

WITNESS STATEMENT OF IDREES JARJEES AYOOB

I Idrees Jarjees Ayoob, was born on 8th May 1961 and live at Kharab Daleel, in Bashiqa Province, Nineveh Governorate, WILL SAY:

I own sheep and I am from a family of shepherds.

I have seven children, Murtada was one of them. He died during a bombing by American or British military aircraft on 30th April 1999.

At the time, my son was with his grandfather, Jarjees, my brother Ahmed and his cousins, Luqman, Mohammed and Sultan. They had taken the family's flock to graze some four kilometres away.

Normally the land would be used to grow crops, but because of the drought that year, which also continued into the next year, the government allowed us to take our sheep to this land to feed.

My son, Murtada, went to help the others. Apart from feeding the sheep, my family also sheared the wool, which was transported in our pick up truck to Kharab Daleel and then to Mosul - the centre of our Governorate in Nineveh – for sale.

My family had tents with them to seek shade from the sun. Some of the shepherds would stay back at night to guard the sheep.

The pick up also took provisions between the family and home. The tractor was used to pull the water tank for the sheep. Ahmed, my brother, came home in a hurry on 30th April to collect lunch and return to the family minding the sheep. Jarjees, Luqman and Mohammed had stayed with the sheep.

Ahmed had come with Murtada and Sultan. All three returned to the sheep at around 2 o'clock in the afternoon.

I was with my brother Hussein at home. I heard a large explosion. The house shook a little. We went onto the roof. I saw black smoke rising high. Dust was rising into the air too. Then I heard two more explosions.

A villager called Agab, from Qoban told us that our flock had been attacked and we drove to the place of attack, but before we left, I am sure I heard another explosion and another on the way.

There were already about fifty men at the site and more cars arriving. Dead sheep were everywhere.

I saw that the pick up truck was destroyed and burned. I asked for my father, if anyone knew where he was. After a while my brother Hussein called me and showed me a small part of his chest – it had white hair. I found my father's upper arm with part of his shoulder at the place that had been bombed, fifteen days later.

On the day,I thought that the children had escaped the attack and my cousin Asad and I drove round other villages and surrounding areas, desparately looking for them. All day I was sure we would find the children and thought Ahmed had escaped with them and led them to safety and still remained hopeful that I would find them.

Later, I returned to the place of the bombing and by then I could only think of my father's death..

I know that the remains of the bodies were carried away in a pick up truck.However, I did not look for, or collect any of the remains. I was overcome by the grief of what happened to my father.

The body remains were taken to our local Mosque for burial. I stayed at the place of the attack.I thought that my family would return and that someone would still be alive. Eventually I was called to attend the funeral prayers and burial.

This has been a great disaster. No one can forget it. I still blame the American government and the British government. All of our future generations will never forget what happened. I always remind my children and all the children in the family, what the American and British governments did to my son and my family so that they may never forget.

I am responsible for twenty five people in the family after the killings. I have replaced my father in these responsibilities.My pain is very great.When I pass the site of the attack, I always remember the 30th April. It is impossible to forget this day. When I see Ahmed's remaining son, Kameran, I relive the deaths.

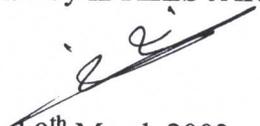
My mother went blind with grief after the deaths. An operation on her eyes did not help. She died a year later.

My father's brother, Thanoon Ayoob Sultan, also died a year later from a heart attack, having cried and grieved in the time since the attack.

My health has deteriorated. I have been to many doctors. I cannot be cured. I have many headaches. My wrist watch used to fit tightly around my wrist, now it hangs loosely over my hand.

I believe that the facts as stated in the statement are true.

Signed by IDREES JARJEES AYOOB


Dated 9th March 2003.

I Jasim Mohammed Kanoush, confirm that Idrees Jarjees Ayoob, a citizen of Bashiqa Province, attended my office. I identified him and he then signed this statement in front of me.

