

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

**WITNESS STATEMENT**

WITNESS INFORMATION:

Name: **MEHMEDOVIC** Kemal  
Last First

Nickname/Alias:

Age: DOB : 28.01.52

Gender: MALE

Ethnic Origin: Bosnian Religion: Muslim

Occupation: Current: no occupation . Former: construction worker

Language(s) Spoken: Bosnian

Language(s) Written: \_\_\_\_\_ (If different from spoken)

Date(s) of Interview(s): 13 August 1995 - 14 August 1995

Interviewer: Jean-Rene RUEZ

Interpreter: Martina FRYDA-KAURIMSKY

Language(s) Used in Interview: Croatian Bosnian English

Names of all other persons present during interview(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Signed/Initialed: Mehmedovic Kemal

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## WITNESS STATEMENT

I was born in KAMENICA, in the municipality of ZVORNIK. After the fall of KAMENICA the population fled to KONJEVIC POLJE to seek for the protection of the UNPROFOR that was stationed there. The Serbs continued to shoot and to shell the people gathered there so that they decided to flee to SREBRENICA. I came to SREBRENICA on the 14.03.1993. I was working as a help for the local farmers, and was not involved in any military activity.

On Tuesday the 11th of July, SREBRENICA fell but already five days prior to that it was clear that the situation was becoming hopeless. That day, everybody decided to flee. I didn't wait the arrival of the enemies to try my way out. I heard from the others that the Tchetnicks were arriving. I have two brothers. One is invalid and stayed in SREBRENICA. He is now safe here in TUZLA. He has been evacuated by bus. My second brother decided to escape through the woods with myself and all the able men. The rest of the population went in the direction of the UNPROFOR base in POTOARI.

Nobody organized the evacuation of the able men. According to the estimation that everybody made at that time, we were about fifteen thousand men ready to withdrawal and try to escape through the woods.

One first column was formed. I would estimate that in this first group were two to three thousand men, soldiers and civilians and among them were also some wounded persons. I received after my arrival here in TUZLA the information that this column managed to reach the free territory.

I was part of the second column and am unable to say how many people were part of this group that very soon split in many smaller groups.

I was in a group of about thousand men including mostly civilians and a few soldiers and we had some wounded men as well.. We were going over the mountain BULJIN PLANINA and near the place called POBUDJA we heard a voice ordering through a loudspeaker: "Surrender you are surrounded". Most of us didn't know the area very well. A few among us responded that we would surrender only in the presence of representatives of the UNPROFOR or of the Red Cross. We never saw any representatives from any international organization. The Tchetnicks gave us a dead line for the surrender first at 1000h and then they moved it to 1500h. All the time they were promising that we would stay alive. We spent that time discussing what to do and finally decided to surrender.

We came down to the enemy positions and saw the soldiers, tanks, armored transports, and howitzers, about six vehicles all together, parked in a group. The soldiers were wearing camouflage uniforms and I could see the insignia on their sleeves on which it was written ARMIJA REPUBLIKE SRPSKE.

I have seen one of them wearing a SAJKACA cap with a kokarda on it. Later this unit that guarded us was replaced by another unit and the guards told us before they left that this new unit consisted of ARKANOVCI [ ARKAN's troops]. I was not able to see their insignia. These other soldiers had the same camouflage battle dresses and the same type of equipment than those who left.

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Immediately after we surrendered we were ordered to give our money, they were asking for Deutch Marks, Dollars and other foreign currencies. After that they took our belongings away. No violence was used against us but they threatened to kill anyone who would later be found with money in his possession.

We had to go to a field were we were gathered together and we had to hold our hands up.

A commander of the Serb unit who was wearing a black scarf on his head spoke to us and told us that MLADIC had informed them that the Bosnian and the Bosnian Serb government were discussing the exchange of all the prisoners.

The Serb soldiers forced us to lay down and to put our hands on the back of our heads and forced us to shout "Long live the king". They told us that this was Serb country and that nobody can fight the Serb soldiers.

