



TRIAL OF ANWAR RASLAN

Higher Regional Court – Koblenz, Germany

Trial Monitoring Report 41

Hearing Dates: July 14 &15, 2021

CAUTION: Some testimony includes descriptions of torture.

Summaries/Highlights:¹

Trial Day 82 – July 14, 2021

P40, a 28-year-old Syrian and one of the few witnesses who were detained at Branch 251 before March 2011 described detention conditions similar to those after March 2011, although not as bad. The witness further told the court that he was not blindfolded when he was interrogated by Anwar Raslan, whom he identified as head of investigations at the Branch. According to the witness, arrests in Syria were unlawful, even before 2011, as no one was informed about the charges or even where they were detained. Detainees were not presented to a rightful judge nor were their families informed about their fate.

Trial Day 83 – July 15, 2021

P41, a 43-year-old Syrian testified about his detention at Branch 251 in 2011. He described to the court the bad detention conditions, lack of medical care, and torture at the Branch. The witness further identified Anwar Raslan as the head of the Branch who was also present at one of P41's interrogations. P41 was able to see Raslan as he was not blindfolded during his interrogation. According to P41, Raslan ordered a guard to torture him. The witness further identified two people on screenshots of open-source videos and explained that both allegedly died of torture at Branch 251. P41 said he saw one of the people himself after his corpse was handed over to his family.

Day 82 of Trial – July 14, 2021

The hearing began at 9:30AM with four spectators and three members of the press in the audience. One non-accredited journalist was granted access to the Arabic interpretation. The prosecution was represented by prosecutors Ritscher and Klinge. Plaintiff counsels Dr. Oehmichen and Mohammed were not present. Attorney Ziorovski appeared as substitute for Raslan's defense counsel Böcker.

Testimony of P40

P40 was informed about his rights and duties as a witness. The 28-year-old Syrian currently living in [information redacted] denied being related to the defendant by blood or marriage. P40 answered these first questions in German. Presiding Judge Kerber told him he could speak in Arabic, his mother tongue, as there were competent interpreters assisting the court.

¹ Throughout this report, [information located in brackets are notes from our trial monitor] and "information placed in quotes are statements made by the witness, judges or counsel." Note that this report does not purport to be a transcript of the trial; it is merely an unofficial summary of the proceedings. The names of witnesses have been redacted.



Judge Kerber's Questioning

Presiding Judge Kerber explained that she would first ask the witness to provide an overview of what happened to him before Judge Wiedner might ask additional questions. Kerber further explained to P40 that the court was aware that he already provided this information to the police, however, according to German law he needed to repeat everything in court. Kerber first asked P40 how he came into conflict with the Syrian regime and how he was arrested. P40 said he was arrested at the end of 2010 together with his brother. They were arrested at 4AM in Damascus. P40 said he already told the police how he was arrested: he was taken to an unknown place. P40 asked Kerber what else she wanted to know.

Kerber asked him to tell the court everything he could remember. She added that the court knew what P40 told the police, however, he needed to repeat all that in court. P40 went on to explain that he was very young when he was arrested, he said that he and his brother were of course beaten several times. P40 added that he would describe everything in detail. They were arrested at 4AM. [The interpreter sitting next to P40 and translating his statements into German told P40 that he was free to speak Syrian dialect instead of Standard Arabic]. P40 recalled that people were knocking at his door at 4AM. He said it was very harsh and he was the first of his family to wake up. When he asked who was knocking, he was told by the people outside the door to open the door. As soon as P40 opened the door, he saw security forces carrying Kalashnikovs. P40 said he was told to lie on the floor and his hands were tied within seconds using cable strips. His vest was pulled over his head and his head was pushed down. P40 said he was passed on like that from one person to the other and beaten on his head and back. He was then taken inside a car which drove away after five to ten minutes.

P40 showed the court how he was pushed inside the car with his head down. He said he had to sit in this position which was very difficult and started hurting. Every time he tried to raise his head, he was beaten with a Kalashnikov. P40 explained to the court that it was horrible for him. He was very young at the time and it was the first time something like that happened to him. He added that the entire time he spent in detention felt like one single day.

P40 said the car drove for 45 to 60 minutes. He did not know that his brother was there as well. Since P40 was blindfolded and could not see what happened around him, he assumed he was alone. When they left the car, it was the same procedure than before: beatings. P40 said they had to walk quickly and he was beaten the same way as when he was arrested at home: on his head and back. He recognized that they were taken downstairs to a hallway. In the hallway, they were told to undress to their underpants.

Kerber intervened, asking P40 to not speak more than one sentence, so the interpreter could follow. She added that although this is a very emotional situation for P40, he should try to speak a bit slower. [The interpreter said that P40 was simply repeating every sentence three times.] P40 went on to describe that he was then taken to the office of an investigator. He was able to see that this person was Anwar Raslan. P40 added that he did not know it was Raslan at that very moment when it happened. P40 said when they entered the office, they were told to turn around. That was when he saw that his brother was there as well, something he did not know before. The investigator then gave orders to the employees, saying left or right. The security guards/employees then took people to the left or right. Once they were all separated, they were taken to different cells. After that, people came and called their names.

Kerber wanted to know whether P40 was blindfolded or had to wear his vest over his head when he was in the office of the investigator. P40 denied, saying he was wearing nothing but his shorts.

Kerber asked how many detainees were in this office. P40 said there were around twenty to thirty people in the hallway.

Kerber went on to ask P40 what happened in the cell. P40 described how names were called. He added that their personal data was registered before they were taken to the cells. When they were in the cell afterwards, their names were called. When P40's name was called, he was taken to Raslan's office.

Kerber wanted to know whether it was the same room as before or a different one. P40 did not understand the question. Kerber said she understood that P40 had been in Raslan's office before. P40 denied. Kerber asked him to explain. P40 repeated that he was taken downstairs, had to stand in the hallway, had to get undressed, and was then taken to the room of the investigator. He then had to turn around and the detainee was taken to the left or right.

Kerber wanted to know who the 'investigating person' was whom P40 just mentioned. P40 said he was not blindfolded. This person was Anwar Raslan.

Kerber recalled that the person in the office at this occasion was Anwar Raslan. She asked P40 if he was taken to the same room when he was called from the cell and taken to Anwar Raslan. P40 said it was the same room.

Kerber asked what happened next. P40 said one officer was standing behind him. When P40 entered the room, he was told to lower his head. The investigating officer was sitting or standing behind a desk. He was asking P40 questions. P40 told the court that he could still remember one of the questions: he was asked if he was a Kurd from [information redacted]. P40 explained that the investigator of course used the question to find out whether P40 was affiliated to Kurdish groups. P40 told the court he denied the question and replied he was from [information redacted], the Arabic name of the town. All the questions that P40 was asked dealt with Kurdish issues and were unrelated to P40. P40 said every time he denied a question about Kurdish people, the investigator gave a sign to the security officer who then beat P40. The beats were harsh and P40 was even kicked and fell on the floor while 'he' [Anwar Raslan] was present. When the round of questions and answers was over, the security officer was ordered to take P40 to the hallway. P40 said he did not understand what was meant by this order at that time. He explained to the court that in the hallway, he had to lie on the floor on his stomach with his hands tied behind his back, and was beaten with a four-wire cable. After the beating, he was taken back to the cell.

Kerber asked if P40 had to wear blindfolds in the room where he was interrogated. P40 denied.

Judges Kerber and Wiedner had a short discussion before Judge Kerber asked P40 to continue his descriptions. P40 said he was taken back to the cell after the beatings. When he was in the cell, names of other detainees were called, among them P40's brother. P40 added that he was the youngest in his cell.

Kerber wanted to know how old P40 was at the time. P40 said he was around 17-years-old. He wanted to graduate from high school and study law. He added that the arrest he and his brother were subjected to was against the law, it was illegal according to P40. He explained that he was a juvenile and there was no reason to arrest him. P40 asked the judges whether he could ask Raslan a question.

Judge Kerber told P40 he should rather not ask the question, but if he still wanted to add anything after his testimony, he would have the chance to do so later. Kerber quickly recalled what P40 told the court so far and asked him what happened next. P40 said his brother was called from the cell and beaten. He was accused of the same thing relating to Kurdish people as P40. P40 added that because he was a juvenile, he was beaten on his head and feet with a cable. His brother was however older and therefore had to endure *Doulab* and was beaten on his feet with a cable. P40 said he was released before his brother. But when his brother was released, one could see signs of electric shocks on his brother's body. According to P40, others were tortured the same way as his brother.

