

**Transcripts of victims' testimonies**  
**Brcko '92: Beyond Reasonable Doubt**  
5.09.2008, Belgrade

**Adila Suljević's Testimony**

My name is Adila Suljević and I'd like to present a short story about myself, my biography. I think it's very important. My parents were very young when they got married and left Čelić; it's a village located in the vicinity of Brčko. They went to Tuzla where they lived and worked. I was born in Tuzla. So, they earned some money and our life was pretty nice and then my father made a decision and we left for Vienna. In Vienna, I completed the first and the second year of high school in a Catholic high school where all the children were Catholic. I remember very well, teachers were nuns, and the school principal told my father, "Osman, your daughter is a Muslim child and these are all Christian children". I also remember that my father said, "Dear lady, God is one. When all these children can pray to this one God, then my child can do it, too." So I completed the first and the second year of high school. My parents got some money that they had saved and they bought a house in Srpska Varoš, Brčko. That is where I obtained further education and later was hired in the *Interplet* factory and then in *Mladost* factory, a clothing company. What am I trying to say? I'm trying to say that my brothers and I were not taught to hate; we were not taught to make difference between religions. We were taught to love, respect, and appreciate. I got married and went from Srpska Varoš to Meraje. That is also a suburb in Brčko and that is where I lived when the war broke out. On the 1<sup>st</sup> of May (1992), I saw my neighbours going somewhere. They were saying, "We're going to Rahić, we're going to Maoča." I had never been in these villages. I do not have any relatives in these villages. I had my house, I had my job and why would I run away, who should I run away from? I had no idea what was going on. Far away, I saw smoke and flames. What is going on? They said that the Bosna Company was on fire. That was a furniture factory. I heard shooting and explosions. Other neighbours ran into their basements. They say, "Wrap up warm; it's going to be cold." "I put on a green track suit, pretty thick, and a robe and we went to the basement. There were about 50 people, women, children, some pregnant women. We spent two days there. We could still hear the shooting. We didn't speak, we were listening, waiting. We wrote a sign and put it on the basement door which said that it was a shelter, so that people would know that there were civilians in there. My neighbour Himzo Rendić went out of the basement on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May because we were all hungry and thirsty, so he went out to get something for us to eat. A sniper shot him just as he was going out. He fell there. We wanted to drag him inside this basement. However, we heard a car, a van; I don't even know how to explain this to you. Then we went back inside these basements. Then I saw a cool storage arriving. People, or rather a youth, in uniform opens this cool storage. I was watching all this, but I was hidden and they could not see me. It was filled up with bodies. They took Himzo Rendić by his hands and legs and threw him like a sack inside the truck and drove away. In this moment we started panicking. I forgot to say this, but I was 26 at the time, I was a young bride. I was probably pregnant at that time, but because of the stress, as I was told later on, I got my period. Some women from this basement then gave me some



