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Name of the organ

Number of the Subject [no entry]

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Date of origin: [no entry]

Headquarters of the organ

Secrecy type	Security Classification Level		
STATE SECRET			
MILITARY SECRET	Highly Conf.	Confidential	Internal
OFFICIAL SECRET	Highly Conf.	Confidential	Internal

Retention Period	
Year(s)	
Permanently	

Subject: [handwritten note: Vuković Marko – a surgeon]

[handwritten note: significant statement]

[no entry]

Total Number of	
Documents	Pages

[handwritten numbers: 91]

KI Number: [handwritten note: KRI 20/96]

[handwritten numbers: 514]

[handwritten numbers: 209]

RECORD OF WITNESS STATEMENT

dated 11th March 1996 before Investigative judge
of the Lower court in Trebinje
in the criminal proceedings against [no entry]
due to criminal offence from Article [no entry] of KZ¹.

Bojan Stević - judge

Witness

[no entry]

Marko Vuković

Recording Clerk

People present at examination:

Aleksandra Cvetković

public prosecutor

[no entry]

defendant

[no entry]

defence attorney

[no entry]

Examination started at 2:45 PM.

The witness was warned that he/she is obliged to speak the truth and that he/she must not keep anything secret, was warned of the consequences of giving false testimony, as well as the fact that he/she is not obliged to answer specific questions if it is probable that he/she would thus expose himself/herself or a close relative to severe shame, considerable material damage, or to criminal prosecution (article 229 of ZKP²), thus the witness gives following answers to general questions:

1) Name and surname Marko Vuković

¹ Translator's note: abbreviation for the Criminal Code

² t/n: abbreviation for the Criminal Procedure Code

- 2) Father's name Vlado
- 3) Occupation a doctor – a surgeon and an orthopaedic
- 4) Temporary place of residence temporary Trebinje, phone
- 5) Place of birth Dragojevići, Foča
- 6) Year of birth 8th May 1936
- 7) Relationship to the defendant and aggrieved party [no entry]

Next, the witness states the following regarding the case itself:

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I graduated from the Sarajevo Faculty of Medicine and started working as a doctor in Foča. I started working in Sarajevo in 1982 as a Surgical Clinic Deputy Director; in 1984, I was elected assistant professor at the Sarajevo Faculty of Medicine. I had been having those jobs until the beginning of war in the former BiH³, and I was also recruited as a surgeon at the Trauma Clinic. My function in the business board allowed me to keep in touch with most of the doctors since all organisational – personnel tasks in surgical clinics went through me.

After a multiparty system was introduced, the Sarajevo parties made deals on the crucial executive positions. In my business board, a Croat was the president, and there were also one Serb (me) and one Muslim. No changes were made in this Board. However, as the war broke out, most of the Serbs in executive positions were rapidly replaced. The three of them who stayed in their positions got Muslim deputies. Those deputies basically started performing all the functions, leaving Serbs side-lined. By the way, horrible hatred against Serbs by Muslims and Croats in the leading positions of the HDZ⁴ party was omnipresent at the beginning of war. Still, Croatian citizens had correct relationship with Serbian citizens – probably because they both were in a similar position when it comes to Muslims' attitude towards both of them.

Shortly before the war, when barricades were set up throughout the city, many Serbs were searched in the streets by members of the so called “Patriotic League”; their vehicles and other valuables were taken away from them on the streets. For example, my brother Simo Vuković had his “Golf” taken away from his yard.

Attitude of members of the “Patriotic League” towards members of the JNA⁵ was especially interesting and surprisingly harsh. A large number of officers of the former JNA took off their uniforms and left their soldiers unprotected like wild animals exposed to hunters, and anyone could do whatever they wanted to them. Members of the “Patriotic League” and many Muslim citizens shot those soldiers with any weapons they had, they abused and murdered them. The only way for them to save themselves was to change into civil clothes. However, unfortunately, some of them did not have any civil clothes. Many soldiers tried to save themselves by running away to hospitals. Unfortunately, members of the “Patriotic League”, i.e. the “Green Berets” quickly posted guards in all hospitals. They were catching those soldiers at the gates and taking them in unknown directions. We never saw those people again. Some of the soldiers

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³ t/n: abbreviation for Bosnia and Herzegovina