P40 went on to explain that there was one thing he could never forget: When he had to wait downstairs in the hallway right at the beginning of his detention, he saw an old man, around 75-years-old [P40 got emotional]. According to P40, this man was sitting in some kind of solitary cell in the corner. He told the court that he would never forget this scene and was still wondering about the reasons to detain such a man. The man was unable to walk. P40 went on to describe that there were all kinds of psychological and bodily torture the detainees had to endure. It was difficult to use the toilet because the security guards said they would count to ten and if the detainee was not done by then, they would open the door of the toilet and start beating him. The detainees therefore used a corner of their cell as a toilet. They used military blankets to create some kind of toilet. P40 further described that if they wanted to sleep at night, it was very difficult because there were too many people. They had to sleep back-to-back to use all the space.

Because P40 was detained for a long time he got scabies. He also got an acute tonsillitis. There was a doctor for the Branch whom P40 told that he needed medicine. The doctor told P40 to eat salt instead. P40 said this person was a doctor but he behaved like a security officer. P40 got salt every time the food was distributed. However, the salt caused his throat to bleed.

Kerber wanted to know how often the detainees got food. P40 said they got food twice a day consisting of one piece of bread, sometimes eggs and tomatoes, and sometimes only an egg.

Kerber asked if it was enough food. P40 said it was of course not enough. He added that the detainees were beaten, and the detention conditions were very difficult. According to P40, the detainees were exhausted due to the torture, and the guards insulted their families using words that P40 was ashamed to repeat in court.

Kerber asked him to just mention one term as an example so the court could understand how bad the insults were. P40 said the easiest and most common term was son of a bitch.

Kerber said that would be sufficient and explained to P40 that she wanted to know how long he was detained, how he was released, and where he was detained in the first place. P40 explained that he did not know where he was, he only found out after he was released. He added that it happened around twelve years ago at the end of 2010, so he could not remember how long exactly he was detained. However, he guessed it was more than one month.

P40 described how, before he was released, he was again taken to the office of the investigating officer together with other detainees. The officer gave them a lecture about loyalty towards the state. The officer also told them that their arrest was a mistake, but they would only serve the security of the state. They therefore had to arrest good and evil people to filter them. P40 said he and the other detainees could only thank the officer (it was their duty to thank him). They were then taken to another room where there were clothes.

The clothes were used and P40 assumed they belonged to previous detainees. He and the others were allowed to dress with these clothes as they were about to be released. P40 said he and the other detainees started counting the clothes and decided to only wear undershirts, so the other clothes could be used by the people still in detention. P40 added that they were naïve, because the clothes were never given to other detainees and only to be used by people who were released.

P40 said when he was released from the Branch, he realized he was on Baghdad Street close to the Red Crescent hospital. When P40's brother was released a couple months later, one could see signs of torture on his body. P40 explained that he himself had to endure relatively little torture, probably due to his young age. He described how he was tortured: lying on his stomach, hands tied behind his back, and beaten on his legs and feet. P40 said he was also hit with fists.

Kerber asked whether P40 knew the number of the Branch that was close to Baghdad Street and the Red Crescent hospital as he just described. P40 said he did not know the number, but learned later that it was Branch 251.

Kerber asked if it was possible that P40 spoke about the number of the Branch while he was still detained or might have seen a sign with the number on it. P40 remembered that there was a cupboard with a piece of paper, an announcement on it. The paper said it was Branch 251. P40 said he learned after his release that the person in charge of the Branch was Hafez Makhlouf, a cousin of Bashar Al-Assad.

Kerber asked P40 whether he needed a break and told him to let the court know if he needed one.

Judge Wiedner's Questioning

Judge Wiedner recalled P40 saying he was detained for more than one month. According to Wiedner, P40 told the police he was detained for around 45 days. P40 affirmed.

Wiedner asked if P40 was released in 2011. P40 said he was arrested at the end of 2010 and released in early 2011. He added that when he was released, the revolution in Egypt started.

Wiedner recalled that P40 said he was interrogated by Anwar Raslan but did not know the name of this person at the time. Wiedner asked P40 how he knew the name by now and how he identified Raslan. P40 said the police showed him pictures and he recognized Raslan in one of them.

Wiedner asked P40 to describe how the identification procedure with the police happened, how and why P40 recognized a person from the pictures. P40 said he could only remember one person.

Wiedner said that according to the police transcript, P40 said he thought he knew the person in the first picture and mentioned some features of this person. P40 said he cannot remember the number of the person he recognized but he did recognize one of them. He recalled telling the police that the birthmark was not there in 2010 or at least that he could not remember it. P40 said he could remember other features.

Wiedner recalled P40 telling the police that he thinks he recognized the person in the first picture and added that he was however not sure since the person who interrogated him at Branch 251 had thicker hair, no beard, and a smaller birthmark. P40 confirmed, adding that he told the police that the birthmark was not as present back then as it would be now.

Judge Kerber intervened, asking whether there was a birthmark [for the person who interrogated him at the Branch]. P40 said to be honest, he cannot remember as it happened a long time ago.

Kerber said the court would now visually inspect pictures from the selection of pictures that the police showed P40. When the first picture was shown, P40 said he remembers this person. Kerber asked him if this was the person who interrogated him at the Branch. P40 affirmed

When the second picture was shown [The court monitor noted that this was a picture of the defendant] P40 said he remembers telling the police that the person in this picture had less hair and a different birthmark than the person who interrogated him.

Kerber asked if the person in picture 2 was the one who interrogated him in 2010. P40 said the person in the first picture looked more like the one who interrogated him. P40 did not recognize anyone from the following pictures.

Judge Wiedner told P40 to take a look around and asked him whether he could identify anyone in the court room as the officer who interrogated him. P40 said if he recognized someone, it would be Anwar Raslan [pointing at Raslan].

Wiedner asked when and where P40 saw a picture of Anwar Raslan on the media. P40 explained that one month after his police interview, he read on the internet that two people were arrested. He read that there would be a trial dealing with crimes against humanity committed by the Syrian regime. P40 added that he did not see a picture [of Anwar Raslan] before that.

Wiedner said he did not fully understand whether the person who interrogated P40 had a birthmark or not. P40 said he could barely remember. However, he recognized general features in the picture, so he told the police that he did not remember whether there was a birthmark or not.

Wiedner wanted to know how the interrogation officer was dressed. P40 was confused whether Wiedner meant the officer at Branch 251 or someone else. Wiedner explained he meant the officer at Branch 251 whom P40 identified, asking if he wore a uniform, casual clothes or a suit. P40 said he was wearing a suit without the jacket, but shirt, tie, trousers, and glasses.

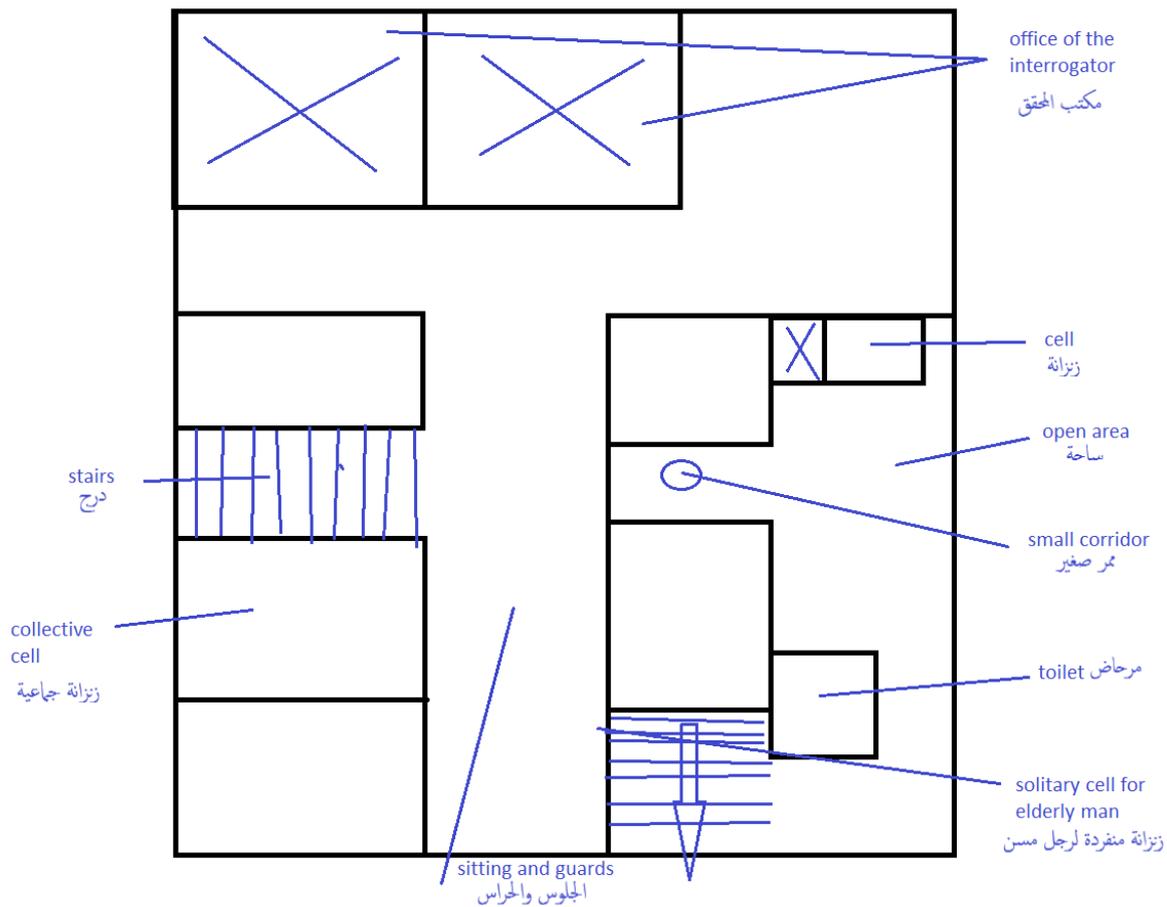
Wiedner asked how many times P40 was interrogated in total. P40 said he could not remember the exact number but he was interrogated more than seven or eight times.

