

Written Testimony of **Ms. N.N.**

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on “Kosovo’s Wartime Victims: The Quest for Justice”

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It was just before I turned eleven years old when they threw us out of our home. My father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, my cousins and all the other women who had found refuge in our house. Serbian soldiers lined us up into columns and sent us to different villages. When we arrived at village D, the Serbian soldiers stopped us and separated the lines into two. One part was sent to village P and the other to village K. My mother, my sisters and I were kept in village K. Meanwhile, my dad and my brothers were sent to the village P.

In village K, they left us on the front lawn of the village school. After a few hours, they sent us to some houses near the school. They separated us into different rooms. I was in a room with my mother, sisters, cousins, and many other women. They left us there, in that room, and told us that we were okay there.

An hour later, two drunken Serbian soldiers came in. One of them was wearing a scarf over his head and the other one was bald. As soon as they entered the room they turned to my oldest sister and told her to get undressed.

We did not understand what they were saying because they spoke in Serbian. However, an old man translated it to us. After my sister, another girl was picked up and told to do the same. Somehow, the soldiers got distracted, and my sister sat down. The other girl was forced to undress in front of us all. She was very shy, and her grandfather did not have a choice but to translate to her what the soldiers were asking for. The girl fainted. No one touched her after that. They just left her as she was. On the floor. Naked.

I was very young and I looked almost like a boy with my short hair, so they asked me to stand. My cousin thought that they would kill me and pulled me over to explain that I was a girl. When the soldiers understood that I was a girl, they spat on me, punched me hard, and told me to sit down.

The soldiers then started to ask for money and jewelry. Everyone gave them all that they had. Some women had difficulties in taking their rings off because of their swollen hands, and the soldiers threatened to cut off their fingers. They began to fire up their guns, and some other Serbian soldiers and paramilitary came to get them out of the room.

We were told to stay calm. They said that we would have food and water and they left. We spent the night in that room, and nothing happened. The next day, they came back. They took us all out of the rooms and sent us back to the school we were at the day before. There were different soldiers there. Some had scarves on, some were in black uniforms, others in green uniforms, and some with police uniforms on.

We sat down, and all those soldiers surrounded us. There were so many of them. I distinctly remember when they discovered that a boy was among us. He was drawn out of the crowd and shot at with the intent of being wounded. Then they hung him, right there in front of us, on a tree by the fountain of the school.

The boy's mother and his sisters were pulling their hair out, screaming from the terror. They grabbed the boy's mother and his two sisters and took them inside the school. When they got inside, they killed the mother in front of her daughters. The two sisters were screaming so loud that you could hear it from the outside. As a child, I was terrified by the sound.

After that, the soldiers came back to our group and started taking more women and girls. My mother gave them all our gold and money so that they would not take us. They took it all, and then they took my mother, and my sister, and me. My youngest sister who was only a baby was left behind with an old lady who was standing next to my mother.

We were sent inside the school. When I got there, I saw the mother of the boy that was hanged laying dead on the floor with blood all around her. On the walls, you could see marks of blood that her hands had must have left when she was trying to get up.

I was placed inside a classroom with one of my sisters and some other women. There were different Serbian paramilitary forces there. Some had scarves on, some had masks, others had their faces painted with stripes. They did all sorts of horrible things to us in that classroom. Two of them came after me. One of them was bald and the other had stripes painted on his face. The bald one pulled my hair and tore my pants off.

I was only a child, not even eleven years old when the Serbian soldier raped me. I had no idea what he was doing to me. I kept moving the whole time, and I could hear other women screaming, but I was too scared to look around. The soldier raped me over and over again, in different ways. Whenever I would move and scream he punched me.

While he was raping me, the Serbian soldier cut my face with a knife, once on the cheek and twice on my head carving a cross on my forehead. He said, "You will bear this as a memory." The other soldier raped me as well. They did so at the same time. The bald one bit me all over my body and blood started to flow down my face. I fainted. I had no idea where I was anymore. I only know that I was there for a long time, nothing more. After a while, I started to wake up but I was very tired. My whole body was shaking.

I attempted to get up, but I had no strength left. I could hear voices, but everything felt like a dream. I heard the sound of my mother's voice calling out my name. Some people placed me on a mattress outside the school. I remember feeling the fresh air. It felt like I was waking up.

Someone took us on a horse carriage and sent us to a house that was under construction. We stayed there for many hours. I was with my mother, my sisters, and some other women. From there we were sent into the woods. A cousin of mine took care of us. I got very sick and could not eat for two weeks. They managed to keep me alive with water and sugar and we stayed there until the war was over.

Today I call on the United States Congress to take action in response to the war crimes and atrocities committed in Kosovo.