⁴ t/n: abbreviation for the Croatian Democratic Union

⁵ t/n: abbreviation for the Yugoslav People's Army

resorted to self-mutilation, or they tried to escape to hospitals as injured persons. Members of the “Patriotic league” had the same treatment for both healthy and injured persons. Unfortunately, the “Patriotic League” formed some kind of a hospital in the Second Ward of the Urology Clinic during the first days of war. Severely injured Serbs were taken to this hospital. Serbian personnel were denied access to this hospital. I am personally familiar with the case of the former Head of the JNA Army Home in Sarajevo. 24 hours after a difficult operation, he was allegedly taken to the aforementioned ward. I have never seen him again after that. He had a Macedonian last name. They took him from the intensive care unit of the Trauma Clinic. I performed an operation on him one day. Immediately, a guard with automatic weapon was deployed next to him. The guard was an X-ray technician at the Institute of Radiology. I cannot recall his name and last name. The next day, the former JNA Head was taken away from the Clinic and I have never seen him again. I believe that, for a certain period of time, patients in this ward were controlled by Dr Faris Gavrankapetanović, a doctor in the ward that was led by me for a long period of time. I am not familiar with his treatment of the patients. I only know that one retired police officer known as “Mujica” secured the ward. He was known for his cruelty.

At that time, all media – especially the Television and the Radio of Sarajevo, promoted persecution of members of the JNA. The JNA members were accused of all sorts of things. They were showing Mufid Memija, a TV Sarajevo journalist with an automatic rifle in his hands, all night long on the TV. Hadžifejzović, the newsreader, was literally calling for culling. I am also familiar with the fact that Mr. Alija Izetbegović and Ms. Turković, who was later appointed ambassador in Zagreb, visited the slopes of the Trebević Mountain in summer of 1992. Numerous Serbs were murdered and ditched in the caves on these slopes. The person who stood out in doing this to Serbs was Mušan Topalović alias “Caco”, a commander of the special militia and members of his group. After forcing Serbs to dig trenches, they shot at and murdered many of them. Some of the Serbs got killed on the first lines during armed conflicts. During the aforementioned visit, in front of the TV cameras or Radio – I am not sure, Alija told Mušan Topalović that he should listen to the Command and praised him for the work well done. Ms. Turković praised him even more. By the way, there was a practice at that time that each street, i.e. each neighbourhood in Sarajevo had its own armed

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Muslim group. Those groups called themselves different names. Mostly at night, those groups took away prominent Serbs. Their excuse was that they were taking them in for informative conversations. However, they murdered those Serbs. Dr Milutin Najdanović was murdered in this manner. He was a professor at the Clinic for Chest Surgery who got retired just before the war broke out. In the presence of his wife, daughter and grandchildren, he was taken away from his apartment and murdered nearby. He was stabbed with a knife nine times and shot in his mouth. He had lived in the settlement of Koševo, between the Sarajevo stadium and the hospital. There was a rumour that his murder was committed by a group led by a person nicknamed “Srna”. The same group is responsible for the murder of Branko Milanović on the Vrbanja Bridge. Starović, an engineer, was murdered in a similar way. He had been a CEO at the “Traser” Sarajevo Company before the war. People who were murdered the most were the ones who were left alone in their apartments, including women. After the murders, the apartments would be occupied. A lot of Serbs were murdered in front of their apartments or in the stairways. The explanation was always the same: it was done by Serbian snipers. Dr Gojko Šurbart, a retired cardiologist, was murdered in the same way.

I would like to mention extremely brutal conduct of a person last named Topić, alias “Topa”. He owned a café in the Alipašino Polje. Afterwards, he was appointed a military attaché somewhere in Germany. He and his two companions entered the operating room while I was operating on a soldier who suffered minor injuries. They lifted the soldier off the table, pushed me away and immediately started beating the wounded soldier in front of the operating room. They took him to a destination unknown to me. They did not beat medical personnel on that occasion. I am sure I could recognize Topić when I see him.

I would also like to specifically mention the events that took place in the Vase Miskina Street at the end of May 1992. I found out the majority of information on this event while I was in prison, and from Fahrija Karkin, a lawyer who shared a prison cell with me for three months. He was arrested for his criminal activities. By the way, he was initially Sefer Halilović’s deputy. Halilović was the commandant of the “Patriotic League”, while Karkin was in charge of civil matters. During his stay in prison, he talked with other people in the room. I could not sleep at the time, so I heard that the day before the event that took place in the Vase Miskina Street, members of the “Patriotic League” visited Muslim apartments near the aforementioned street and told the residents

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not to leave their apartments and not to go out in the city. At that moment, it became clear to me why so many Serbs got murdered and wounded while queuing for bread in part of the city with very few Serbs. I have to say that some of them were wounded with firearms, so I suppose that they were shot from a small distance at the same time when mine explosion happened in the same street. It is assumed that they were being shot at from the “JAT” skyscrapers located in the immediate vicinity. The truth is that only a minute after the explosion, two OB vans arrived in the Vase Miskina Street, although the TV station was at least 8 kilometres away from the place where the explosion happened. In my opinion, Kerkin was well acquainted with the preparations for the massacre which was, in my opinion, done by the Muslims. Similar thing happened in front of the City Hall when two persons were murdered. The ambulance vehicle arrived only 20 seconds after the event, although the ambulance is located two to three kilometres away from the place where the event took place. Everyone at the hospital believed that everything was framed.