Wiedner wanted to know if he was always interrogated without wearing blindfolds. P40 affirmed.

Wiedner asked if it was always the same person and room for all interrogations. P40 said it was always the same office and most times the same interrogation officer.

Wiedner asked if he understood correctly that the office was in the same area as the cells, or if it was rather further away from the cells. P40 said it was in the basement but at a different hallway. He added that he drew a sketch during his police interview based on what he was able to remember.

[The sketch was shown in court. Below is a recreation of the sketch based on what the trial monitor was able to see and hear in court.]



Wiedner wanted to know what the interrogations were about. P40 said the topic was that he and his brothers are Kurds and allegedly tried to teach people Kurdish language. They were accused of being members of the Kurdish party and his brother was accused of “going to the mountains”, which meant he was accused of joining the PKK. P40 said he was told that the fact that he and his brother did not join the Syrian army was proof of their accusations. P40 explained to the court that his brother did not serve mandatory military service because he was the single earner in the family.

Wiedner asked if P40 was beaten during or after the interrogations. P40 described how he was beaten during interrogations every time the officer did not like P40’s answer and gave a sign to the guard who then hit P40’s neck. P40 said he was kicked and slapped on the back of his head. The interrogation officer then told the security officer to take P40 with him to the hallway. In the hallway, P40 had to lie on his stomach and was beaten on his feet with a four-wire cable. P40 said he himself was tortured by being beaten on his head and feet with the cable. His brother, however, had to endure different, massive torture just like other detainees.

Wiedner wanted to know if the interrogation continued after P40 was beaten on the floor or if he was taken back to the cell. P40 said he was taken back to the cell and it was somebody else’s turn.

Wiedner asked if P40 was mistreated using electric shocks. P40 said he himself did not receive electric shocks, however, one could see signs of electroshocks on his brother’s body.

Wiedner told P40 that if he wanted to, he could describe to the court what happened to his brother. P40 said he could only describe what he saw. Wiedner asked him to do so. P40 said his brother had to endure *Doulab*, beatings with the four-wire cable, electric shocks, and kicks all over his body. One could clearly see the signs on his body.

Wiedner wanted to know if P40 spoke to other detainees in his cell about what happened to them. P40 denied, explaining that they did not have the courage to do so because they were too afraid that there were spies amongst them. When someone returned to the cell, others could clearly see the signs on his body but did not have the courage to ask what happened.

Wiedner recalled P40 mentioning electric shocks and asked how he knew that others were tortured like that. P40 said one could tell from the obvious signs on their bodies. His brother also later told P40 about it. P40 added that his brother was also detained at another branch, as he was transferred to Najha.

Wiedner referred to signs of torture on the bodies of fellow detainees and asked P40 whether he saw severely wounded people. P40 said most had bruises due to the beatings with the cable, his brother had bruises as well.

Wiedner recalled P40 saying he was shocked by the old man and asked him if this man was injured. P40 denied, adding that he imagined that this man had been there for a long time. According to P40, he was wearing a clean pajama and was detained in a solitary cell. The security officers wanted to take him out of his cell, but the man could barely walk. P40 said he was shocked because the man was older than 75 years for sure and P40 did not understand why one would arrest such a person.

Wiedner asked P40 if he remembered the size of his own cell. P40 denied, adding that it was very tight.

Wiedner recalled P40 telling the police that the cell measured 5x5 meters. P40 said he could not remember, but there were twenty to thirty people inside the cell.

Wiedner asked about the furniture in the cell, whether there was something to sleep on. P40 said there were military blankets.

Wiedner asked if every detainee had a blanket. P40 affirmed, adding that the blankets were very rough.

Wiedner further recalled P40 telling the police that his head was shaved at the beginning of his detention. P40 affirmed, explaining that everyone had to shave their heads to prevent scabies, although they still got scabies. He remembered that one time, their entire cell was sterilized.

Wiedner asked if P40 was allowed to go outside and see the sun. P40 said one could see the sun from the hallway.

Wiedner recalled P40 telling the police that the detainees were once taken outside to see the sun. P40 clarified that they were not taken outside the building but to the hallway where there was a light shaft. One could see the sun through this shaft which was in the hallway between cells and toilet.

Wiedner concluded that the basement was in the underground. P40 affirmed.

Wiedner said P40 provided detailed descriptions to the police regarding the conditions of his fellow detainees, and asked P40 if he remembered. P40 said others were tortured differently and more massively because they were older than P40. He said others were beaten with the cable all over their bodies, while he was only beaten on his feet. Others also had to endure *Doulab*.

Wiedner asked if P40 saw other methods of torture, recognized signs of these methods or was told about it. P40 said he was not told about it, only by his brother after he was released. Others did not tell P40 about it, but he could see the signs.

Wiedner recalled that when P40 was asked by the police about the condition of other detainees, he described that they were tortured with electric shocks and their skin was ripped off with tongs. He asked P40 whether that would be correct. P40 said there must be a translation error as he told the police that people were pinched with tongs but not that their skin was ripped off.

Wiedner wanted to know how P40 knew about that. P40 said his brother told him.

Wiedner recalled P40 further telling the police that people were hanged from their feet, locked in a cupboard, and screamed. He further mentioned that one could hear screams and see blood and open wounds on other detainees. P40 told the court that the police asked him about *Shabh*, but he told them that he did not see that, although it might have been applied with other detainees. P40 said he also told the police that the methods of torture were less severe in 2010 compared to 2011. After the revolution started in Syria, torture got massive.

Wiedner asked P40 how he knew that. P40 said he knew from other detainees who were released later.

Wiedner again cited from the police transcript according to which P40 told the police that one could still see the signs of electric shocks on his brother's stomach until that very day. Another person also told P40 how he received electric shocks on his way to the interrogation. P40 told the court that he could not remember the situation with the guard [person receiving electric shocks on the way to the interrogation] but it would be true that one could still see the signs on his brother's body.

Wiedner asked P40 whether he lost weight during the detention. P40 affirmed.

Wiedner wanted to know if P40's relatives knew about his whereabouts. P40 denied, saying they did certainly not know. He explained that they were also unable to find out. P40 added that the police also wanted to know if he went to see a doctor after his release. He then explained that a person who got out of a branch does not have the courage to go anywhere. P40 added that Syrian society believed that people who were arrested by the intelligence services committed a crime. This would be the mentality of the Ba'ath party and their justification for arresting a lot of people.

Wiedner asked why P40 was arrested or what he was suspected of. P40 said the only reason would be that this state [Syria] is an arbitrary state, a security state [state run by security forces]. When the revolution in Syria started, the regime started to spoil it in several cities across the country.

Wiedner recalled P40 telling the police that in Syria, people would be writing reports about other people. Someone allegedly wrote a report about P40's brother teaching Kurdish language. P40 told the court that spies for the regime would be called "Fasfaseh" فسفسة [bug] in Syria. According to P40, the accusations against him and his brother came from these people. Another reason for their arrest was that his brother refused military service, so he was accused of having joined the PKK. P40 said that to be honest, the reason for that was the bad economic situation of his family, which was also the reason they moved to Damascus.

Kerber asked P40 whether he needed a break. P40 denied. One of the interpreters requested a break.

[15-minute break]

Prosecutors' Questioning

Prosecutor Klinge said the prosecutors had only a few questions. The first would relate to the fact that P40 was one of the few witnesses who was detained at Branch 251 before the revolution started in 2011. Nonetheless, P40 called his arrest unlawful. Klinge wanted to know if P40 ever saw a lawyer or anyone like that. P40 denied, explaining that would never happen in Syria. Not even the police would enter the cells.