.....
JASIM MOHAMMED KANOUSH



.....
9th March 2003

WITNESS STATEMENT OF EIDA THANOON AYOOB

I Eida Thanoon, date of birth 1962 in Bashiqa, Mosul, residing of the village of Kharab Daleel, WILL SAY:

I confirm that I am the mother of Mohammed Ahmed Jarjees, aged twelve at the time of his death; Sultan Ahmed Jarjees, aged six at the time of his death; Luqman Ahmed Jarjees, aged thirteen at the time of his death. I also confirm that I am the aunt of Murtadha Idris, aged eleven at the time of his death. My husband was Ahmed Jerjees Ayub, aged thirty six at the time of his death. My father in law, Jerjees Ayoob Sultan, aged sixty eight was also killed. These main members of my family were all killed in a bombing by the American or the British on the 30th April 1999.

The sheep the family were tending that day belonged to my father in law and all the family shared in the tending of the sheep and lived communally. The sheep were the family's only asset and income from them are shared between all.

That day I was like a crazy woman. I didn't know whether it was like a dream or reality. My daughter was two years old, she always said: 'father is coming, father is coming.' There was one hour between their leaving and the bombing. I always felt that who ever came, was Mohammed. Since then, I still cannot believe that they are dead. At night I dream of them, then I stand up and there is nobody there.

On the day of the bombing, people came rushing, hooting the horn loudly. Announcing something terrible had happened. At mid-day I had been with them, I took them a thermos of tea and food – my eldest son, Luqman, was cutting the wool of the sheep. I returned at about half past twelve with my remaining son, Hamza, now four years. In spite of the destruction the food, placed a little distant, remained there, undamaged.

I asked to go to the place (of the bombing) but no one would take me. I begged them to take me, but they refused. Some of the family members went to hospitals – perhaps some of them might have been taken to one.

After seven days I went to the cemetery, and still, when I saw the six mounds, I could not believe it. I asked for something to turn over the earth, so I could find whether my family were at least whole and not broken,. At the cemetery, I fell down, unconscious. After all, my children were just working with the sheep and looking forward to their picnic..

When groups of people came to mourn and help me, for many months I looked amongst them believing surely one of my family would be there.

If I had no children, I would have committed suicide.

I suffer many health problems, which began the year after the disaster. Hypertension, liver problems, arthritis – before I was always well.

The bombings have been going on so long that when there is thunder, the children shake, thinking it is another.

There is now produced to me marked 'ETA1' a compact disk with photographs of my father in law, Jarjees and Luqman, my son and posters on the wall of our home.

I also ask Mr Blair to take the pilot to Court, he is a criminal.

I believe that the facts as stated in this statement are true.

Signed by EIDA THANOON

X  X

Dated 9th March 2003.

I Jasim Mohammed Kanoush, confirm that Eida Thanoon Ayoob, a citizen of Bashiqa attended my office. I identified her and she then signed this statement in front of me.


.....
Jasim Mohammed Kanoush



.....
9th March 2003

WITNESS STATEMENT OF JASIM MOHAMMED KANOUSH

I Jasim Mohammed Kanoush of Directorate of Bashiqa Province, Bashiqa, Mosul, Nineveh Governorate, Republic of Iraq, WILL SAY:

I am the Director at the Directorate of the Bashiqa Province. The Directorate has overall authority for various services, which include amongst others: agriculture, water, electricity and wider municipal responsibilities. My position is the equivalent of a Mayor in another country.

I make this statement concerning the bombing by military aircraft, on 30th April 1999, in Bashiqa, which killed six of our citizens.

Bashiqa covers an area of approximately three hundred and sixty square kilometres. The terrain is largely flat land and hills against a backdrop of small mountain ranges. The flat and hills are mainly agricultural, though extended areas have been left fallow - grassy or arid.

The land cultivated is predominantly devoted to wheat, barley and the olive groves for which the region is famous. The availability of land for grazing is dependent on rainfall.