woollen socks and I had to put on some clothes. Because of this fear on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of May we left the basement when the night came and went into a nearby house. The owner of the house was Omer Džafić. Omer Džafić, his wife and son, my husband and my ex sister-in-law's son, who lived with me at the time, came with me. We spent a night there. Omer Džafić's phone rang and he answered the phone. It was his son from Germany. It didn't last for two minutes; Omer didn't dare tell his son what was happening. The phone rang again two minutes later. I heard a rough and angry voice saying, "I'm the Chief of the Hospital and my name is Ljubiša Mauzer. We heard there is a sniper there and we're asking you to surrender because you're surrounded. We know about you." We were frightened and we didn't know what to do. Suddenly we heard soldiers, tanks, we heard screaming, and we heard a noise. They started banging on the door, "Open up, we'll throw a hand grenade. Open up. We'll kill you all." I have no idea where I got all this courage. I was the first one who went out and others followed me. When I got out they started beating me with batons; they were hitting me in the legs; I don't even remember all the things they were beating us with. They lined us in front of a house with our faces looking at the wall and our hands in the air. They beat us again and asked us where are the firearms and who has firearms and who is the sniper. We had no idea. We didn't know what to say since we didn't know anything. They started beating us again. I heard them say, "Russian, these all need to be killed", "Well, of course. We should kill all of them," said this Russian. I know him only by the name of Russian. I've never discovered his first and the last name. They turned us around and lined us up for execution. However, this Russian's Motorola rang. He received some orders or I don't know what. Anyway, they put their rifles down and took us to the playground. That was very close. There was a street ... a house, then a small street, and right across the road there was a large playground. Many people in Ivici know where this playground is. There, they lined us again. I heard them say that Ljubiša Mauzer was coming. In less than two minutes Ljubiša Mauzer arrived. He was wearing a doctor's uniform, white clogs, white trousers and a doctor's coat. Three or four other people came with him. I would say they were his bodyguards or something like that. And this Ljubiša Mauzer was a short man and he had to leap to hit us. And he was hitting us. He was asking whether we had any information on where the "Green Berets" were and where our firearms were. No one knew anything. Ljubiša then ordered our execution again. In the meantime, the Motorola rang again and they received another order or I don't know what. We were waiting to die. Again, they decided not to execute us, but to transfer us into another house, again across this playground. And while we were all lined up there, I saw a lot of soldiers, young soldiers, drug users. I see their needles, I see alcohol. They are singing; some are screaming; some are shooting in the air. Horrible! They threw us again inside this other house. And so it was like that until we calmed down a little and they gathered. This Russian beat me again. To these other neighbours ...

I remember that they gave my husband a litre of whiskey to drink all at once in order to confess where the weapons allegedly were and where the "Green Berets" allegedly were. They did the same thing to other neighbours. This Russian guy took me upstairs, to the second floor. The staircase was wooden. I remember that very well and they were round. He said to me, "Take your clothes off." I said, "Man, but I have problems, female problems, I'm bleeding." He just took a knife from his left trouser leg and cut all of my clothes off me. There he assaulted me, raped me. On top of this, he beat, insulted and



threw me around. When he was done, he called other soldiers and said, “Who wants more?” I heard ... I heard boots, I heard someone coming upstairs. I felt dead in that moment. I wanted to die in that moment. I regretted staying alive because in that moment my world had crumbled down, my life had crumbled down. When these soldiers arrived, there were three of them, one of them said – excuse me for having to say this – “Fuck, man, it looks as if you slaughtered a cow, what is this?” It was true. I was covered in blood. I was bleeding everywhere, my head, my ears, my genitals. I smelled like blood. These soldiers went back down the stairs and he kicked me, naked, down the staircase. I was rolling and rolling and finally ended up in a place where my neighbours and my ex-husband were. My neighbour found a dress and wrapped me in it. After this, I heard, “Adolph is coming, Adolph is coming, silence, Adolph is coming.” At that time, I didn’t care anymore whether I was going to live or not. I didn’t care at all. Adolph arrived. He limped on one leg. He arrived in a police vehicle, a police vehicle. There were questions again and believe me I didn’t hear them any more. I didn’t feel pain. I didn’t feel the beating at all. In that moment I only felt shame. I felt terrible things. Adolph began handcuffing my neighbours and pushed them inside this police vehicle one by one. And me ... he took me again to execute me. He said, “You, Muslim bitch, find a place where you want me to execute you.” I didn’t say a thing. My brain was dead. He cocked his gun. I only prayed to God to be killed as soon as possible. So he held his rifle. I don’t know what kind of a rifle it was. It was a small rifle and I felt light on my forehead. He held that rifle for two ... maybe two minutes and then he put it down and said to me, “You goddamn Muslim, your eyes are telling me not to kill you. But it doesn’t matter; you’re going to the blood feast.” What kind of feast? I was wondering what could be bloodier than this. He dragged me inside the police vehicle. He and a soldier were sitting in this vehicle with us. I just need to mention that these soldiers were all young. I do not know if any of them were from Brčko. I think that they were youngsters who came from some other places but I have no idea where they came from. The police vehicle we were in drove off. There was another soldier inside the vehicle with us and he beat us and didn’t let us look through the window or anything. As we were driving down the Meraje road, we crossed the *Brka* Bridge and went up towards the downtown centre. There had been a massacre in the centre of the town. I saw this; I just saw it somehow. I saw a great number of civilians killed in the vicinity of the police station, *Posavina* Hotel. There were so many dead people on the road that Adolph could not drive his police vehicle through the centre of the town. “What should we do,” he asked his colleague. He said, “Let’s go over this bridge. It’s probably very risky, but I think we’ll be fine.” They were scared of Croats. They were scared that Croats might start shooting from the other side of the Sava River, but they took a chance. However, we got through because not a single bullet was fired from the Croat side. We entered Srpska Varoš. He pulled over Verica Simeunović’s house. She was my neighbour. Her children played with me and my brothers. Zvonimir Simeunović, her son, went to school with me. We all used to be good neighbours and loved each other. Goran pulled over Verica Simeunović’s door. In one moment, Verica got out of the house and he went out of the police vehicle and entered her yard. Verica recognized me and she just said, “Kole my son, that is our neighbour, is there any way you can save her.” Later on she said that she recognized me only because of my eyes. Goran Jelisić returned to this police vehicle again. He didn’t stay long. Konstantin Simeunović, Verica’s son, came with him and took us to Luka. In Luka, at the entrance,