Klinge asked if there was an arrest warrant against P40 or if he was informed about the reasons for his arrest. P40 denied, saying it was arbitrary.

Klinge wanted to know if P40 ever saw a judge. P40 denied, adding he did not even see a judge upon his release.

Klinge asked if P40 heard screams in his cell. P40 affirmed.

Klinge wanted to know if this was the case every day, always or from time to time. P40 said it was mainly during the day.

Klinge wanted to know how many times it was the case. P40 said every few hours.

Klinge asked how long the interrogations and mistreatment usually lasted. P40 said he does not know exactly, sometimes around ten minutes. For him it was usually five minutes.

Klinge wanted to know if P40 saw women at the Branch. P40 denied.

Klinge asked if P40 was a victim of sexual violence or knows others who had to endure sexual violence. P40 denied.

Defense's Questioning

Defense counsel Fratzky wanted to know if the person who interrogated P40 spoke some dialect. P40 said he spoke Arabic, his dialect was similar to the Damascene dialect.

Plaintiff Counsel's Questioning

Plaintiff counsel Scharmer said that he saw how P40 was waiting at the witness stand alone before the session when Raslan was there as well. He asked P40 if Raslan said anything to him. P40 denied.

Plaintiff counsel Kroker recalled P40 saying that his family had no information about his whereabouts and that P40 mentioned a saying in this regard to the police. Kroker asked P40 whether he remembers this saying or if Kroker should read it to him from the police transcript. P40 asked Kroker to read it out.



Kroker said P40 told the police that “The one who is arrested is lost. The one who is released is newborn.” P40 told the court that this would be a common saying in Syria regarding the intelligence services. People say that whoever gets there [detention facilities] is lost, whoever gets released is newborn. It means that when you get released it would be like you were gifted a new life.

[Anwar Raslan handed a piece of paper to his translator who passed it on to defense counsel Fratzky.] Kerber asked if there would be any more questions. Defense counsel Fratzky denied.

P40 was dismissed as a witness. Judge Kerber thanked P40 and told him he was free to leave or stay in the court room. P40 said he would like to make a personal statement to the court. Kerber asked him to roughly tell her what it was about, so she could decide whether to grant his request or not.

P40 said he wanted to thank the court to also sentence Salafists and radical forces, particularly because the Kurdish population in Syria is suffering a lot due to them. He thanked the court.

Kerber thanked P40 and went on to explain that the court received the transcript of an interview of a person who requested to join the proceedings as plaintiff. Copies of the transcript were handed to the parties. Kerber said the person was permitted to join as plaintiff. She added that attorney Bahns requested to be admitted as plaintiff counsel for this person and none of the parties made any statements in this regard. Kerber went on to tell the parties that the office of the federal prosecutor general received an analysis regarding military hospitals in Syria which would now also be on the case file.

The Proceedings were adjourned at 11:27 AM.

Day 83 of Trial – July 15, 2021

The hearing began at 10:00AM [due to delays because of heavy rains] with four spectators and three members of the press in the audience. One non-accredited journalist was granted access to the Arabic interpretation [the same as the day before]. The prosecution was represented by prosecutors Ritscher and Klinge. Plaintiff counsel Dr. Oehmichen was not present. Attorney Ziorovski appeared as substitute for Raslan’s defense counsel Böcker.

Testimony of P41

P41, a 43-year-old Syrian currently living in [information redacted] was accompanied by his plaintiff counsel Mohammed and informed about his rights and duties as a witness. P41 denied being related to the defendant by blood or marriage.

Judge Kerber’s Questioning

Presiding Judge Kerber recalled that P41 had already been interviewed by the German police, however, he had to repeat all that in court for the public and all parties to the trial. She asked him to give the court an overview of how he came into conflict with the regime, if and how he was arrested. P40 explained that the security situation in Syria had been precarious for forty years. According to P41, it all started with Hafez Al-Assad and the Syrian society would be suppressed for forty years. P41 said the actual actor in Syria would be the *Mukhabarat* [security forces].

Although not every member of the *Mukhabarat* would be an officer, they would be free to do whatever they want, said P41. They conduct arbitrary arrests as part of the state of emergency and everyone who was arrested by the intelligence services is considered to be lost. Even the fates of the people who were arrested at the massacre would still be unknown, according to P41. He went on to explain how with the beginning of the Arab Spring, society started to stand up against Bashar Al-Assad. They were demanding reforms, social justice, equal rights, and restraints to the security apparatus. The reaction of the regime [to these demands] was excessive violence. According to P41, the security apparatus was instrumentalized for that [reaction]. They quelled demonstrations and arrested people for the first one and a half years after the start of the revolution. After that, there were liberated areas at first. These areas were under control of the opposition and the security forces had less competencies there. P41 said that the actual activities of the intelligence services during the first one and a half years [after the start of the revolution] were solely related to demonstrations.

He told the court that the regions in Syria were allocated amongst the intelligence services. Al-Khatib Branch was in charge of Ghouta and the surrounding area. P41 recalled that when he was protesting in Harasta, [members of] Al-Khatib Branch were patrolling and arresting people. P41 said he was arrested on a Friday in [information redacted] 2011, and taken to Al-Khatib in Damascus. That was where the phase of interrogations, investigations, and torture by the employees led by Colonel Anwar Raslan started. P41 said he was still suffering from the consequences of that until this very day. He was still receiving psychological and neurological care in [information redacted].

Judge Kerber asked P41 to be more precise and explain how he was arrested, where he was taken, how he was taken there, and how he was treated during detention. She added that he could tell the court any time he needed a break. P41 said he was on the street in front of [information redacted] mosque in [information redacted], 2011. They were demanding to change the regime, a coup. P41 explained that four months after the start of the revolution, there was massive violence and killings, so people changed their demands.

Kerber asked how the demonstrations were and where P41 was arrested. P41 said at the beginning [of the revolution] he participated in many demonstrations in Harasta. A group of young folks went to the streets, shouting slogans. At the beginning it was all about freedom and social justice. Later, they demanded the release of their friends. Due to the excessive reaction of the regime, they later demanded the downfall of the regime. According to P41, all demonstrations were peaceful, it was just people gathering on the streets.

Kerber asked P41 to describe precisely how the demonstration where he was arrested took place and how he was arrested. P41 described that on [information redacted], 2011, around fifty people started walking from the [information redacted] mosque. They were shouting slogans demanding the downfall of the regime. P41 carried a camera and filmed and photographed what was happening to post it on YouTube in order to show the world the truth. Then security forces started sieging the area and they had to leave the area and the demonstration. P41 tried to get home with the help of some friends. When they were close to [information redacted] mosque a security patrol suddenly appeared. P41 and his friends had to stop and were arrested. They were beaten with the butts of rifles, kicked, and pushed into a car. There they had to wait for a couple hours until the security forces arrested other people as well. They were then taken to Al-Bairouni hospital in Harasta which was used by the regime as a focal point for arrests. Once security forces gathered there, everyone was taken to Al-Khatib.



P41 recalled that when they arrived at Al-Khatib Branch, their hands were tied behind their backs using cable strips and their vests were pulled over their heads. They were taken off the bus and to a door leading to the basement. There they had to kneel and one detainee after the other was taken to the basement. P41 said while they were taken inside, they were insulted and beaten. They were all called traitors and spies. When they were inside, they had to hand over all their belongings, including clothes and money. P41 further described that they had to get undressed to their shorts, were frisked, and got their clothes back afterwards. The detainees were then allocated to different cells. P41 was taken to cell [information redacted] where he had to stay for four days. He was interrogated during that time but did not confess anything as he did not do anything, as P41 told the court. P41 told the interrogators that he was at the mosque and when he left, he was arrested just like that, but did not do anything. P41 explained that although thanks to spies, they [interrogators] knew that he was filming protests and demonstrating, they did not know his name. After four days he was transferred to the general administration of the intelligence services in Kafar Souseh.

The procedure there was similar to what happened at Al-Khatib: he was frisked and had to hand over his belongings. P41 said he had to stay at Kafar Souseh for six days. He was interrogated and beaten several times during this time. Nevertheless, P41 stuck to his initial story. P41 further told the court that during his time in Kafar Souseh, Al-Khatib Branch obtained a picture of him from which they knew that he was the person they were looking for. He was therefore re-transferred to Al-Khatib where the second phase of interrogations began. P41 recalled that his name was called at night when he was in his cell in Kafar Souseh. He said goodbye to his friends there as they all assumed that he would be released. P41 was then taken to a room where all his personal items were. His hands were tied again, and he was blindfolded. He was taken to a jeep and to Al-Khatib Branch.

