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No. 02-4-1010

DX¹ "S"

DATE: 7 August 1995

RBiH² MUP³, SDB⁴ Administration 02

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TUZLA CSB⁵ - SDB Sector

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The Sarajevo SDB Sector has delivered us a statement of Nedžad Ademović, the integral text of which we provide to you herewith:

"Citizen Nedžad Ademović, son of Hasan and Duda Hodžić, born on 15 April 1970 in Đile in Vlasenica municipality, of Muslim nationality, citizen of RBiH, with secondary school education in mining, permanently residing in the village of Buće in Srebrenica municipality, married, pursuant to Article 151 of the ZKP⁶, on 28 July 1995, in the official premises of the Sarajevo SDB Sector gave authorised officials the following

S T A T E M E N T

When the war broke out I was in Sarajevo, attending a course for members of the MUP. The course was terminated due to the aggression and I headed from Tarčin to Vlasenica. On the way there we were stopped by members of the SPF⁷ from Vlasenica and apprehended and taken to what was then the Vlasenica SJB⁸. We were questioned by the SJB Chief, Rade Bjelanović, a former engineer in the mine. Bjelanović helped out of the prison after two days in and, together with driver Ivan Madjarević - the bus driver of the Boksit⁹ [mine in] Milići - he drove me to the village of Đilo and then went back. On the way there, he told me to hide in the woods for the following few days because we, in the village, had a large amount of infantry weapons, a total of 86 [weapons], mostly APs¹⁰ and PAPs¹¹.

When I returned to the village, the people were already fleeing, while one part of the population remained there and held positions until 4 May when the Chetniks¹² attacked with four M-80 personnel carriers and two T-55 tanks. They set fire to our village and 2 men burned to death in the fire: Mustafa Ademović, son of Mujo, born in 1937, and Ramo Hodžić, approximately the same age. A total of 86 of us retreated to Radava mountain in the area of Žepa. From then until the final aggressor's operations against the so-called protected area of Srebrenica, I was a member of the ARBH¹³ in the Žepa Brigade. When the aggressor's attack on Srebrenica began, I was in the village of Buće near the front line. At that time, our sabotage units lead by commander Palić raided the village of Višnjica and the Crna Rijeka barracks in Han Pijesak in June 1995, killing around 70 Serb soldiers in

¹ Translator's note: not urgent

² t/n: Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina

³ t/n: Ministry of the Interior

⁴ t/n: State Security Service

⁵ t/n: Security Services Centre

⁶ t/n: Criminal Procedure Code

⁷ t/n: Serb Paramilitary Formations

⁸ t/n: Public Security Station

⁹ t/n: bauxite

¹⁰ t/n: automatic rifle

¹¹ t/n: semi-automatic rifle

¹² t/n: derogatory term for Serbs - members of Yugoslav royalist and Serbian nationalist movement in World War II in Yugoslavia

¹³ t/n: Army of the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina

combat. After that, Mladić stated on Radio Milići and Radio Bratunac that, in retaliation, he would stop the delivery of humanitarian aid to Žepa and Srebrenica. This statement deceived both the people and the army into relaxing in the belief that the Chetniks would not attack.

The truce lasted approximately a month, and there were no combat activities whatsoever. At the time, the 28th Division in Srebrenica was made up of five brigades and one mountain battalion, and in terms of heavy weapons it had 2 T-55 tanks, 1 M-80 personnel carrier, 2 Howitzers – one 105 mm and the other 205 mm, several mortars, 2 recoilless guns, 1 VBR¹⁴, approximately 30 PATs¹⁵, several PAMs¹⁶, and a significant amount of ammunition for the said weapons. In terms of infantry weapons, there were about 3,500 pieces in Srebrenica and enough ammunition.

The first Chetnik attacks on Srebrenica began at 0500 hours on 7 July 1995. Throughout the night, one could hear the moving of tanks, and there were around ten of those in Srebrenica in total, and they attacked from three directions, more specifically from Zeleni Jadar, Bukova Glava, and Podravanje, through where the corridor to Žepa lay.