Events that took place in and around the Sarajevo Maternity Hospital and the Ilidža Rehabilitation Institute are especially interesting. Primarius Dr. Marina Maglajić, a gynaecologist and a member of the business board of the SOUR⁶, told me the day before that members of the “Patriotic League” entered the Maternity Hospital at around 10 AM. They were brought in by Dr Lutvo Hodžić, a paediatrician. That entire day and until the afternoon the following day, they were shooting on Serbian positions from the maternity Hospital. I want to point out to the fact that the Maternity Hospital is located on a hill ascending above Sarajevo and the area towards Vogošća. It was only the next day at around 4 PM when Serbs attacked the Maternity Hospital, when the hospital had long been abandoned. I also want to point out to the fact that no infants, no new mothers and no medical staff were injured – meaning that they had previously been evacuated for those purposes.

A more drastic case took place at the Ilidža Rehabilitation Institute. The day before – I cannot recall the exact date – members of the “Patriotic League”, i.e. the “Green Berets” from the settlement of Hrasnica brought weapons on the third floor of the Institute. Some of the members changed into patients’ clothes, while another group arrived in white coats the next day. Shooting from the third floor, they murdered around 20 Serbs in the park. Later, while defending themselves, Serbs set the third floor on fire, but there were no injured patients. The patients were sent down to the first and the ground floor.

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⁶ t/n: abbreviation for the Composite Organisation of Associated Labour (COAL)

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I would like to mention a statement given by Dževad Softić, a professor of gynaecology. In my office at the Clinic, he said the following: “Four women with a referral came to my office for a pregnancy termination. When I asked them how many men raped them and where it happened, each one of them told me that they had not been raped, but they were instructed to say so in exchange for certain privileges”. I also want to point out to the fact that all of the women were Muslim, as well as the doctor.

I have witnessed grenades falling on property of the “Koševo” hospital on several occasions. The grenades hit the Trauma Clinic in my immediate vicinity twice. However, it was always preceded by a series of shootings performed by the Muslim military below the Trauma Clinic, where some kind of their school was located. Later, we would always take cover as soon as they started shooting from that school on Serbian positions. The Clinic was approximately 15 metres away from the Faculty of Civil Engineering, where this school was located.

Just when the war broke out, I met Omer Sefić at the hospital’s property. He was a Muslim lawyer whom I had operated before the war, and he invited me for a coffee at his place. He led me to the administration building of the Clinic Centre. I had an office in the building as well, as I was a member of the business board. It was a low building with the ground floor and the first floor. It had a large atrium shaped as a Cyrillic letter “P”. Muslims had set up high bars at the entrance. The bars had not been there before the war. I saw around 50 people detained in the atrium; they were standing or walking around the room. Sefić confirmed to me that it was a prison. Those were mostly older people – I had not seen any younger men among the prisoners. In my estimation, there were around 120 and 150 arrested people there. I went to see Sefić several times (three to four times) because he had a special phone line and because he was very correct to me. In August or September 1992, the prison was emptied. I do not know where all those people were taken to, but the rumour had it that they were murdered in front of the “Zetra” sports centre.

Furthermore, the “Patriotic League” had another Command in the basement and on the ground floor of the Faculty of Dentistry and the Clinic, and in the most of schools and kindergartens I know near the “Koševo” hospital. Juka Prazina was the Commandant of the Headquarters at the Clinic of Dentistry. I do not know who was the commandant of the headquarters in other aforementioned locations.

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I had known Juka Prazina since before the war because he had a surgery and stayed in the hospital in my ward in February 1992, so I saw him in person in the aforementioned headquarters. In the beginning of war, Juka Prazina was constantly in the BiH Presidency building. He had an office there and everybody called him “general”. He was always sitting in the first rows in all meetings.

