

My name is Miroslav Bralo. I wish to make a personal apology to each one of my victims who I made suffer, and to each member of every one of the families affected by my actions. I wish to say that I am truly sorry for their suffering and the suffering of their loved ones. What I said in court last time I really meant: I am guilty, and I deeply regret it.

My apology should go further. It should be bigger than a globe. It should include my apology to all the victims and their families; all those who had to pass through the horrific events that took place—those known and those still unknown. I also want to apologize to the many people who are still living in fear and despair as refugees all around the world.

The Factual Basis to my plea is agreed. It is true. One of the gravest counts is the first one, which talks of Persecutions as a Crime against Humanity. This means something particular to me. As a human being these are my crimes alone, committed against people whose voice I silenced in the massacre at Ahmici. I would like to apologize in the name of those who committed horrific crimes and are not alive any more. And to all those who had to experience pain and suffering due to war and inhumane behavior in Ahmici.

These were acts which I always knew to be wrong, which anyone would know to be wrong, and for which there really can be no excuse at all. I know I acted badly, and compounded this later by my words. Our wrongs were so terrible— I include others here— that we even clung to them, and tried to justify them. I tried to be proud of my actions and to think they were the actions of a successful soldier. Today I am ashamed of all of that, ashamed of my conduct and ashamed how I behaved.

No, these were not the actions of the soldier I once wanted to be. I was present when women and children were gunned down in front of me, and at that moment the good soldier in me was gone, silent.

I was sometimes brave during that time, but I was not brave enough to recognize what I had become, I was not brave enough to speak out for people whose lives should have been saved. At that time that would have been the heroic act.

It has taken me years to understand and acknowledge my full responsibility for each of my own actions. Now, reasoning about my own conduct, I feel enormously sorry and can do nothing but pray that never ever happens again in this world.

The Tribunal has had to deal with a lot of lies. I do believe that the only way forward is for the truth to be told and for the denial to stop. I don't think I lied, but I was one of the biggest deniers— particularly to myself.

But there must be an end to the cover up of crimes. Families should grieve knowing the truth. I know what it is to grieve for the one whom you love deeply. I truly hope all sides will cooperate in search for the truth and by doing so they will shorten the agony of many families.

I would have said let people take their own course, but I do not believe it. I would say that I encourage anyone who can do so to come

forward and talk to their neighbours, to talk to the court and begin to make their peace. When one says the truth and admits the truth—both the neighbour and the court will believe him or her.

At the Tribunal, from last November, I knew straight away that the original indictment did not tell it all. I wanted to offer up the truth about my own crimes, even though I knew that the worst were known only by me. This, and more, is what I owe.