

# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

601

Annex n° .....01....., to the  
Report n°..759/94.....of..30 May 1994.....  
of the Gendarmerie unit JUDICIAL  
SECONDMENT OF BRUSSELS.....

On ....30 May 1994.....at ..11.25....hours, this person was heard by me/~~us~~ the report writers(s):

IDENTITY: RENOUPREZ André

Name and first name: ...GERLACHE Mathieu.....

Date and place of birth: .....NAMUR on 13 July 1965.....

Profession:....Professional soldier....Civil status: .....Married to DUMONCEAU S.....

Address:.....5020 NAMUR avenue du Transvaal n° 7.....

For soldiers: Rank and number: .....Corporal number R 59385.....

Unit: .....12th FLAWINNE company .....

who stated:.....

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## DECLARATION:

"I would like to express myself in French and formally choose proceedings in this language.

### A. GENERAL POINTS:

I have already been questioned by the JUDICIAL SECONDMENT in RWANDA on 13 April 1994.

I would, however, like to clarify the following points:

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### B. ATTACK:

The FAR camp at KANOMBE was located more or less 1.5 kilometres as the crow flies from the airport. Being installed in the former control tower of the airport that is 5 to 6 metres high, our CP company as well as the radios were on the last floor or the tower.

This floor was a platform surrounded in glass.

From the view that we had from this place, we could see all the runways but not the FAR camp, as this was located in a dip.

On 06 April 1994 at about 20.30 hours while I was manning the radio service, I noted that the lighting on the runway had just been turned on. I point out, in fact that the lighting was always turned off.

The runway was only lit up during the manoeuvres of aircraft landings. I then went out of the control tower and I went on the side rail of the platform in order to look at the aircraft that was approaching for landing. I can categorically say that the airport lighting was never turned off during aircraft approach manoeuvres. The lighting was in fact turned off but after the aircraft accident, I can no longer tell you how long after.

At the time the aircraft was approaching the airport, we did not know which aircraft it was. I then saw a luminous dot leaving the ground. The direction of the departure of this dot was the KANOBE camp.

With regard to the colour of this luminous dot I think that it was white. You would have thought that it was a shooting star from its configuration. When I saw this dot was moving towards the aircraft that I realised that it must be the firing of a missile. At that time, the lights of the aircraft were turned off but the aircraft did not explode after this first firing. The lights of the aircraft that had been turned off were never turned back on.

The theory of missile firing was reinforced when I saw a second luminous dot, the same as the first, coming from the same place taking the direction of the aircraft. At this time the aeroplane exploded and fell more or less 500 metres from the PRESIDENT's residence. The residence was located in line with the landing runway.

At the time when the aircraft exploded, immediately after general gunfire broke out. I could see on each side of the runway and apparently from both sides of the PRESIDENT's house there was a lot of firearms shooting including some with tracer bullets. I can no longer assess the time that this shooting lasted. At the time the aircraft exploded, I did not see any FAR soldiers on the airport runways.

Following these events, I informed S3 (CPT CHOFFRAY) with the company commander who was next to me by the radio. I reported to him that an aircraft had just exploded following the firing of two missiles. The S3 did not take this information seriously, furthermore, more or less one hour later after the events he announced on the radio network that it was a munitions depot that had exploded in KANOMBE.

My Company Commander (CPT VANDRIESSCHE) then went to the civil airport and found out that it was the PRESIDENTS's aeroplane that had just exploded. On his return CPT VANDRIESSCHE immediately reported the correct events to his superior.

After a certain time, the length of which I cannot assess, but which may have been an hour, I saw from my control tower, the mortar platoon arrive and carry out a stand-by on both sides of the runway. At this time, I left my position to go and speak with them. To your question regarding the Motorola that LT LOTIN owned, I can confirm to you that he did own one but I cannot describe the model to you.

C. MURDER.

The mortars together with LT LOTIN remained at the airport until the time when they left to carry out the escort mission at the house of AGATHE. During all this time, the mortars did not have any particular mission, only for half the section to remain on stand-by, the other half protecting the runway.

With regard to the radio communications between Y6 (LT LOTIN) and the CP operation, as I was on the same frequency, I can tell you that at the time of the problems with the mortars, before arriving at the house of AGATHE, I heard Corporal LHOIR point out to S3 that it was normal that there were problems with a jeep because it had been fired on for one hour. He said this ironically in order to make the situation clearly understood.

Following the problems that LT LOTIN announced by radio while he was at the house of AGATHE, the CP operation, without being able to say who was speaking on the radio, replied to him: "it is you who is on the ground, you alone can judge the situation, take the decision yourself as to what is to be done." After having heard that the mortars were disarmed and on the ground, I heard nothing more on the radio. Following this interruption, the CP called Y6 several times without obtaining a reply.

The remainder of the day and also the following days I remained at the airport to continue my mission. With regard to the following days, I know that on 07 April, during the day, more specifically during the morning, LT VERMEULEN wanted to approach the aeroplane wreckage, he turned back as the wreckage was being guarded by the FAR, elements of the Presidential Guard, and perhaps Rwandan police. I know this because I heard him report it on the radio network.

Following this, LT VERMEULEN, the section that accompanied him as well as other soldiers from the airport (soldiers at the time of the events on leisure outings) left to take refuge in the AMAHORO stadium. From listening to the radio during the troubles at the stadium I can tell you that I heard that LT VERMEULEN was refused access to the stadium. He informed his CP operation of this by radio, and the CP operation, the S3 informed the UNO CP (Colonel MARCHALL). There was obviously a problem with the decision to be taken because no order with given to LT VERMEULEN. He was threatened with his men in front of the stadium gates and the "Bengali UN" soldiers [illegible number] refused to open the gates for him therefore enabling him to take shelter.

You could hear from LT VERMEULEN's voice that he was stressed and the reply time seemed to last an eternity. From the radio, I know that there was shooting before they could finally go into the stadium. As everything was blocked off, the CP operation could not send him reinforcements.

D. RADIO MILLE-COLLINES.

With regard to this radio, I never had the opportunity to listen to it.

E. END OF INTERVIEW.

In order to explain in part what happened, I think that with regard to our command, it did not realize at the time the seriousness of the situation, due to the lack of familiarity with the country and its inhabitants.

If it is of interest to you, I can send you a duplicate of the photo that I took of the position where I was at the time of the attack. On this photo you can see the runway.

I do not know anyone to be heard other than the soldiers.”  
Having been read, he maintains his statement and signs on this document.

[signed]

Whereof act.

[signed]