I would especially want to point out to the behaviour of Josip Pejaković, the actor. He became a commander of a company responsible for protection of monuments of culture. The company was armed. He owned several purebred dogs and took them with him everywhere. There were serious stories in different places that he had been pitting them against imprisoned Serbs in the “Viktor Bubanj” prison.

I would also like to mention the conduct of a number of Muslim doctors towards injured Serbs, especially towards members of the former JNA. Many of those people had died due to deprivation of medical assistance; especially because of the failure to perform blood transfusion or due to endless postponing of surgeries. Doctors who stood out in such practice were: Dr Esad Čibo, an orthopaedist; Dr Naim Kadić, a neurosurgeon who is currently their ambassador in Kuwait; Dr Ljubović, a neurosurgeon (I do not know her name); Dr Ešref Bešlić from the Clinic of Abdominal Surgery; Dr Esad Drino, also from the Clinic of Abdominal Surgery; Dr Bilal Berzad, an anaesthesiologist who had been Head of the Anaesthesia Centre before the war; Dr Kemal Drnda, a cardiothoracic surgeon; Dr Muhamed Gavrankapetanović, a neurologist; Dr Fariz Gavrankapetanović, a trauma surgeon; Dr Amira Dulić, an anaesthesiologist; Dr Fakica Bušić, an otolaryngologist. I also need to point out to the fact that there were Muslim doctors who provided adequate medical assistance to Serbs and who helped Serbs on various occasions. For these reasons, other Muslims threatened these doctors. Those doctors are Dr Ismet Cerić, a psychiatrist, Dr Mina Bunar – Kapetanović, a psychiatrist, Dr Ismet Čeranić, a neurosurgeon and others. By the way, it was extremely difficult for Serbs to meet their needs when it comes health care. They were not given any medications, they were never allowed transport in an ambulance, they were rarely admitted to hospitals.

In the summer of 1993, Dr Dragan Kalenić, minister of health, sent me a letter through one woman from Switzerland. In this letter, he asked me to check the percentage of Serbs admitted to hospitals in Sarajevo. Since I was not able to always differentiate Serbian from Croatian names, I put them in the same group. Of all people admitted to hospitals, there were 10.2% Serbs and Croats. At that time, it was claimed that there are 38% of Serbs and Croats.

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By the way, all the time during the war, Serbs were only allowed to seek help from just few Serbian doctors and even fewer Muslims.

What I especially want to point out to are the events which took place in the Dobrovoljačka Street on 3rd and 4th May 1992. I will talk about these events to the extent of how I know them. That day, I was the head of a team in Trauma Clinic. A lot of severely wounded members of the JNA were brought in to the hospital after the attack on the column in the Dobrovoljačka Street. Most of them were officers. I personally operated on them. One of them was a general Enes Tas. According to what I was able to hear, the attack was organised and ordered by Ejub Ganić, and executed by a person last named Abadžić – an economist and owner of a store in Baščaršija. Members of the “Patriotic League” and the “Green Berets” were stopping certain vehicles, opening the doors and shooting officers and soldiers directly in the heads. Dr Radulović was murdered in that way; he was Chief of Medical Corps Military District and a colonel by rank. The ones who managed to jump out of the vehicles were murdered in the streets because the attackers were placed on both sides of the street. The ones who arrived at the hospital received the aforementioned treatment and they were transferred to a special ward of the Clinic of Urology. I want to specify the treatment: members of the “Patriotic League” entered all hospital wards without knowledge and consent of doctors and took away certain wounded persons on their own authority, disregarding their health condition. Those persons were most likely taken to the ward in the Clinic of Urology – so we were told. We have never seen those persons on check-ups again, nor were we able to make any kind of contact again. So, their fate was mostly unknown to us. I would also like to say that general Enes Taso, one major and four soldiers escaped their fate because they had been directly exchanged before members of the “Patriotic League” arrived.

The way in which members of the “Patriotic League” treated medical personnel of Serbian nationality was aggressive. One tall, blonde and uniformed young man wanted to murder me at the Clinic twice. I was saved by Spomenka Matić, a Croatian woman and a nurse who got me into an elevator on the ground floor and took me to the elevator tower on the roof. I spent two hours on the roof. In the meantime, the Clinic security removed the attacker from the building. The security apologized to me. However, three months later, I was informed that the same person came looking for me. Fortunately, I had not been working the day when he arrived.