When he arrived at Al-Khatib Branch, he had to endure the same procedures as before. He was again taken to the same cell, [information redacted]. After around one hour, he was called for interrogation. When the guard took him, he was blindfolded and taken to the interrogation officer. This person asked P41 several questions. P41 was asked for his name, he told it. He was asked whether he was married, P41 affirmed and said he had children. He was then asked about the name of his son and told that he would be Abu Hassan, the person they had been looking for. P41 recalled that he mentioned another name that his friends used for him, they called him Mimati. The interrogation officer then asked P41 whether he should call him Abu Hassan or Mimati. P41 said that this was the moment he realized they knew a lot about him. He first denied. The guard then got the order to take P41 to solitary cell [information redacted].

One hour later, P41 was interrogated again. The interrogation officer told P41 to take off his blindfolds and introduced himself as Lieutenant Colonel Abdelmon'em An-Na'saan. P41 realized that another person was sitting on the floor. P41 was asked whether he knew that person. He affirmed, saying he was his friend. P41 told the court that this person would currently live in [information redacted]. P41 said he was then confronted with this person, the fact that he was his friend, and information about P41. The guard was then ordered to take the other person back to the cell. The interrogation officer then said that since P41 would be an educated person, they should try to treat each other in a respectful manner. P41 was told they knew everything about him, nevertheless, he should tell everything himself: what he did against the Syrian state, who his friends and partners were with whom he conducted his acts against the state. He was given a pen and sheets of paper and told to go back to the cell and write everything down: starting with his birth until that very day.



The guard was told to take P41 to cell [information redacted] [solitary cell] where P42 started to write everything down starting with his birth, school education, beginning of demonstrations, and his participation in peaceful demonstrations. He then knocked on the door and told the guard he would be ready. The guard then took him to the interrogation room “the usual way”, P41 was blindfolded.

When he arrived at the interrogation room, P41 was told to take off the blindfolds. P41 saw a desk opposite the door. That was where Colonel Raslan was. Lieutenant Colonel Abdelmon'em An-Na'saan sat left of Raslan. He took the sheets of paper and started to read. P41 told the court that he was given seven empty sheets, however, he only used the first half page. The Lieutenant Colonel then passed the sheets to Colonel Anwar Raslan. Raslan also read it and threw the paper in P41's face. Raslan told the Lieutenant Colonel “I told you he would not understand!” P41 told the court that he could not blame the Lieutenant Colonel, as the two were playing a “good cop – bad cop” game. After Raslan threw the paper, he said “take him and teach him in a way he understands. Once he is ready cooked, bring him back.” P41 explained that this was an order to torture him. He was taken back to the solitary cell and first abused with sleep deprivation and not being allowed to sit down for three days. P41 said every time he fell down due to tiredness, the guard came in, beat him, and put him back on his feet. P41 asked the court for a break.

[10-minute break]

Judge Kerber asked P41 what happened during his first detention after he met Raslan. P41 said after he was taken back to the solitary cell where he was not allowed to sleep and sit for three days, he was done with his nerves. The guards again took him for interrogation. The interrogation officer was Lieutenant Colonel An-Na'saan who asked P41 who his friends were with whom he conspired. P41 told the court he only answered so far as to not get himself into trouble. He only mentioned names that were already known or from people where they only had pictures. P41 explained that he knew most people via skype where they used imaginary names.

Kerber wanted to know what P41's interrogations were like. P41 explained he had to kneel on the floor. The interrogation officer was sitting on the sofa next to him, smoking and asking questions. If he did not like one of P41's answers, he kicked him. The guard who was standing behind P41 beat him with a belt every time P41 answered too slowly. P41 further explained that he was interrogated daily for around one or two hours for four days in a row. He said he could tell from the questions what the [people at the Branch] knew and what they did not know. Based on that, he provided them only information that they already knew: that he filmed demonstrations and posted the videos on YouTube, Facebook and Al-Arabiya. The main accusations against him were: damaging the reputation of the state, contacts with the opposition, and distribution of fake news to foreign media. P41 said he only confirmed things they already knew.

Kerber asked if it was correct that P41 was interrogated for four days. P41 confirmed.

Kerber asked P41 to describe what happened next. P41 explained he was then confronted with the fact that the employees of the Branch wanted to storm the place where he and his friends slept. P41 told the court that he and his friend agreed to change their location in case one of them gets arrested. In the morning, P41 was put in a car with his eyes blindfolded. He was taken to the Lieutenant Colonel who told him that P41 would go to Harasta together with the employees of the Branch.



Kerber asked about the Lieutenant Colonel's name. P41 said it was Abdelmon'em An-Na'saan, the deputy head of the Branch who was in charge of interrogations. P41 added that tasks were split between the people working at the Branch and An-Na'saan was in charge of interrogations.

Kerber wanted to know what happened next after this person told P41 to go to the place where his friends slept. P41 said he was taken to a car and another car was driving behind them with a machine gun built on top. He was taken out of his cell without being blindfolded, only his hands were tied behind his back. He was taken through the door of the basement like that. The patrol then drove to Harasta and when they arrived, P41 was told to show them the way. When they arrived at the building, P41 was told to stay in the car. He told them the number of the floor and the flat. P41 told the court that they [employees of the Branch] went inside and came back after thirty to forty minutes. He was then taken back to the Branch. P41 added that after he was released, he found out that they smashed the door.

Kerber concluded that P41 was still in detention and asked him to continue. P41 said that when he was back at the Branch, he met Lieutenant Colonel An-Na'saan who told him that there was no one in the flat and asked P41 where these people would be now. P41 said he told him that his friends were there before he was arrested but he did not know what happened after that, since he was in detention ever since. P41 was taken to a different solitary cell, [information redacted] where he had to stay for 25 days.

P41 described that he was allowed to use the toilet twice a day; in the morning and in the evening. His cell was very small, around 1.6x0.8 meters without a toilet inside. The food was given to him through a gap under the door. He received two meals per day which usually consisted of eggs, bulgur, and flatbread. He was interrogated again after 25 days.

P41 said the interrogator told him that from their current knowledge, they knew that P41 was in charge of media issues and in possession of a recording device. P41 was told to hand the device in to be released. P41 told the court he knew they had no evidence against him but if he would have given them his camera, they would have been in possession of evidence. P41 further told the court that this device was in his car which he parked close to the mosque. But since he was arrested, no one knew where the device was. He wanted to let his friends know where the device would be so they could use it. P41 therefore tricked the Lieutenant Colonel and told him he would provide information about his devices. P41 requested to see the mayor of Harasta to talk to him. The following day, P41 was again taken to the Lieutenant Colonel. He told P41 that he would be taken to the office of the head of the Branch where the mayor would be waiting as well. Indeed the mayor, [name redacted], was there. He greeted P41 and asked about his well-being. P41 told the mayor he could find the keys to his car at one of P41's friends who also knew where the car was because they were together when P41 was arrested. P41 further told the mayor to hand the device to P41's father who would then give it to the Branch. P41 recalled that after a while he learned from the Lieutenant Colonel that P41's friends failed him and P41's device would be more important to them than P41's life. P41 said he was again interrogated a couple days later. The interrogation officer was very angry and told P41 he had a phone call with a leading figure in Harasta (P41 told the court this person sadly passed away). The interrogation officer said he learned from that call that Abu Hassan told his friends where his device was and they would now be in possession of the device. P41 said the head of the Branch was very angry because P41 used them and played games with them [people at the Branch]. He ordered beatings.

Kerber asked if the conversation with the mayor of Harasta took place in the office of the head of the Branch. P41 affirmed.

Kerber wanted to know who else was present during this conversation. P41 said there was no one else. When he was taken to the room, the Lieutenant Colonel accompanied him.

Kerber asked if the head of the Branch was angry because of the recording device. P41 said this was what Lieutenant Colonel An-Na'saan told P41.

Kerber wanted to know who the head of the Branch was. P41 said it was Colonel Anwar Raslan and his deputy was the Lieutenant Colonel Abdelmon'em An-Na'saan.

Kerber asked if P41 personally saw Raslan and saw he was angry. P41 denied.

Kerber asked who ordered the beatings. P41 said Raslan ordered it the first time.

Kerber wanted to know who ordered the beatings in the situation regarding the recording device. P41 said it was Lieutenant Colonel An-Na'saan.

Kerber asked P41 to continue. P41 said he was beaten until he fell unconscious. A doctor came and a pill was put under P41's tongue to cure his heart issues. The doctor recommended that P41 take the pill every day but the people at Al-Khatib did not follow the recommendation. P41 recalled that when he was transferred to the general administration in Kafar Souseh, he received the pill every day.