About 1900h MLADIC arrived on the spot on foot wearing camouflage uniform without any insignia and didn't have anything on his head.. I had never seen him before but since I have arrived in TUZLA I saw the news and I have no doubt that the man I saw on the television and who is introduced as being MLADIC is the same person that I saw that day. Shortly before his arrival we were allowed to sit up. When MLADIC arrived he greeted us with "Good evening neighbors". He never introduced himself. He told us that the government was discussing our exchange and that the next day we would be exchanged. He also said that we would be removed to some hangars. He also added that we would get nothing to eat this same evening without giving any explanation. He promised us we would get some water. After he finished his speech the prisoners said "Thank you commander" and applauded.

After MLADIC left, several trucks and buses arrived and we were ordered to get in these vehicles . I was in a very big truck. At that moment I was separated from my brother Nurif born in 1950 and have no news of him since that moment.

After we were all in the trucks they took us to BRATUNAC and stopped in front of the garages of the company VIHOR. I got this information by other prisoners who had worked as drivers for this company and told me that these garages were those of that company.

The trucks were parked in front of the garages and we remained on the trucks.

Shortly afterwards Serb soldiers came and I could hear them starting asking about the people from different villages around SREBRENICA. I remember that they mentioned PUSMULICI, POCOCARI, SLATINA, GLOGAVA. When these people came off the trucks we would hear thuds and people screaming. They were ordered to shut up and were questioned about their names and the name of their father. Then we heard some more thuds and afterwards a burst of fire. We never saw these prisoners again.

This lasted during the whole night. We heard shots regularly. It stopped in the morning. I suppose that probably many people did not dare to answer but that others were to scared that it could be found that they were from these places and they answered. In my truck one person was taken out early in the morning. I have the feeling that this man has been recognized by one soldier who asked him his name and his father's name and than took him out. Shortly afterwards a second one who answered the question about the village he was coming from was also asked to get out. They never returned.

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After that some soldiers who were standing near the truck told us that they would bring us to Fikret and to Alija for the exchange.

In the morning, the trucks started to move and they stopped in the outskirts of BRATUNAC. We could hear the Serbs talking and they said that they were waiting for the UNPROFOR. We spent there two to three hours. I cannot tell exactly because I didn't have my watch.

The driver and a young boy, he was fifteen or sixteen years old, brought us some water. The boy was asking about a man with the name ISMET and I think that he said that his family name was RAMIC. The boy said that this man was a shoemaker from BRATUNAC and that he used to be his neighbor. The other prisoners who were with me on the truck said that ISMET used to be in SREBRENICA but nobody knew where he was at that moment.

Shortly afterwards a truck full of older Serb men came. Some of these men wore SAJKACA caps on their heads. These men threatened us shouting "Here they are, there are for us" but they never came off the truck and shortly afterwards they left.

The column of the trucks started to move and we passed through KRAVICA , KONJEVIC POLJE, DRINJACA and when we arrived to DIVIC we saw a UN A P C that joined the column. The white UN A P C didn't have the UNPROFOR sign on it but only the UN letters written on it. On the license plate on the back of the vehicle there was a letter C. In the A P C there were two soldiers in UNPROFOR uniforms with automatic weapons and an older man in civilian clothes for whom I think that he was interpreter. They never said anything to us.

We continued our drive through ZVORNIK and turned to the direction of TUZLA. We drove through KARAKAJ and after five or ten minutes of drive we turned right and I could see that the first vehicles from the column were already parked in front of a big sports hall. According to the position of the sun it was the beginning of the afternoon.

There were some other buildings near the sports hall and there was also a small river nearby.

I am providing you with a drawing that shows the area of this sports hall to be attached at my statement. [ DOCUMENT ATTACHED UNDER THE NUMBER 1 ]

We were ordered off the vehicles and into this sports hall.