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Serbian doctors were constantly accused of performing too many amputations on Muslims, allegedly to disable them. This was a direct hazard for their lives. They continuously kept addressing the nurses as “Chetnikushe”⁷. A Muslim police officer pointed automatic rifle into the stomach of Dr Slavoljub Vrčević at the Trauma Clinic. The police officer kept the rifle pointed to the doctor’s stomach for 15 minutes, demanding that he gets his brother out of prison. Medical staff of Serbian nationality was endangered in other clinics as well. That is why they were finding different ways to escape; they were gradually leaving. Dr Milica Marković, a neuropsychiatrist, was murdered with a shot directly in the head. Her husband, a pharmacist, was severely wounded by a Muslim soldier who had previously taken 4,000 marks from them in order to safely get them to the Serbian side. Then, he shot them in the backs. She was killed on the spot.

On 3rd January 1994 at 2 AM, I was arrested by a patrol consisting of five police officers. When they entered my apartment, two of them kept the weapons pointed to me, one of them flashed light in my face, and two of them were searching my apartment. They ordered me to quickly get dressed, not allowing me to take my gloves, scarf or a cap. They took me to the Dolac Malta police station. I had spent two days and two nights there before they took me to the Central Prison on the third night. They did not physically abuse me, but they did insult and threaten me seriously. I spent five nights in a solitary confinement, with no blankets, no day or artificial light, wearing only a coat. Then, I spent 15 days in a cell which I shared with a man last named Damjanović who was sentenced to death. Later I was moved to a bigger room since, besides other people, there was also the aforementioned lawyer Fahrija Karkin with me. Doctors received a more beneficial treatment in prison. There were four more doctors in prison besides me: Dr Dejan Kafka, Dr Igor Sabljak, Dr Nemanja Veljkov and Dr Ranko Medan.

We were located in the military part of prison on the 5th floor. There, the head was Šefko Mulić from Foča. Before the war, he had been retired from the Foča Penitentiary. One person whom he treated extremely brutally was Veljko Filipović. Filipović was around 60 years old, with poor health. Mulić did not allow him to see a doctor, not even after Filipović had diarrhoea 12 times in one night. By the way, he was sleeping on the top bunk.

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⁷ t/n: a derogative nickname for Serbs originating from Serbian guerrilla forces in the WW2

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Veljko Filipović survived thanks to the medicines brought to me by one doctor. This doctor wrapped the medicines in toilet paper since we were not allowed to have any medicines.

The charges had been changed three times in my case and in cases of other doctors. Initially, we were indicted on charges of genocide and faced death penalty. Then, the indictment was modified to military desertion and avoidance of duty tasks. Finally, the indictment was boiled down to avoidance of duty tasks. We were not allowed to have witnesses testify. During the trial, the judge dictated for the record that witness statements have been read, although those statements had never been read nor presented to us. None of the doctors know if witnesses had been heard and, if they have, what they testified. I was the first defendant among the group of five doctors – defendants. The sentences were handed down in only 12 minutes and decisions on extension of detention were written. This made us realise that everything was written in advance and that the trial was only a matter of formality. All our complaints and appeals had been automatically denied. The medical documentation we submitted was merely mentioned, and medical reports had not been read. I was sentenced to 20 months in prison.

I was released from prison on 16th June 1994 in an exchange.

As I have already mentioned, I spent all this time in the Central Prison. However, I heard that many Serbs imprisoned in the “Viktor Bubanj” prison were subjected to tortures and even murdered. I know that Stevo Zarić, a civil engineer from Bratunac and Puhalo, a lawyer and a former JNA officer were murdered in this prison.

In the Central Prison, I shared my room with Sretko Damjanović for 15 days. He was sentenced to death. He told me that he was completely innocent, that he had not raped anyone and that he had not murdered anyone. Namely, Muslims claimed that he had committed murders in the area which was constantly under Muslims’ control. He also said that none of alleged victims had ever been identified or exhumed. Also, he had never faced any allegedly raped women. Those women were all living in part of the city controlled by Muslims. He showed me indictments and appeals, so I also saw his lawyer’s appeal

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addressed to the Hague Tribunal. The appeal was written on 23 pages. Damjanović complained to me about that. Since he was in a solitary confinement, it was very difficult for him not having a watch. That is why I gave him my watch and my scarf.

While I was in Sarajevo, I had been following Muslim media. They often mentioned Grand Mufti Efendija Cerić who used to visit military units and who used to say that this was Jihad (the holy war). We (Serbs) knew what this meant and it caused huge fear among Serbian citizens.

I am willing to testify about the aforementioned matters before a competent court.

This is all I had to say on the previous matters. The record was loudly dictated to me and everything I stated was entered in it. Thus, I accept it as my own and, as such, I sign it.

Witness examination ended at 6 PM.

RECORDING CLERK

JUDGE

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