was there any military presence
21 around the place where your brother's shop was?

22 A. [11:35:07] The soldiers were in Abok. But the soldiers would not just protect
23 my brother's place because the rebel groups would move anywhere where there were
24 shops. So they would not only send government soldiers to protect only my
25 brother's shop.

1 Q. [11:35:35] I understand that. I'm just wondering when these raids happened,
2 what did the government forces do?

3 A. [11:35:48] When the government soldiers meet this group, they would fight.
4 But they would also fire to do a cover-up, not just to protect my brother only, but
5 their presence there was to provide protection to the larger population.

6 Q. [11:36:25] You don't need to mention the name of your village again, but how
7 far away is it from Abok? Sorry, I meant the IDP camp.

8 A. [11:36:50] It is not far, because the distance between (Redacted) and Abok is not far.
9 We are almost at the border. We are at the border of (Redacted) and Abok. So we could
10 go to either side. We could go to (Redacted). We could go to Abok. The distance could
11 be approximately (Redacted)

12 Q. [11:37:16] You said that your mother was injured during the attack. What kind
13 of injuries did she sustain?

14 A. [11:37:36] She tried to flee and she fell into a ditch and she has a problem
15 with -- she sustained injuries on her back and on the chest because she fell in a ditch.

16 Q. [11:37:59] You talked about the training you received while in the bush, and you
17 said it lasted about two months. Now, for the things that you were forced to do
18 during that training, could you have said no?

19 A. [11:38:31] I could not refuse because what they told us, they told everyone who
20 was training, that if you have been assigned to do something, for example, if you
21 refuse to kill someone when you have been given to kill, then you'll also be killed.
22 So you cannot refuse to do what you've been instructed to do.

23 Q. [11:39:00] Did you see such a thing happen?

24 A. [11:39:06] I saw and I also did, because I was given to kill someone who tried to
25 escape, and I killed that person, because the instructions there were very tough,

1 because if I did not, then I will be the one to be killed. So I did see it and also did it
2 myself.

3 Q. [11:39:31] You talked about the six lashes that you received every day during
4 your training, and you said that they told you this was to take the civilian out of you.
5 When did you transition from being a civilian to being a soldier in your own
6 experience?

7 A. [11:40:00] I transitioned within only two weeks of that thorough beating. But
8 the training took two months. But the beating, we were beaten for two weeks. So a
9 bit older persons were left, left off, but for me, because I was young, I continued.

10 Q. [11:40:33] Now, you spent about over two years in the LRA. When you finally
11 transitioned into a soldier, did you feel like you had a choice in the things that you
12 did while you were now a soldier in the LRA?

13 A. [11:41:09] I did not have any strength. I did not have any power. Because it
14 was an order, if you are told to go to a place, you follow that order, you follow the
15 order to go and do what you have been ordered to do. You do not do anything out
16 of your own will. It has to come from an order.

17 Q. [11:41:42] You said that you escaped in October 2006. Do you have any idea
18 where you were located? No, I'm sorry, I'll take that back.

19 You said that you were Labalpiny in Kona Agula when you were ambushed by the
20 UPDF. How many people were in your group, if you remember?

21 A. [11:42:16] We were 25 people in number.

22 Q. [11:42:25] Do you have any idea where you were going.

23 A. [11:42:32] At that time we were going to a place called Iceme, but because of that
24 ambush, people ran and went back. I do not know if they went to another place
25 because I remained back from that point of the ambush.

1 Q. [11:42:56] During this time period, had you heard anything about the peace
2 talks between the government of Uganda and the LRA and Joseph Kony to be exact?

3 A. [11:43:20] I did not hear because while in the bush we were told that whoever
4 returns home were killed. So people were scared that if you return, you would be
5 killed.

6 Q. [11:43:53] So from your answer would I be correct that you did you not also hear
7 about the ceasefire and the safe passage routes?

8 A. [11:43:58] We were not told, so I did not hear about it. But what was said was
9 that whoever comes home would be killed. That's the only thing they would tell us.

10 Q. [11:44:35] Can you briefly describe to us the ambush as it happened, from where
11 you escaped?

12 A. [11:44:43] At the ambush, the soldiers lined up on the other side of the road.
13 We were moving and we were confident that we were going and would reach where
14 we were headed to. So when we reached the ambush point, someone, one of our
15 people somewhere in the middle told us to stop and said, "Hey, people, stop. I can
16 hear something."

17 So we stopped immediately. And then immediately we saw Labalpiny fall down.
18 Then I also fell down to take cover. Luckily, when I crawled away from that point I
19 found a ditch and entered into it.

20 Q. [11:45:46] You have mentioned the fear that if you returned home you'd be
21 killed by the UPDF. Was this something you had observed before your abduction or
22 you just heard it in the bush?