Before we entered the sports hall they ordered us to take off our jackets, sports jackets and coats. We were allowed to keep the shirts and the trousers on. People who had already taken off their shirts during the drive were not allowed to put them on again. We were ordered to put our clothes onto a big pile four or five meters in front of the entrance to the sports hall.

When we entered the hall, we saw that more than the half of the sports hall was already full.

The building was about fifteen meters long and about twelve meters wide. We entered through a small corridor which was leading to the entrance of the main hall . This hall

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had windows on the upper parts of two walls. Along one wall the windows ran the entire length. On the opposite wall there were windows along two-thirds of the wall and then a door. Behind that side door was a room and I suppose it was a wardrobe. On the floor was parquet. I don't remember seeing any sports requisites in it. I add that detail because the architecture of the building reminded me of a sports hall. People were sitting in long rows and we were ordered to take the same position. On the right side of the entrance of the hall were sitting apart four boys. The youngest could have been ten years old and the oldest was around fourteen. I supposed at that time that they had been captured together with the other men who had tried to escape through the woods.

Later on when I reached the free territory I found out that these boys had been released and that they were still alive. I don't know where they are now.

After some time the soldiers ordered the first four rows to turn around and to remain seated facing the wall. They repeated the same action with other rows of people up to my row. People in my row were sitting approximately in the middle of the hall. We remained in our position so that we were turned with our backs towards the backs of the others. After this action was completed approximately one half of the detainees was facing one wall and the other half the opposite wall.

I would estimate that there were around thousand people in the hall because we were pressed close to each other.

We were guarded by soldiers in camouflage uniforms carrying weapons and among them was a woman also in uniform but without any weapon.

At one moment a prisoner whose name I don't know said aloud "These people must not be killed" and a guard said "Who says that?". The prisoner repeated the same words and the guard said "Now we will see whether these people can or cannot be killed".

Shortly afterwards this prisoner was taken out in front of the sports hall and we could hear some shots and the man screamed. We heard some more shots and after that we didn't hear anymore sounds. The man never returned.

After that they took another man out, I don't know why, and we also heard some shots and the man never returned.

Shortly afterwards they brought a big pile of pieces of cloth, most of them had blue stripes on it, and put it beside the side door.

At one moment I realized that the prisoners who were sitting near the side door were standing up to be blindfolded. At one moment one of the guards said that all of us will have to go through the same process. Some of the prisoners were blindfolded by the guards and some others by another prisoner who was ordered to blindfold his comrades. The prisoners went through this procedure in two rows. The procedure continued without any breaks. Some prisoners asked where they were taking these people and some guards answered they were taken to the camp in BIJELJINA.

The only incident was when a prisoner has been slapped on the face.

There was a man there with a red beret cap on his head on which he had a badge attached in the front with four C. I had already seen this insignia on other soldiers but I never saw it on a red beret. This man never said a word.

They took away about half of the hall when the turn came to me. I stood up. They blindfolded me and I received a cup of water. The water was given by the woman. I know that because I saw that she was the one who had distributed the water to those who were just before me before I was blindfolded.

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We were taken to a truck and we were ordered to get in. We didn't have to climb in the truck and had just to step in because the truck was parked at the end of a sort of platform. The truck was small, we call these type of trucks TAMIC. Its color was a kind of blue. It had two benches on each side and it was covered by canvas. When we came onto the truck and sat down on the benches we could remove the blindfold. People who were brought after me to the truck sat on the floor of the truck between the two benches.

We didn't know where we were going. First we drove on an asphalt road for about one kilometer because the drive was short, not more than five minutes and the truck was slow. Then we turned left onto a gravel road and stopped there after about twenty meters. If I could return to the sports hall right now I am sure that I would easily be able to find the spot where we stopped at that moment. We were immediately ordered out. Before stepping out of the truck we put our blindfold on again but I did it in such a way that I could see downwards.