Kerber quickly recapped that after the situation regarding P41's recording devices, he had heart issues, received a pill, was transferred to Kafar Souseh. She asked P41 what happened after he got the medicine. P41 said after that another person was taken to his solitary cell in Al-Khatib, together with him.

Kerber asked if P41 was talking about the 1.6x08. meter big solitary cell [information redacted]. P41 confirmed, saying that an injured person from [information redacted] was taken to his cell. This person slept on the floor, lying on his back. P41 therefore had to stand for hours. He recalled that this other person fell unconscious and every time he woke up, he was asking P41 who he was and who P41 was. This person relieved himself in his clothes. P41 therefore had to clean up. They stayed together in the solitary cell for a long time, around 87 days, until P41 was told there would be a trial in Kafar Souseh.

Kerber wanted to know if P41 had to stay in Kafar Souseh for a long time or was released immediately. P41 said he stayed there for a long time, he was only released thanks to the Arab League on January [information redacted], 2012.

Kerber asked if it would be correct that this date was shortly before P41's second arrest. P41 confirmed, saying he was arrested at home 25 days after his release. He recalled that someone knocked on the door in the morning and people from Al-Khatib Branch started searching the flat. P41's brother-in-law stayed with him that night. He was only 24 or 25-years-old when they were arrested together.

P41 said the arrest followed the same procedure as the first: Their hands were tied, and they were blindfolded. When they arrived at the Branch it was the same procedure again: they had to hand in all their personal items and undress. P41 said he was separated from his brother-in-law at the Branch. P41 was taken to a group cell, [information redacted], where he stayed for fifteen days before he was taken for interrogation. When P41 entered the interrogation room, Lieutenant Colonel An-Na'saan was there as well.

P41 explained to the court that although he was blindfolded, he recognized the Lieutenant Colonel's voice. He asked P41 "[P41's name], what's the matter? You're here with us again." P41 replied that he was only there because he was taken there and added that the entire country would be in the hands of Assad's gangs. P41 told the court that he was unable to walk. The Lieutenant Colonel told him they knew everything about him but had some questions regarding people who visited P41. These people were wanted and they [intelligence services] wanted to know more about P41's relation to them. P41 replied that these people only visited him to ask about his well-being and congratulate him on his release. P41 recalled that he was then told he would be released but should report everything to the Branch in the future, otherwise he would be taken there. When P41 was taken back to the cell, he asked if he had to stay there for long, the Lieutenant Colonel denied. P41 told the court that he had to stay at Al-Khatib for three more days before he was transferred to Kafar Souseh where he stayed for ten days until he was released.

Kerber said her last question would be how many times P41 met Anwar Raslan. P41 said he met him once.

Kerber asked P41 whether he needed a break or if the court could continue with questions. P41 said it would be alright for him to continue.

Judge Wiedner's Questioning

Judge Wiedner said he wanted to clarify a few things regarding location and dates. He asked P41 if it was correct that he was arrested for the first time on [information redacted], 2011. P41 confirmed.

Wiedner asked whether it was correct that P41 was then released mid-January 2012, on January, [information redacted] 2012. P41 confirmed.

Wiedner wanted to know more about the chronology of P41's first detention: when he was at Al-Khatib, when at Kafar Souseh, when he was back at Al-Khatib, and how many times he was at Al-Khatib respectively Kafar Souseh. P41 explained that at his first detention he was at Al-Khatib for four days before he was transferred to Kafar Souseh where he had to stay for six days. After that, he was transferred back to Al-Khatib where he stayed until he was again transferred to Kafar Souseh. P41 said he could not remember the exact date when he was again transferred to Kafar Souseh, but he estimated that he stayed at Al-Khatib around 100 days before he was transferred. At Kafar Souseh, he stayed fifteen days before he was released due to an initiative.

Wiedner asked if the time P41 was taken back to Al-Khatib he had to stay there for fourteen days or longer. P41 said he was there from early February until May.

Wiener summarized that during his first detention, P41 stayed four days at Al-Khatib, six days at Kafar Souseh and then asked how long P41 stayed at Al-Khatib after he was taken back there from Kafar Souseh. P41 said he was at Al-Khatib for four days, then six days at Kafar Souseh, and after that...[P41 took some time to think] he stayed at Al-Khatib from November/December on for around two months and ten days.

Wiedner wanted to know how P41 knew he was at Al-Khatib at his first detention. P41 said he could tell from the streets leading to the Branch. P41 explained that he knew the area and that it was common knowledge that everyone who gets arrested would be taken to Al-Khatib. P41 added that he was only certain after his release.

Wiedner recalled P41 telling the police that he learned from other detainees that he was at Al-Khatib. P41 affirmed, adding that he knew from the beginning but was only sure after his release when he met with the mayor.

Wiedner asked when P41 met Lieutenant Colonel An-Na'saan for the first time: during P41's first four days at Al-Khatib or after he returned from Kafar Souseh. P41 said it was after Kafar Souseh.

Wiedner asked how P41 knew the name and rank of this person. P41 said the person told him.

Wiedner asked P41 to describe his first meeting with this person: how he acted and what he wanted to know from P41. P41 said the person asked him about his personal information to make sure P41 was the person they were looking for. At their second meeting, he confirmed that information and confronted P41.

Wiedner mentioned the term 'offer to collaborate', adding that in case P41 could not remember, he could read out what P41 previously told the police in that regard. P41 told the court he could remember. He recalled being offered to collaborate with the Branch. They tried to win him over and get information from him.

Wiedner recalled P41 telling the police that at their first meeting, the Lieutenant Colonel introduced himself and told P41 that since he would be smart and not violent, he should cooperate. P41 explained that the translation [in the police transcript] was slightly wrong there. He was rather offered to provide information without torture. He was offered to provide information without being mistreated.

Wiedner asked if the following meeting was with Raslan. P41 said the third meeting was with Raslan. The second meeting was with An-Na'saan.

Wiedner summarized there was a first meeting, then a second during which P41 was confronted, and a third together with Raslan. P41 confirmed.

Wiedner asked how P41 could be certain that it was Anwar Raslan. P41 explained that Lieutenant Colonel An-Na'saan introduced Raslan with his name and rank. He told P41 to provide him the information he wrote down and give him the sheets of paper.

Wiedner asked if there was a sign with Raslan's name on it. P41 affirmed, adding that he could not read what was written on it. There was a sign with a name on it and a pencil cup, however, P41 was not able to decode what the sign said.

Wiedner asked P41 to take a look around and tell him whether he recognized Anwar Raslan in the room or someone who looked like that person back then. P41 said he recognized someone. Wiedner asked whom he recognized. P41 pointed at Anwar Raslan.

Wiedner went on to ask if the interrogation room was on the same floor as the cells or if there were stairs in between. P41 said it was the same floor.

Wiedner asked P41 to describe the furniture. P41 recalled that there was a door and a desk opposite of the door. Left of the desk was a sofa and a table. He said that was all he could remember, and that there was a picture of the president on the wall.

Wiedner wanted to know where Raslan was in that room. P41 said he [Raslan] was behind the desk. Left of him was Lieutenant Colonel An-Na'saan.

Wiedner asked if there was another person in the room as well. P41 said there was a guard. Wiedner asked where that guard was. P41 said he was behind him.

Wiedner further wanted to know where P41 was in the room and how his position was. P41 said he was one meter from the door.

Wiedner asked if there was a particular guard. P41 said it was Abu Ghadab.

Wiedner recalled P41 describing a situation where sheets of paper were thrown at him, and an order was issued. He asked P41 to describe this reaction that happened before he left the room. P41 said this reaction was due to the fact he did not write down the information they wanted from him. He wrote everything from his birth to the start of the revolution but only two sentences on the revolution. That was what triggered this reaction.

Wiedner wanted to know if both people that were present in the room reacted when P41 gave them the papers. P41 explained that the Lieutenant Colonel took the papers first, read them, and then handed them to Colonel Anwar Raslan, addressing him as "Sidi". Raslan took the papers, read them, and threw them at P41. P41 said Raslan was angry and told An-Na'saan "he doesn't understand words. Teach him in a way he understands."

Wiedner asked if there was a concrete order for torture. P41 denied.

Wiedner recalled P41 telling the police that Raslan turned to An-Na'saan, saying "it looks like he did not understand that language." He then ordered deprivation of sleep until P41 would be "well cooked and ready to eat." P41 affirmed, adding that this was coming from An-Na'saan. The guard then took P41 with him.

Wiedner wanted to know what Raslan said, if he gave any orders. P41 said Raslan gave orders, he said that P41 should only get back once he is well cooked and ready to eat. All other orders came from An-Na'saan. According to P41, he was the one who ordered the deprivation of sleep.