23 A. [11:46:07] That is what I heard while I was still in the bush. But before I was
24 abducted and taken to the bush, I would see people would return from the bush and
25 nothing would happen to them. But when I now went to the bush, that's what we'd

1 be told, that whoever escapes and go home, that person would be killed, and the
2 person would not return back to us.

3 Q. [11:46:43] In response to the Presiding Judge's question this morning, you talked
4 about your relationship with your father now. I'm just wondering, were you close to
5 your father before your abduction?

6 A. [11:47:10] We had a very strong and good relationship. We would stay
7 together, we would converse and chat. But after my return, I think he looked at me
8 or was studying me and felt that my mind had changed. I was not the same person
9 as I was before.

10 So he started fearing me. And up till now our children, even the older ones and the
11 young ones fear me. If anything happens, any slight thing happens, they just, you
12 know, have that fear in me.

13 Q. [11:47:52] You said this morning that when your father went and left you in the
14 bush that he had hid you, you became afraid and left and went back to the cassava
15 garden. And you mentioned that you were afraid that he was going to call the
16 UPDF.

17 Why did you believe that of your father?

18 A. [11:48:19] Because what we were told while still in the bush, I heard it, I kept it
19 in my mind and I feared that when I return home, people would kill me.

20 Q. [11:48:43] So you believed what you were told in the bush?

21 A. [11:49:04] While I was still there, I was young. I had the belief that people
22 would return and they would be killed just as we were told most of the times. So I
23 had that fear.

24 Q. [11:49:27] You said that you did not apply for amnesty and neither did you go to
25 a rehabilitation centre, but were you aware that the government of Uganda was

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1 offering amnesty to people who had left the LRA?

2 A. [11:49:45] I did not understand that because I was young. But maybe if my
3 father had taken me to apply for it, maybe I would have gone. But what he did, he
4 just picked me, took me to (Redacted) and no to any other place.

5 Q. [11:50:13] You also told us about your mother when you returned home, that
6 she broke an egg and poured water on the roof. What was this supposed to be for?

7 A. [11:50:38] That was meant to cleanse me of all the bad and the dirty things that I
8 went through while in the bush. It is part of a tradition. I do not know what that is
9 supposed to mean.

10 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:51:05] May I shortly, Ms Bridgman.

11 You said you didn't understand what it was supposed to mean. Did it mean
12 something to you at the time, or in hindsight does it mean something to you?

13 THE WITNESS: [11:51:25] (Interpretation) I was still young. And even when she
14 was doing it, I did not pay a lot of attention to it. It was until now when I become of
15 age, that's when I was now told and learned that even when you have been just
16 ordinarily arrested and taken to a normal prison and when you return home, such
17 procedure would be performed on you. That's what I came to learn later.

18 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:52:07] Yes, I understand. So you understand
19 now and you have come to learn what it is supposed to mean. And knowing that
20 now, does it mean something to you, that this happened when you came back from
21 the bush?

22 THE WITNESS: [11:52:24] (Interpretation) Now I know that it is done to cleanse
23 you of the bad luck, the bad things that you've gone through. So it is done so that
24 you'll become clean and so that you do not go back to what you have gone through.

25 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:52:59] Please continue.

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1 MS BRIDGMAN: [11:53:04]

2 Q. [11:53:12] In your victim application form -- and your Honours, this is the only
3 tab, UGA-V40-0002-0001.

4 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [11:53:28] That's a new introduction, "the only tab",
5 so to speak.

6 MS BRIDGMAN: [11:53:34]

7 Q. [11:53:34] You said that in the bush you were smeared with oil that could and
8 still makes you sense danger ahead of you. How soon after your abduction did this
9 smearing happen?

10 A. [11:53:48] That happened on the day when we were being passed out to go out
11 now to work. That's when they did, performed that ritual. They brought water
12 and put it in a small gourd and they gave us to drink. So it was performed on the
13 day that we were now being passed out following the two months training that we
14 went through.

15 Q. [11:54:21] What kind of danger was it supposed to help you sense?

16 A. [11:54:35] Could you say the question again?

17 Q. [11:54:46] This smearing ritual, what kind of danger was it supposed to help you
18 sense? For instance, was it to sense danger from the government forces, from wild
19 animals, from what kind?

20 A. [11:55:05] That, that ritual, why it was done, I did not understand it at that time.
21 But later on I asked my colleague that "This thing which was performed on us, why
22 was it done?" Because for him, he had spent some time in the bush. So he told me
23 that that ritual is performed to harden your heart so that even when you go to fight,
24 you would not be fearful. You would just move and fight without being scared or
25 becoming coward.

1 Q. [11:55:58] Do you think that it indeed hardened your heart?

2 A. [11:56:07] Yes.

3 Q. [11:56:18] Do you know if it also prevented you from escaping?

4 A. [11:56:32] I think this function was only done to harden you so that when you
5 go to fight, you are a hardened soldier. But I think escape depends on an individual.
6 That ritual cannot prevent you from escaping because people would escape the way
7 they would want, if they want to.