When I came out I could immediately see dead bodies all around. We were grabbed and lined us up in rows. I was standing on the left side and I think that I was the last or the second to the last in my row. I don't know in how many rows we were lined. They started to shoot and as far as I can remember they were shooting from the right side and people began to fall leftwards. I could feel bodies falling on top of me and I fell down although I was not shot. When we were all down they repeated the shots and I wasn't shot again. My right hand was outstretched over the chest of another man lying. Something hit me between my two first fingers and I think that it was some small stone because the wound very slight. I was lying with my face to the ground and my lower part of the body was covered with other bodies. Later, after I escaped I discovered that the lower back part of my T-shirt was soaked with blood. I could hear one person begging the soldiers to finish him off and one of them answered "Slowly slowly" meaning later. I didn't hear anything else coming from this person but later I could hear that they were finishing off people who were still moving. Shortly afterwards, ten or fifteen minutes later, I heard another truck coming, I heard shouts and then bursts of fire so I concluded that the same happened again. I still had my blindfold on and I was too afraid to move.

The same continued to happen for the rest of the afternoon and in the evening. I heard that one truck was arriving every ten or fifteen minutes. I heard only one truck at a time. In the evening they changed the location of the execution spot and I could not hear the trucks arriving anymore but I continued to hear the shots.

After some time I managed to take off my blindfold and to change the position of my body.

I saw a backhoe that I could hear before but did not know what it was. This machine was yellow and at that time it was about ten meters far from me.

I saw a group of seven or eight men who obviously did the shooting. They were standing not far away from the backhoe and were dressed in camouflage uniforms.

Among them I am absolutely sure that I recognized a Serb who used to work with me. His name is Gojko SIMIC. He has not really what I could call a nickname but sometimes people call him "Gojan". I recognized also his voice and heard the others call him by his first name Gojko. He is from the village called ORAHOVAC which is in the region where the shooting happened. I was rather friendly with him before the

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war and he always acted normally with everybody. I know him since fifteen or eighteen years. We worked together in the constructing company from BELGRADE called "RATKO MITROVIC". We worked together for about ten years. We lived each in our own village which were from the same municipality of ZVORNIK. We were not close friends and never visited each other. I don't know his precise adress in ORAHOVAC because I never went to visit him there. He is born like me in 1952. He is small, about 1M63. His hair is blond, he is not bolding and he has one or two golden teeth in the front of his mouth. His eyes are light colored and has no facial hair. His body is thin and he is rather week. I never noticed any specific scarves on his skin nor tatoo. I know that before the war Gojko was supposed to go to Germany to work there. I am not sure of the town but I think that it might be STUTTGART.

I could hear them talk and they were talking about the change of the location of the killing spot. They were saying that they would go to a mown meadow where they wanted to continue their activity. The driver of the backhoe protested and said that he didn't want to stay alone and that if they went he would go with them. Gojko decided that three soldiers would stay with the driver and ordered the rest of them to take the ammunition and to go to the mown meadow. According to the way he was speaking he was obviously in charge.

They went away and I could hear shots coming from the distance, about three hundred meters far away. I discovered later that this spot was on the other side of railway track. Three soldiers remained near the backhoe.

It was already very dark when I saw a bulldozer or a kind of loader arriving and it came to the spot where the backhoe was. It had its lights on and I could see that its color was also yellow. There were many dead bodies around but I was so afraid that I did not really inspect the surrounding.

In that moment I saw a person who obviously survived the shooting running to the nearby woods. They started to shoot in the direction of the woods but they didn't enter the forest. At that moment the loader made a turn and pointed its lights towards the woods. While doing this the driver saw me moving. I heard him shouting "Also here one is running away". I was crawling towards railway tracks which were on a kind of dam. When I heard that I jumped to my feet, climbed to the railway tracks and ran to the other side of the dam. They were shooting at me but missed. On the other side of the railway tracks were cornfields. I ran into the corn and after some time I fell down and continued to move on my hands and knees. When I came out of the corn I found some willow trees near what was probably a stream because I heard the sound of the water flowing. I could hear that they were looking for me but they couldn't find me and I supposed that they left because I couldn't hear them anymore.