Wiedner asked if P41 could tell from the interactions between An-Na'saan and Raslan whether they had the same rank or sub-ordination. P41 said Raslan gave orders to An-Na'saan. The latter addressed Raslan as "Sidi" while Raslan addressed An-Na'saan by his name.

Wiedner wanted to know how Raslan was dressed. P41 could not remember.

Wiedner asked how P41 was dressed. P41 said he was wearing a suit and tie when he was arrested. After his arrest when he was beaten, his clothes were ripped, and he arrived at the Branch solely wearing a shirt and shorts. One of the detainees in the group cell was wearing long underwear that he gave to P41. P41 recalled that when the mayor saw him dressed like that in the middle of winter, he requested that P41's family could bring him clothes. However, P41 never got these clothes.

Wiedner asked if P41 consequently wore long trousers, and his body was naked during the interrogation. P41 said he also wore a vest.

Wiedner recalled telling the police regarding Raslan's clothes that he was wearing civilian clothes: jeans and a shirt. P41 further told the police that everyone at the Branch was wearing civilian clothes, even the guards in front of the door. P41 affirmed in court that everyone was dressed in civilian clothes. He could not exactly remember what they wore but added that all members of security branches were always wearing civilian clothes.

Wiedner asked if P41 noticed a particular dialect or language that Raslan spoke. P41 denied, explaining he could not tell from his dialect where he came from. He added that Raslan did not say much.

Wiedner asked if Raslan said anything else to P41, maybe insulted him. P41 said he could not remember.

Wiedner recalled that when P41 was asked by the police if Raslan insulted him, he affirmed, explaining that Raslan said 'you fucker, what about these demonstrations, don't you have a good life?' P41 clarified in court that Raslan did not say that. Raslan did not interrogate P41. These words rather came from Lieutenant Colonel An-Na'saan, not Raslan. According to P41, he only met Raslan once.

Wiedner wanted to know if P41 heard screams in the interrogation room. P41 affirmed, saying of course he heard screams. One could hear voices and screams of torture. One could hear them especially in cell [information redacted] which was opposite of the interrogation room. P41 concluded that detainees were taken there on purpose to torture them psychologically.

Wiedner asked P41 if he also heard screams during the interrogation with An-Na'saan and Raslan. P41 said that might have been the case. One could also hear people in the hallway who were called rats.

Wiedner recalled that P41 was taken out of the interrogation room and not allowed to sleep for three days after that. He asked P41 what else he had to endure, if he was beaten with a cable. P41 said he was beaten with a belt and his hands were tied. He said he had to endure that until he got difficulties with his nerves.

Wiedner recalled P41 telling the police that he had to lie on his stomach with his arms tied behind his back and his feet in the air. He was asked questions and whipped by Abu Ghadab. P41 confirmed.

Wiedner asked if it was correct that P41's knees started bleeding because they were pushed on the floor while his feet were beaten. P41 affirmed.

Wiedner wanted to know if P41 saw signs of torture on other detainees or if someone told him what they had to endure or if he witnessed others being tortured. P41 affirmed. Wiedner asked what exactly P41 saw or heard. P41 recalled that while he was in the solitary cell [information redacted] a person from [information redacted] was tortured right in front of the cell. His name was [FD1], his brother was [name redacted], a doctor. The latter treated injured people, so his brother was detained to put pressure on him. P41 said he could hear his screams, the ones who tortured him wanted information about his brother and accused his brother of being a terrorist. He kept saying that as a doctor at a hospital, his brother had to treat all patients. P41 said this person died of torture.

Wiedner asked P41 whether he only heard this scene or saw it, or if he heard that from someone else. P41 explained that before he was in the solitary cell, he was in a group cell where he constantly heard people [being tortured] and saw signs of torture on their backs. P41 remembered a person from [information redacted], he was an air-conditioner technician, relatively big and taller than P41. Once he was called for interrogation and when he returned, he was carried by three guards who threw him into the cell. He was covered in blood and unconscious. P41 said the other detainees made space and cleaned his wounds with tissues.

Wiedner asked if there was medical care at the Branch. P41 denied.

Wiedner recalled P41 mentioning screams he heard while he was in the solitary cell. He asked P41 how often and when he heard them. P41 said one could hear them most times. They were sometimes louder, sometime less loud.

Wiedner recalled P41 explaining to the police that he was taken to the solitary cell [information redacted] on purpose because it was right next to the interrogation rooms from where one could constantly hear screams. One could hear the beatings and the screams. There were many people and P41 was constantly afraid to be next. He said he could hear the detainees crying for mercy and the guards replying that there was no god, but them alone. P41 confirmed.

Wiedner wanted to know more about the general condition in the cell; how big it was and how many people were in there. P41 said it was around 4x4 meters or 5x5 meters. There was a sink in the corner and a toilet. However, there was no door to separate the toilet from the rest of the room, just curtains.

Wiedner asked about the hygienic condition and the number of detainees in that cell. P41 said on one occasion they were more than eighty detainees in the cell. Then people from Al-Abadeh were arrested and they were more than 100 people in the cell. No one could sit down, they all had to stand. P41 said that after two or three days some people were taken out of the cell.

Wiedner asked how they managed to sleep. P41 said people had to stand. They sometimes leaned on to each other. Or tried to make space.

Wiedner asked if they got enough food in the group cell. P41 said they got food twice a day; in the morning and at noon. Food usually consisted of flatbread, sometimes potatoes or olives. The second meal was usually four or five bowls of bulgur that they had to distribute among them. Sometimes they got soup.

Wiedner asked if it was enough. P41 denied.

Wiedner wanted to know if the light was switched off at night. P41 explained the light was always the same. One could not tell day from night because it was in the underground. There was a fan in the cell so people could breathe. Behind the fan was a strong light which was never switched of. P41 said they were sometimes able to tell the time when they heard the call for prayers.

Wiedner asked if P41 saw injured people or was told by others in the cell about torture methods. P41 said that due to his work in documenting demonstrations, he saw several corpses from Al-Khatib. He documented all that, some of the material can be found on YouTube. P41 describe some people showed open wounds or fractures.

Wiedner said the court would only be interested in what P41 saw at Al-Khatib, not what he saw after that. P41 said he saw signs from beatings, injured people, and blood. He recalled a person whose feet were bleeding due to beatings, the feet were swollen and blue.

Wiedner asked if P41 remembered something relating to fingernails. P41 denied.

Wiedner recalled P41 telling the police that he saw blood due to ripped off fingernails. P41 said that might have been the case, however, he could not remember in this very moment. He added that every day someone returned from interrogations, he could therefore not remember everything. One person had the corners of his moth ripped because his mouth was splayed during an interrogation.

Wiedner asked if P41 saw dead people or people close to death at the Branch. P41 said he saw people who were close to death, but no dead people.



Wiedner asked P41 to describe the people who were close to death. P41 said there was a detainee who was unable to breathe. The other detainees were knocking on the door and told the guards what was happening. The guards in turn just said there was nothing they could do about it and that it would be OK for them if he would 'croak'. P41 said they told the guards that there were too many people in the cell, so this person had difficulties breathing. According to P41, this person never returned to the cell.

Wiedner asked if that happened during P41's first or second detention. P41 said it was during his first detention.

Judge Kerber said the judges had no more questions for the moment, so there would be a lunch break before others could ask questions.

[75-minute-break]

Presiding Judge Kerber asked P41 if his headache was gone and he felt fit to continue. P41 affirmed.

The prosecutors had no questions for the moment.

Defense's Questioning

Defense counsel Fratzky recalled P41 telling the court that there was a name plate and a pencil cup on the desk. P41 affirmed, adding that he however could not read what was written on the name plate.

Fratzky said that when P41 was shown different pictures during his police interview, he hesitated when he saw picture No.2 before he said that he knew the person in the picture but could not remember a name. According to Fratzky, P41 did not hesitate to mention a name in court. He wanted to know if P41 between his police interview and the day in court...Plaintiff counsel Bahns intervened, saying that Fratzky cited the police transcript falsely: P41 did mention a name during the police interview. Judge Kerber said P41, however, did not mention a name right away, so Fratzky's citation would be fine. Fratzky finished his question, asking P41 if he saw a picture of Anwar Raslan between his police interview and his testimony in court. P41 denied, adding that he told the police the name Anwar Raslan.

Fratzky wanted to know when and how P41 learned about Raslan's arrest. P41 said he could not remember a date. He read on the internet that an official from the Syrian intelligence services was arrested. P41 then did some research and found out that this person was the head of Al-Khatib Branch.

Fratzky asked if P41 saw pictures of the person who was arrested during his research. P41 denied, adding that it was not clear to him at the beginning who the arrested person was. He had friends in Germany who then told him it was Anwar Raslan.

Fratzky wanted to know if P41 was only told about the identity of this person or researched it himself. P41 denied, explaining that a friend from [information redacted] told him that this person was the head of Al-Khatib Branch.