Agricultural land is dependent on two sources of water: firstly, Artesian wells provide a source of water for olive trees and gardens. Secondly, rainfall allows for a cultivation of barley and wheat.

On 30th April 1999, we received a report that a family of sheep farmers and their flock had been attacked by US and/or UK aircraft (operating the illegal 'no fly zones'.) At the time, Iraqi military aircraft were prohibited from flying in the area. Also, there was no Iraqi military installation or activity whatsoever in the area. As a result, we undertook the preparation of a report on the incident. Our records show the following information:

At 3.30 pm on 30th April 1999, hostile aircraft, fired missiles on child and adult shepherds and their flock, near the village of Qoban, on agricultural land, where the sheep, due to a near unprecedented drought, were foraging.

The details provided of the dead are as follows:

Jarjees Ayoob Sultan ('Jarjees') Date of birth 1931
Ahmed Jarjees Ayoob ('Ahmed') Date of birth 1963
Luqman Ahmed Jarjees ('Luqman') Date of birth 1986
Mohammed Ahmed Jarjees ('Mohammed') Date of birth 1987
Murtadha Idrees Jarjees ('Murtadha') Date of birth 1988
Sultan Ahmed Jarjees ('Sultan') Date of birth 1993

Jarjees is Ahmed's father and Luqman, Mohammed's, Murtadha's and Sultan's grandfather.

Luqman, Mohammed and Sultan are Ahmed's sons.

Murtadha is Ahmed's brother's son.

In addition to the losses of their lives, the further losses suffered by the victims included the destruction of a Toyota pick up truck, a tractor, a water tank on a trailer and approximately one hundred and ten sheep (owned by the Jarjees') tents and two sheep dogs.

The families lived in a nearby village called Kharab Daleel. Normally their sheep would feed in fields near the village. However, in that year, 1999, we suffered a drought (and temperatures were particularly high.) Accordingly the Government of Iraq assisted by granting shepherds permission to move flocks to new feeding areas whilst also providing additional fodder for affected flocks. As a result, shepherds needed to equip themselves to live away from their fixed dwelling and consequently lead a more nomadic lifestyle.

Therefore they had with them, tents, a pick up truck to ferry supplies of food and other essentials from their village. They also had a water tank, towed by a tractor. Water was essential for the sheep

As the shepherd families moved further from home, extra help was needed to drive the car, tractor and to prevent the sheep from straying and to shear wool. Photographs were taken at the scene on the day of the attack.

There is now produced to me two compact disks, marked : 'JMK1' and 'JMK2', which contain copies of a display, with six photographs and two newspaper cuttings. This display is entitled: 'Photographs of U.S. Crimes Against Innocent Civilians near Qoban village, on 30th April 1999'. This was prepared by us.

I now briefly describe the contents of the display. Commencing with the top left hand corner:

First there appears a newspaper article which was published a day or two after the incident.

Next (going down the left hand column of four photographs)

- 1) This is a photograph of the pick up truck.
- 2) This is a photograph of the tractor remains. It will be seen that the tractor was obliterated.
- 3) This is a photograph of the remains of some of the sheep.
- 4) This is a photograph of one of the sheep dogs.

(Going to the right hand column of the display)

- 5) This is a photograph of the other side of the pick up truck. At the top right there are further photographs of some of the sheep.
- 6) This photograph shows the water tank, part of the trailer and a piece of the pick up truck at the bottom right of the photograph.
- 7) and 8) These are also photographs of the remains of the sheep, as they were found.

9) At the bottom there is a further newspaper article, printed shortly after the attack.

Finally and for the avoidance of any doubt, I confirm that each of the victims (whose details I have given above) and Eida Thanoon Ayoob (Ahmed's wife and the mother of Luqman, Mohammed and Sultan) and Idrees Jurjees Ayoob (the father of Murtadha) are citizens of Bashiqra and live in the village of Kharab Daleel and are presently alive.

I believe that the facts as stated in this statement are true.