I could hear for some time the shooting coming from the direction of what I think was the mown meadow after some time it stopped. Everything was very quiet. I cannot estimate what time it was.

I decided to start walking and first I went downwards following the railway tracks. I arrived to a small train station and I didn't know this place. It was just one small building placed near the railway tracks.

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I decided to return because from that station I could see some bigger village not far away and wanted to stay near the track because of the fear of getting lost. I followed the tracks walking on the right side and arrived to an asphalt road. I followed this road for about fifty or hundred meters and arrived to a meadow with cut off grass.

The first thing that I saw was bodies and clothes on these bodies and heard moaning of a person in agony . The moon had came out so that the visibility was rather good. I could see different colors of clothes on these bodies some were light some were dark. One man was still alive and was about ten meters far from the other bodies. He was obviously badly wounded because he was moaning. The meadow was appoximately two and a half to three DULUM big [ One DULUM is, according to the witness, thousand square meters ]. It was covered with bodies. Nobody alive was around.

I decided to head for the free territory but I didn't know the way because I didn't know the area. I passed some houses with lights on but I didn't hear anything. I came to a hill and climbed it. I found a large path following the general direction of railway tracks and there was also some river there. On the path I could see caterpillar tracks and I suppose some tanks or heavy artillery had passed on this large path.

After some time I arrived in KRIZEVICI, a deserted Muslim village which was burnt down. There, I realized where I was. I walked longer than two hours, as far as I remember, to arrive there. Since I knew that the path leading from KRIZEVICI to BALJKOVICA was full of curves I was afraid to cross the way of some Serb patrol.

I decided to head in the direction of the village SEFEROVICI and from there to the village of MOTOVO which I knew because I used to have some relatives there. Near MOTOVO I observed some artillery in the forest I decided to hide and spent the night in one half destroyed house in MOTOVO. From this house I could observe how three buses full of Serb soldiers came so I understood that I was near Tchetnik lines. In the morning three or four Serb soldiers came to the village and they apparently saw a piece of cloth that I put on the window to protect myself from the rain which had been falling that night. They threw something into the house and shouted "Get out" but I didn't answer and they went away without entering the house. I don't know the reason why. I came out of the house because I was afraid they might return and I hid among the trees near the house. I could hear the sound of battle which was apparently not far away. I remained there untill the early evening and I started walking again about two hours before the night fall. I climbed a hill and came to some burnt down houses.

I decided to go in the direction of the village NEZUK because I thought that it was on the free territory.

I walked through the fields and after some time I came to a meadow with cut grass where I could see a man. I thought that I was arrived in the free territory and I asked him whether he was a guard from the NEZUK lines. He asked me where I was coming from and I told him that I was coming from SREBRENICA. He said "Well we are here waiting for you people". I approached him and greeted him in the Muslim way. He greeted me back and I introduced myself. Because he didn't immediately introduce himself with a Muslim name I understood at that moment that he was a Tchetnik. I was than close enough so I could see that he was in uniform and that he had an insignia on his sleeve written on it ARMIJA REPUBLIKE SRPSKE. I didn't

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show him that I understood who he really was. I sat down and he offered me a cigarette. He told me that he was from the unit SARAJEVSKO-ROMANIJKI KORPUS. He also said that he was taken to the front line the day before. He asked me whether there were some others with me. After some time he proposed that we go to the village, to meet with others. He took his weapon and his bag and I took some small piece of army equipment that I could not recognize. He started walking in front of me and I followed him. I let him take some distance and than I started to run away. After a short distance I hid in some bushes. The Serb soldier, apparently joined by some others, was looking for me for some time and than they gave up. In the dawn I decided to continue walking and the Serb, who was obviously looking for me the whole night, saw me at one moment and shouted me to stop. I succeeded in running away and he didn't shoot.