8 Q. [11:57:03] In your victim application, you also said that the spirits of those you
9 killed still haunt you a lot. Can you explain how they haunt you?

10 A. [11:57:27] Each time I mention this, I dream of it. I get nightmares. Whenever
11 I would talk about it, I would get nightmares. But all I do now is resort to prayers to
12 help me.

13 Q. [11:57:54] Does this, do the nightmares only happen when you talk about it or
14 sometimes they come on their own?

15 A. [11:58:12] The nightmares come when I talk about it. When I mention it, that's
16 when I get them.

17 Q. [11:58:34] You also talked about the fits of anger. When did these start?

18 A. [11:58:47] It started immediately when I returned from the bush.
19 Whatever -- when I get angry, I become very aggressive. So most times when people
20 try to annoy me, I just resort to crying. So it started immediately I returned from the
21 bush.

22 Q. [11:59:22] So from what you told the Court this morning, would I be correct to
23 say that this anger comes on its own sometimes by random events, like a chicken
24 crossing your path?

25 A. [11:59:53] It is usually provoked. For example, if I am -- I have displayed

1 something to dry in the sun and a chicken comes to start scattering it to eat it, I get so
2 angry and aggressive and I would want to kill it. If something of mine is destroyed
3 by something, no matter what, I would want to get at it.

4 Q. [12:00:30] Do you think that there is any particular incident about what
5 happened to you in the bush that causes this anger and the nightmares, or is it a
6 combination of your life in abduction?

7 A. [12:00:54] I wondered whether it was the whipping which was given to us that
8 made me behave the way I did, because it was very painful. First, I was young, and
9 I got angry over it and it makes me to do things that I may regret later.
10 Then I also wondered, is it the killings which I was made to kill? At the end of the
11 day I think it is built up, it is the whole experience that I lived in the bush that makes
12 me react the way I do.

13 Q. [12:01:43] Now, do you recall ever having nightmares or these flashes of anger
14 while you were still in the bush?

15 A. [12:02:04] When I killed someone, I stayed for about two months and then I
16 started having nightmares about the guy I killed. He would appear to me in a
17 dream and tell me "Let's go, let's go away", and I would object and say "No, I'm not
18 feeling well. I can't go with you."
19 While in the bush I had a nightmare only about that incidence, but when I came back,
20 the nightmares continued. The person I killed was close to me at the time that I was
21 told to kill him. I had already stayed in the bush and we had grown fond of each
22 other.

23 Q. [12:03:02] You also told us that that time at the church with your grandmother,
24 you said something came over you and you started crying and walked away. Can
25 you describe that something? How did you feel, apart from the anger?

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1 A. [12:03:39] When my grandmother asked me to stand up, I stood up. Then all of
2 a sudden as I was feeling it, I felt a darkness and I started crying. I knew I was
3 crying, but I didn't know what was happening to me. I just stepped out of the
4 church and walked home.

5 Q. [12:04:19] And I'm sorry about all the challenges you have faced since your
6 return, but can you give us examples of the peculiar circumstances in the bush that
7 you wish people would understand?

8 A. [12:04:50] Kindly repeat your question, please.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:04:59] I think you would have to explain a little
10 bit what you mean. So perhaps may I? If I'm wrong perhaps you can tell me
11 afterwards.

12 But I think, Mr Witness, Mrs Bridgman is heading at the following. You told us this
13 morning how people reacted to you, and that they labelled you as a person of the
14 LRA, that they wrote in your school book "LRA". And at the root of everything was,
15 of these reactions was that you have been in the bush and these people who did this
16 had not been in the bush.

17 So the question is, if you could, what would you like to tell them what they do not
18 understand what happened to you at the bush so that they perhaps would
19 understand you better?

20 It was a long speech, but I hope you have perhaps understood what I meant.

21 THE WITNESS: [12:06:11] (Interpretation) I've not understood the question.

22 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:06:15] Then I think I give Mrs Bridgman another
23 chance.

24 Or perhaps the people react to you in a way that is bad for you, that deepens your
25 harm, so to speak, how you described it, and these people have not experienced what

1 you have experienced. So do you think if you could tell them what really happened
2 to you that would help? And if so, what specifically would you like to tell them?

3 THE WITNESS: [12:07:00] (Interpretation) It was a difficult situation. And I
4 didn't tell them anything. My problem was with my grandmother, because she's the
5 one who introduced me that I was from the bush. And since people listened and
6 said I was from the bush, they started to stigmatize me.

7 And if I was to tell, if I was to tell them what happened to me, I think it would have
8 created more fear and distance between me and them.