Signed by JASIM MOHAMMED KANOUSH
In the presence of



Dated ^{10th} ~~9th~~ March 2003.

WITNESS STATEMENT OF FARIS SALEM JASEM

I Faris Salem Jaseem, date of birth 1964, live in a village ^{called} ~~nearby~~ Qoban, WILL SAY:

I work in the Civil Status Office in Bashiqa. This office issues identity cards.

My village overlooks the area where the bombing took place on 30th April 1999 and where members of the Jarjees family were killed.

At around 3.30 p.m., on 30th April, I heard a huge blast. I was inside my house, with my family at the time. The windows were open and the window frames shook. There had been recent bombings in our area and I knew this was another.

It is normal for people from the villages to run to help where bombs are dropped.

I ran out of my house and borrowed the car of a visitor to the village, with three others. It is a custom to give anyone walking a lift. The journey to the scene was just minutes by road.

We were first to arrive at the scene. I got out and the others returned to the village to fetch others. At first I could not believe what I saw, I stood in the middle of the sheep and saw pieces of burned flesh, then I saw Murtada, he had no legs, but I recognised him from his face, the only other part I recognised, was, I think, was a piece of the chest of Jarjees – the grandfather – because the hair on the skin – the size of my hand – was white. There were dead sheep lying everywhere, pieces of blackened flesh were scattered as far as I could see.

I tried to lead the remaining flock of sheep away from the scene.

I noticed in horror that the white pick up truck of the Jarjees family had been destroyed, we know the family very well, we are a small community.

I looked for the family, but could not see anyone. Then I heard a 'plane coming, I was scared. I ran towards a large ditch some three hundred metres away and crouched down, I held my head with my arms and hands over it. The 'plane got louder. Then I heard the sound of a rocket whistling and the 'plane sound fading away, then there was an explosion and the ground shook. I looked up and saw that the tractor had been hit. I went back to the place of the attack. Many people were arriving from the nearby villages, eventually there were perhaps two hundred and fifty to three hundred people.

We searched for the remains of the bodies, it was hard to tell the difference between the sheep and the human flesh. I saw many pieces of flesh like raw meat in a butcher's shop, also many of the pieces of flesh were burnt.

We collected as carefully as we could what we thought were human parts and placed them in the back of a pick up truck. Many of the pieces were blackened, stiff, burnt out. Like roasted; no blood.

When we thought we had finished, the pile of flesh in the back of the truck was nearly a metre high.

Children stayed at home at this time, there have been many bombings in our area and they are very afraid of the 'planes.

Then I went home, changed my clothes and went to the funerals – as Muslims, we bury our dead as soon as possible. We bury people in shroud cloth, but apart from Murtada we divided the remains into six equal portions in bags made out of the shroud cloth.

I refer to a compact disc marked: 'FSJ1' and the pictures of the area (and surrounding area) where the Jarjees family and sheep were bombed.

The area between the GMC 4 wheel drive and the mountain range and which lies close to the road, is where the attack took place.

Standing with your back to the GMC and turning to the right, where the mountains end, there is a village at the base of the mountain, that is on a slope. That is where I live.

Moving further round in that direction (clockwise) and after crossing the road (in the pictures with the GMC) you can see in the distance (in front of the GMC and before the start of the next mountain range) the village of Birr Hilan and Kharab Daleel is behind this.

In the pictures with the rear of the GMC showing and the pictures following on from that (on the opposite side of the road from where the attack took place) there is the ditch I ran to before the 'plane came back a second time. In the distance and to the right you can see a collection of farms with their olive groves. There are buildings and an artesian well – this also is an agricultural area.

I believe that the facts as stated in this statement to be true.

Signed by FARIS SALEM JASEM
In the presence of



Dated 9th March 2003.

I Jasim Mohammed Kanoush, confirm that Faris Salem Jasem, citizen of Bashiqa, attended my office. I identified him and he then signed this statement in front of me.

.....
Jasim Mohammed Kanoush

.....
9th March 2003

