

Your Honours, I am fully aware of all the things with which I am charged. I am aware of the acts that I have committed, and I confess to them count by count as they were read out to me here. I pleaded guilty, and I assume full responsibility for the acts that I have committed.

How do I feel about the things that I did in those three months that I spent in the Sušica camp? Only I know that. But I genuinely feel shame and disgrace. But as you heard here, on the one hand, I carried weapons in Sušica, I wore a uniform; and on the other hand, there is the fact that there were women there, aged the same as my mother, there were children there, there were people who used to be friends of mine, whom I used to see over the years in cafes, on sports fields, and playgrounds, with whom I spent summer vacations. And when I think about all of this, it turned into a nightmare that is pursuing me these days and that I see over and over again in my sleep. The question arises why did I do all that? I had enough time to think about it, 11 years. But it is still hard to find an answer to that question.

I can tell you with complete sincerity I never felt sorry for myself because I was not too young to understand at the time; I was a mature man, 35 -- 35 years old. And my compassion was always directed only at the victims, not only those that I hurt myself or whose families I hurt. All those who were down there at Sušica were victims.

What can I say about it all? I can say that I repent sincerely for all of that. I genuinely repent. I am not saying this pro forma, this repentance and contrition comes from deep inside me, because I knew most of those people from the earliest stage. I knew them well; some of them were my neighbours. I want to avail myself of this opportunity to say to all those who -- whom I hurt, either directly or indirectly, that I apologise to everyone who spent any time in Sušica, be it a month or several months.

I would like, now that I have this opportunity to speak in public, to make even those victims feel the sincerity of my apology and my repentance, even those who were never at the Sušica camp and who are now scattered all over the world as a result of that conflict and the expulsions which made it impossible for them to return home. I am aware, Your Honours, that I will spend a long time in prison, but at the same time I hope that the day will come when I will get out. It is my desire to return to Vlasenica one day to do whatever is in my power, if it is at all possible, for those people to become close again, to return to their homes. I would not for a second like to be a threat to anyone by my mere presence, and if at any moment I should feel that my presence disturbs anybody, I would leave immediately. I would go to see my family, my relatives, and I would keep returning there as long as it takes until the moment comes when I feel that nobody minds my being there any more, to try to help those people start a new life in that town, which after all had not been completely destroyed.

I have admitted to my guilt, and as my counsel said -- I wish to repeat it once again -- I hope that all the three parties will be encouraged

by my confession to assume their part of the responsibility for those terrible acts, because that is the only thing that would make it possible for people to become close again, for the three peoples to become close again in those parts. It should be clear to all of us that we are after all an important factor in this reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. This Tribunal also plays an important part in it. And I am trying to assist the Tribunal in this way. We must never forget about the victims.

I now speak only in my own name, and I wish to say that there were among the victims people with whom I grew up and I wish to reiterate once again my deep and sincere repentance over everything that I had done down there. I hope I will get a chance to redeem myself and to alleviate their suffering. I received a message when my cousin visited me, and I want to thank you, Your Honours, for giving me this opportunity to speak and to say all this, to thank you in my own name and on behalf of my mother and my sister, who are here. I had told them that this would be a public hearing. They wanted me to convey to everyone here that their door is always open, that anyone can come to talk to them, including victims and perhaps even neighbours who were never at Sušica.

I can hardly find the right words, but even so, mere words are not enough. Acts are needed, and I do intend to act for reconciliation for the return of those people who were displaced and expelled. That is my deepest wish.