we found fear, fear, horror, just like in horror movies. Horror movies could have been made there. The warehouses were full of our people, our people from Brčko. They spread their arms through those bars, I remember this well, as if they were looking for spas, I don't know. They didn't put me inside the warehouse. The warehouses were on the left side and the Luka offices on the right. They threw us inside an office. There was chaos in the office as well. A picture of Tito was thrown to the floor and papers were scattered all around. Some soldiers in white T-shirts with skulls drawn on them and in black T-shirts with white skulls drawn on them, red berets, and various, various, various... they were dressed in various uniforms. So, they threw us in this office. We just sat there and didn't say a word. We were waiting to see what else was going to happen. We spent the night there and the following morning at around 10 o'clock, a soldier came to pick me up and took me to another office. So, as I was entering this office I saw that they were having a meeting there, 20 people were there. As I was going in, they were leaving the office. There, I recognized my teachers Milisan and Rogan. I didn't recognize anyone else. Four people remained sitting at the desk. One of them first asked me if I had been raped. I said, "No, I hadn't," I lied. I had to. "Who beat you?" "I have no idea." "Why did they beat you." "Well, I don't know", I managed to say. "What's your name?" "Adila Suljević," I said. I don't know why I said Suljević when I was married at the time, but I said Adila Suljević. I don't know why. He just looked at me and told his other colleagues to leave the room. These colleagues of his told him, "Nice, young chick." And they left. They smiled and they left. The man stood up, shook my hand and said to me, "Are you Osman Suljević's daughter." I said, "Yes, I am." Then he asked me, "Where is your father." "My father died before the war," I said. "I'm Pero from Mirosavci," he said, "Your father helped me a lot in my life and here, my child, how did you get here; how did you end up here. Why didn't you run away." I just said nothing. Then he said, "Here, when your father helped me, I also want to do something nice and save you somehow. Go to that office and when I turn on the red light, you will get passes and you will get out of the Luka. Are you aware that you were not supposed to exist, you and your people." I said nothing. I stayed there until the 9<sup>th</sup> of May when Pero gave me a sign and pass to get out of the Luka camp. He just gave it to me. And I said, "Pero, I have a father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law," I lied. I felt sorry for all my neighbours staying there. He looked at me, "No problem, take them with you". "Can I go out?" "Of course you can." On the 9<sup>th</sup> of May 1992 at 11 o'clock I left the Luka camp. And all the time I spent in the camp I heard shooting, our people screaming and singing their Serbian songs. I listened to all of this, but I didn't see anything. I left the camp on the 9<sup>th</sup> of May with these people and I went to my mother's house in Srpska Varoš where I still had an obligation to work. This work was to clean out refrigerators because our people loved to have meat in refrigerators and, I don't know, our people were rich. There was no electric power and we had to clean all that. And I had another task. I had to go to the Gym and wash the blood. We had to collect these parts of our people and throw them in the rubbish bins. We were, I think, removing evidence. Finally, I would only like to add that this evil should never happen again. Thank you.