Those first attacks lasted for two days, but the Chetniks did not succeed in moving our lines. The civilian population from the periphery was moved to the Sućeska MZ¹⁷. After that, the UNPROFOR and our military command from Srebrenica ordered that our lines at Ljubiševići be moved towards Srebrenica due to the possibility of NATO air strikes on Chetnik positions. As soon as the lines were moved, the members of Dutchbat¹⁸ directed the movement of Chetnik tanks to the abandoned lines and to four checkpoints.

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The Dutch UNPROFOR members simply surrendered to the Chetniks with all their equipment and weapons. At that time, at the Lozna checkpoint near the village of Buće, [other] UNPROFOR members also "voluntarily" surrendered to the Chetniks, which had a great impact on the security of the line and the morale of our fighters and population.

Having taken our positions at Ljubiševići, the Chetniks began targeting the town centre directly and their infantry [units] seized our abandoned positions. Through means of communication and courier messages, we received promises from our command that we would get assistance in personnel at our lines.

By encrypted radio communication we received an order from the Commandant of the 281st Brigade, Zulfo Tursunović, to retreat to the lines towards the strategic elevation point KAK, although we were able to exert military control over the situation from our old positions. The order was executed by the Company Commander Džemal Hirkić, and at 1700 hours on 11 July 1995 our positions were moved. Around 2100 hours on the same day, we received an

¹⁴ t/n: multiple rocket launcher

¹⁵ t/n: anti-aircraft gun

¹⁶ t/n: anti-aircraft machine gun

¹⁷ t/n: local community

¹⁸ t/n: Dutch Battalion

order by courier that the entire 28th Division was to withdraw from all positions and head towards Tuzla. The assembly point for the troops was Jagličići, where we arrived sometime around 0100 hours in the morning of 12 July 1995. As we were told, the order had been issued by Ramiz Bećirević, the Commandant of the 28th Division, and it referred to the brigade gradually leaving for Tuzla.

The 284th Brigade headed immediately because they knew the terrain best, and the axis of movement was Konjević Polje, Cerska, Udrč, Zvornička Kamenica, Snagovo, Baljkovica, and the entrance to Kalesija. We all headed in a column, one by one, about 12,000 of us with our personal weapon, while some of us carried Zolja¹⁹ RPGs, OSAs²⁰, and PAMs. We carried as much ammunition as each of us could carry. After Jagličići we immediately crossed over the Serb positions and in a column, in dead silence, we walked for 4 hours until the first ambush in the sector of Pobuđe.

The Chetniks showered us with artillery and infantry fire. I had passed the first ambush and I did not notice how many fighters were killed or wounded. The attack lasted for 20 minutes, but since there were many of us, almost every bullet fired killed one of our fighters. We continued on our way to Bratunačka Kamenica where the whole division was lined up at around 1700 hours. Brigade commandants once again gave instructions how to continue moving and how to behave in the column, and then we rested in order to try to cross the Milići-Konjević Polje road that night. At 2100 hours, the 284th Brigade headed, and immediately after that we were attacked with infantry weapons. They fired at us from the sector of Kravica villages, Rogač elevation point, Konjević Polje village, and from all other elevation points. We suffered massive losses and many were wounded. Our men were panicking and they started killing each other, hand grenades were being thrown, and that lasted until dawn and the shooting went on all night.

During the night, Chetnik groups infiltrated our troops. They were armed and wore civilian clothes so they could not be recognised. Around 0100 hours on 13 July 1995, the column split and at that moment I was at the head of the column which was going to attempt to cross the road. We were about 100 metres from the road when a person from the Chetniks ranks joined us, saying he knew where we could cross the asphalt [road]. When we got to the asphalt road, he turned around and opened fire on us; I threw myself to the ground and this man said not to shoot him because, as he said, he had killed our men by mistake. He came to me, since I had unlocked the safety on my rifle, and he said that the Serbs had cut the throat of our municipal president, Osman Suljić, and while talking he pulled some corpse that had a bomb underneath, after which he jumped below the road and the bomb exploded, wounding me and Agan Ademović, and killing Ibro Ademović who was Agan's brother, and one more person. Agan left me even though I was begging him to bandage me and was assuring him that I would survive, so I bandaged my leg myself and the part of my head that was injured. Later I returned, only to find about 1,000 people who did not know what to do next, although some of them were suggesting trying to break through the lines.