Because of this bad experience and also because I didn't know this area at all I was very cautious in my movements. I was constantly moving between the Tchetnick and the Muslim lines but I was never sure where I really was. Near a Tchetnick line I saw some food and nobody around to guard the spot. I stole the food. It took me six days to reach a house near NEZUK where I saw some people in front of it dressed as Muslims and at last I was sure that I was on the Muslim held territory.

Later on I realized that days before I sometimes already was on free territory but I never dared to go forward to any military personnel.

From NEZUK I was driven by a helpful person to MEDJEDJA and from there by the same way to TUZLA.

*Mehmedovic' Lemor*

*Jean. René RUEZ*



*Hydataminsky*

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**WITNESS ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

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

Signed: *Mehmedovic' Kemal*

Dated: *14. 08. 1995*

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**INTERPRETER CERTIFICATION**

I, Martina FRYDA-KAURIMSKY, Interpreter, certify that:

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

Dated: *14/08/95*

Signed: *Martina Fryda-Kaurimsky*

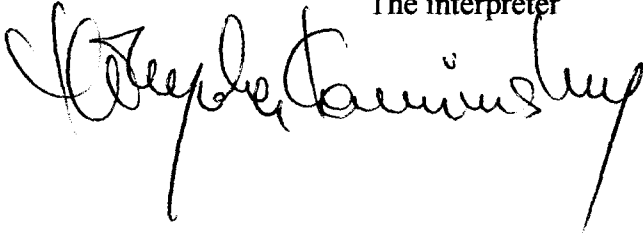
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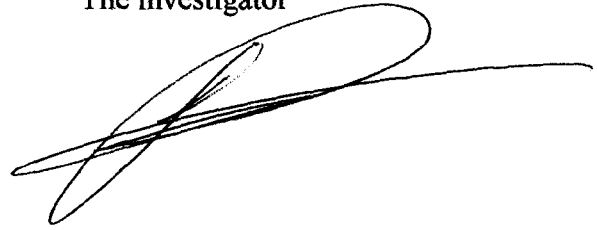
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I, Martina FRYDA-KAURIMSKY, interpreter, certify that according to the explanations given to me by the witness MEHMEDOVIC Kemal the word "dam" written page 6 paragraph 4 of his statement must not be understood as being a "dam" but as an "elevation of the ground on which the railway tracks are". This explanation was given to Jean-Rene RUEZ, investigator, during the interview of the witness.

The interpreter



The investigator



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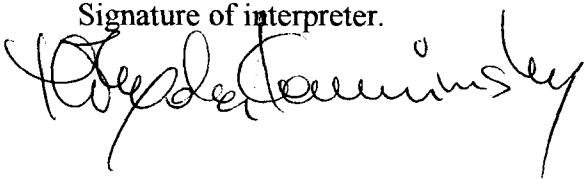
**DOCUMENT ATTACHED TO HIS STATEMENT - NUMBER : 1**

**TRANSLATION**

SALA	hall
RECICA	small river
IGRALISTE	playground
KUCE	houses
SKOLA	school
CESTA ZA TUZLU	road to TUZLA
CESTA ZA GRBAVCE	road to GRBAVCE

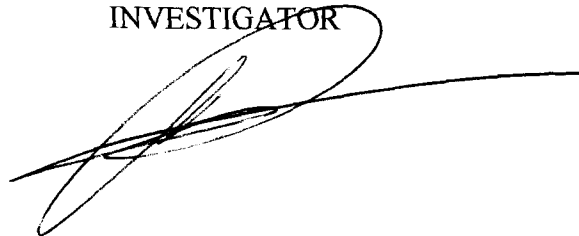
Translation made by Martina FRYDA-KAURIMSKI .[ According to the oral explanations of the witness while he was doing his drawing ]

Signature of interpreter.



Date: 13/08/95

J-R RUEZ  
INVESTIGATOR



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CESTA RATAKLY

CESTA ~~GRAVUCE~~

IGRALISTE

SAKA

REGINA

KUCE

SKOLA

KOTE

Wahmedone' Lemor

13. 8. 1995

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