9 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:07:47] This is exactly what I, frankly speaking,
10 would have expected by what you told us already. So you think it would not have
11 helped them if you had talked to them more in detail what happened to you?

12 THE WITNESS: [12:08:12] (Interpretation) It was not easy to say, I couldn't tell
13 them, because if I -- every time I talked about it I get so angry. I feel the pain that I
14 went through. And if I was to start explaining to them, they wouldn't even
15 understand. They would distance themselves more, they would insult me more, and
16 they could even kill me. Sometimes when people are many, I'll fear that there would
17 be mob justice on me. As a young person, 8, 14, telling them that you've killed
18 people, I'm sure they wouldn't want to hear it. And when I went to the village
19 where my mother took me, life was very difficult also.

20 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:09:08] Would it be correct by me to say then that
21 the people from your community, especially also the pupils and the teacher did not
22 really want to listen, did not really want to understand you; or would that be a little
23 bit exaggerated?

24 THE WITNESS: [12:09:27] (Interpretation) When the teacher called me, it was
25 because pupils would follow me everywhere, but they would follow me only to insult

1 me so that I felt stigmatized. He called me to ask me why this is happening. Then I
2 told him, I explained to him why they were following me and insulting me and
3 calling me names. I told him they're just trying to call me names and stigmatize me.
4 I'm a victim once abducted by the LRA, and I have just returned. I've just started
5 school. He called me to his office and started to talk to me as if he was trying to
6 console me. And he told me, asked me to tell him the things that I used to do in the
7 bush.

8 I told him. And the way he reacted and asked me to leave and chased me away, to
9 leave his office urgently made me to fear, and I could not tell anyone my experience,
10 because I fear that the same reaction which I received from the head teacher would be
11 the same reaction I would receive if I told anyone the experiences I went through.

12 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:10:54] Thank you.

13 Also thank you for your indulgence, Mrs Bridgman. Please continue.

14 MS BRIDGMAN: [12:11:00]

15 Q. [12:11:01] Now, since your return until now, have you met or interacted with
16 former abductees like yourself?

17 A. [12:11:10] No, not much. One time, it was only one time that I met somebody I
18 was with in the bush. I started calling him with a name we used to call him in the
19 bush. Then he looked at me as if he did not know me.

20 Maybe I met some people who were in different battalions, but we never talked much
21 about what we went through in the bush. We would just look at each other.

22 Q. [12:11:51] I would like to clarify something. You said that talking to the
23 victims' representatives was the second time you talked about your experience in the
24 bush. Is it my understanding that it is the second time after talking to that teacher?

25 A. [12:12:34] Yes, that was the second time. The first time was with the head

1 teacher. But the way he treated me and the way he reacted, I did not like it. The
2 second time was when these people came to me and advised me. That was the
3 second time indeed.

4 Q. [12:12:54] You mentioned that you have approached several NGOs for
5 assistance. Would I be correct to say that when you approach them, you don't tell
6 them the details of your time in the bush?

7 A. [12:13:12] The NGOs would come and ask us to register, would ask people who
8 were formerly abducted to register. I also went, but they told me that they
9 also -- they only wanted to register people who had amnesty certificates. I didn't say
10 anything and I did not register.

11 Q. [12:13:49] Have you talked to any other people or experts about your time in the
12 bush?

13 A. [12:14:30] No, I never talked to anyone else. It was only the head teacher and
14 then these people who went to me.

15 MS BRIDGMAN: [12:14:47] Your Honours, I have one last question, and I request
16 that I ask it in private session.

17 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:14:53] Then we go to private session.

18 (Private session at 12.14 p.m.)

19 (Redacted)

20 (Redacted)

21 (Redacted)

22 (Redacted)

23 (Redacted)

24 (Redacted)

25 (Redacted)

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- 1 (Redacted)
- 2 (Redacted)
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- 7 (Redacted)
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- 19 (Redacted)
- 20 (Redacted)
- 21 (Open session at 12.17 p.m.)
- 22 THE COURT OFFICER: [12:17:38] We are back in open session, Mr President.
- 23 MS BRIDGMAN: [12:17:44] Thank you, Mr Witness, for coming and for answering
- 24 my questions.
- 25 Your Honours, I have no further questions.

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- 1 PRESIDING JUDGE SCHMITT: [12:17:49] Thank you very much, Mrs Bridgman.
- 2 And on behalf of the Chamber, Mr Witness, I would like to thank you that you came
- 3 to this Court, that you have taken it upon you to testify. We wish you a safe trip
- 4 back, and we wish you all the best for your future.
- 5 This concludes the testimony of this witness. The next witness will start tomorrow
- 6 at 9.30. It is as I understand it V-3.
- 7 THE COURT USHER: [12:18:19] All rise.
- 8 (The hearing ends in open session at 12.18 p.m.)