I decided to go back and to try to break through to Žepa. On the way, I ran into some people I knew and I suggested to them to join me, so the six of us continued on our way back to Srebrenica and on to Žepa.

¹⁹ t/n: rocket propelled grenade launcher

²⁰ t/n: hand-held rocket launcher

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After an hour, when it dawned, I saw that the aforementioned group of about 1,000 people had started to surrender to the Chetniks, but not long after, I saw how they began to kill them with volleys of automatic fire. I should add that, when I was injured by that bomb, I saw about 200-300 dead people on the asphalt road, people whose way had been blocked by the Chetniks.

In my estimate, out of this group that surrendered, about 300 people were killed. On our way back to Srebrenica, we went along one section of the road where we saw a large number of bodies of fighters from the column who had been killed, and we came across our people who were on their way to surrender to the Chetniks. I tried to dissuade them and told them to come with me instead, because I knew the way to Kladanj, not daring to tell them that we were going to Žepa. All in all, I saw about 1,000 dead bodies that day.

Along the way, I gathered many more fighters so that the column consisted of around 230 people. We walked mainly by night and also by day if it was a wooded area, and after six nights we arrived to the village of Bulogovina in Sućeska, which had been abandoned. There we spent one whole day resting in the forest, and since there were vegetables in the yards around, we also recuperated a little before we headed further. The following night we arrived to the village of Dile where I used to live and there we passed the last Serb line. At sunrise we arrived to Radava mountain where we joined the fighters from Žepa. My feeling, and the feeling of all the surviving fighters, is that what had happened in Srebrenica was a betrayal of the people and the fighters, and I'm saying that because we had were in a position to defend ourselves for a long time, until parallel political action could stop the Chetnik offensive.

The departure of the 28" Division from Srebrenica was hasty and ultimately disorganised, which led to massive killings of fighters. I know that Ramiz Bećirević, the Chief of the 28th Division, whom I knew personally for a long time and who used to be the head of the Srebrenica TO²¹ before the war, is personally responsible for this. The fighters and the population did not like him because of the way he behaved. The fact is he stole large amounts of humanitarian aid [good] together with Naser Orić, Zulfo Tursunović, Ibrahim Mundžić²² [sic] known as Mrki, and some other persons that collaborated with them. [Parts of this paragraph that are underlined are underlined in the original text as well.]

This group had absolute power in Srebrenica and nobody dared to stand up to them. With their approval, food and clothes were traded with the Chetniks and sold at the market for high prices in foreign currency. Those who did not have money were starving, even though warehouses were fairly well stocked with food. One kilogram of salt cost DM²³ 70-80, coffee cost DM 100-120, sugar cost DM 25, oil²⁴ cost DM 15, [and] army boots and uniforms that had been supplied for the fighters were also being sold, the boots for

²¹ t/n: Territorial Defence

²² t/n: Mandžić

²³ t/n: Deutsche Mark

²⁴ t/n: edible oil

DM 150 and the uniforms for DM 300. [Parts of this paragraph that are underlined are underlined in the original text as well.]

The cigarettes that had been delivered for fighters by helicopter were distributed among the command staff and the rest was sold at the market for DM 5 a pack [underlined in original text].

Upon our arrival to Žepa, we were received extremely well, provided with accommodation and food, and another 350 fighters arrived later. Unlike in Srebrenica, the army was organised here, the morale was high among the entire population [underlined in original text]. After the decision to move out the wounded and the feeble, I was placed on the list of people scheduled to leave for Sarajevo.

I have dictated this statement aloud. It contains everything that I stated and as such I accept it and confirm it by appending my signature. I also declare that I was treated appropriately by the authorised officials during the interview.

We forward this statement to you for your further operative use as part of the GUBER OI²⁵

Amir Ahmić

Message No.737

Received on: 7 August 1995

At 17:44:37

²⁵ t/n: Operative Investigation or Intelligence Investigation