Plaintiff Counsels' Questioning

P41's counsel Mohammed recalled P41 telling the court that he is receiving medical care due to his detention and asked what exact treatment he would receive. P41 explained that he had psychological issues since his detention and difficulties falling asleep. He can only fall asleep in the early morning.

P41 added that he often feels absent and isolated. He therefore went to a psychotherapist in [information redacted]. He also suffered physical damage as the nerves in his hand are damaged. P41 said he had to undergo many tests at a hospital in [information redacted], including MRI. He further received physiotherapy, and it was eventually found that the nerves in his hand are severely damaged and not located where they should be. P41 said he also had to take tranquilizers. The doctor at his workplace then said that P41 was only allowed to work for 16 hours a week and only do jobs where he does not have to lift heavy things.

Mohammed asked if his right or left hand was damaged. P41 said it was his right hand.

Mohammed further wanted to know if P41's dominant hand was right or left. P41 said it was his right hand.

Mohammed recalled P41 mentioning that he filmed and posted demonstrations and other things at the beginning of the revolution. He asked P41 whether he had his own channel. P41 explained that he handed certain pics to channels like Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya. He only shared recordings where one could not see the faces of people, so they would not be arrested. P41 said other videos were stored in a specific archive. He also shared recordings of martyrs on channels for torture and deaths.

Mohammed asked if the recordings were uploaded on YouTube. P41 affirmed.

Mohammed asked if P41 uploaded the videos himself. P41 affirmed, explaining that some videos were uploaded by him, others by friends.

Mohammed asked about the name of the YouTube channel. P41 said it is called [information redacted].

Mohammed wanted to know if the videos are still available or deleted. P41 explained that some videos were deleted by YouTube, some were rescued, and some were uploaded again.

Mohammed asked if he understood correctly that P41 uploaded videos on YouTube that showed detainees from Al-Khatib Branch. P41 confirmed.

Mohammed asked what exactly one could see there. P41 said one could see signs of beatings and open, deep wounds.

Mohammed wanted to know during what timeframe these videos were recorded. P41 said they were recorded between the beginning of the revolution and end of May 2012. He added that he was released in May and immediately left Syria.

Mohammed recalled P41 describing that people were crying for mercy while the guards told them, they were Allah. Mohammed asked if he understood that correctly. P41 confirmed.

Mohammed wanted to know if P41 prayed in detention. P41 said of course he did not pray. He was detained with many other people, all in one cell. He once prayed but the guards entered the cell and because he did not stand up, he was beaten.

Mohammed asked if the guard said or did anything. P41 described that the guard opened the door while P41 was sitting and praying. The guard then told him that P41 was not taken there to pray. P41 said it was horror, he was insulted for praying and called by the name of a revolutionist sheikh.

Plaintiff counsel Scharmer wanted to ask P41 a question but Presiding Judge Kerber noted that the prosecutors had some questions first.

Prosecutors' Questioning

Prosecutor Klinge referred to videos and pictures allegedly showing detainees from Branch 251 and asked P41 if one could see from that material that these people were actually from Branch 251. P41 said that when these people were arrested, they were taken to Branch 251. The mayor then told the families they could pick up their corpses at the hospital. P41 explained that the people were not buried immediately due to the cleaning rituals, so he photographed them.

Klinge asked if P41 knew these people were coming from Branch 251. P41 said everyone who gets arrested is taken to Al-Khatib Branch. He photographed the corpses a few days after they were handed to the families. P41 said it was a young man, [C1], and an elderly man, [C2].

Klinge wanted to know when the corpses were handed to the families. P41 said it was in 2011, definitely before 2012.

Klinge further wanted to know where the corpses were handed or picked up. P41 said the mayor sent one of his employees to the hospital in Tishreen.

Klinge asked what this person did at the hospital. P41 said he received the corpses and handed them to the families.

Klinge concluded that the corpses were picked up at Tishreen hospital. P41 confirmed.

Plaintiff Counsels' Questioning

Plaintiff counsel Scharmer said he had a question for the judges: he found out that P41's YouTube channels still exists, including videos of corpses showing signs of torture that were uploaded during the indictment period. He would like to inspect these videos together with P41 and ask him questions. Presiding Judge Kerber said OK. Scharmer asked how this should be done; if he tells the court the link and they would inspect the videos in court.

Judge Kerber said she does not see any necessity to conduct investigative work at that moment. She reminded Scharmer that there was already a first judgment and there were too many open questions about the videos to inspect them on this day.

Scharmer suggested to have a break to answer some questions, adding that what P41 said was of non-negligible interest. Judge Kerber said she understood that the witness filmed two people of whom he assumes they had been at Al-Khatib Branch. Both corpses were picked up at Tishreen hospital. Scharmer added that it would be possible that these two people had been in Al-Khatib.

Kerber said the judges would need to figure that out first. Scharmer replied that P41 would however be in court at that very moment and only a few videos were relevant. Kerber ordered a ten-minute-break to allow the plaintiff counsels to issue a relevant request which the judges would then make a decision on.



[10 minute break]²

Presiding Judge Kerber turned to plaintiff counsel Scharmer to ask him about the request. Scharmer explained that his colleague Bahns would just be typing their request and asked how they should submit it to the court. Kerber said they should send it via email to the court's administration officer.

Plaintiff counsel Bahns intervened, saying he was disturbed by the court's proposed procedure. He said he is aware that this would be happening on very short notice, however he deemed the court's very narrow deadline to be inadequate. Judge Kerber replied that plaintiff counsel Scharmer just told the judges to inspect some videos in court, however, she would be aware that some plaintiff counsels already showed Judge Wiedner during the lunch break videos on their phones. Kerber added Bahns should do some introspection. Bahns replied he was just explaining his own perception of the situation, adding that he was well-aware how complicated the matter was. However, this only came up during the questioning.

Judge Kerber told the plaintiff counsels to send the request via email.

Plaintiff counsel Kroker added that the plaintiff counsels did not show Judge Wiedner any videos. They only told him that these videos existed. Judge Wiedner intervened, saying he was not shown videos but sources and screenshots.

Prosecutor Ritscher intervened, explaining that the prosecutors would be willing to task the BKA to have a look at the relevant YouTube channel and write a respective note on it. He added that all this still needs to be done properly. He suggested the BKA should first analyze the channel and assess whether the court needs to fulfil its duty of judicial enquiry. This way, there would already be a pre-selection and assessment of relevant videos.

Judge Kerber thanked the prosecutors, adding that this would however not relieve the judges from their obligation to make a decision on the relevant requests to inspect the videos in court.

Plaintiff counsel Scharmer said he and his colleagues did not want to delay the issue since P41 would now be present in court anyway. However, he would be open to have a break and resume if the judges would like to discuss first. Kerber said the analysis of this YouTube channel with thousands of videos would take more than one day. She added she would leave it up to Scharmer and his colleagues to file the request or not. If the prosecutors want to analyze the videos and add it to the case file, the court would of course inspect relevant videos. Kerber concluded that they would be talking about two corpses that were picked up at Tishreen hospital.

Scharmer said P41 said something else during the break, he and his colleagues therefore submitted their request to inspect some videos.

² Note from the Trial Monitor: The interpreters took the chance to get a break. Since the plaintiff counsels needed to talk to P41 to determine what videos they wanted to inspect, one of the journalists had to translate for them.



Presiding Judge Kerber asked if there would be further questions for P41 which can be asked until the request arrived via email. Scharmer said he had unfortunately no more questions at the moment but could read out the request in the meantime.

[The following is a recreation of the plaintiff counsels' request, based on what the trial monitor was able to hear in court.]

Attorneys Scharmer, Kroker and Bahns request to visually inspect the following video [URL was read out] which can be found on YouTube together with P41.

This will show the corpse of C2 who was detained at Al-Khatib Branch and whose corpse was handed to his parents. This person was detained at Al-Khatib Branch at the same time as P41, however, they never met there. The person's parents later said their son's corpse was handed to them by employees of Al-Khatib Branch.

Relevance: A dead person showing signs of torture who was detained at Al-Khatib Branch during the indictment period and died in custody due to violence.

The court's administrative officer said she received the relevant requests via email. She found them in the spam folder.³

P41's counsel Mohammed said he would join this request. Plaintiff counsel Bahns said he submitted another request which he could read out as well. Presiding Judge Kerber told him to do so. Before reading the request, Bahns said he wanted to clarify that he always felt the climate at the court would be good and constructive. He did not want to offend anyone and would therefore take back his earlier comment.

[The following is a recreation of the plaintiff counsels' request, based on what the trial monitor was able to hear in court.]

Attorneys Bahns, Kroker and Scharmer request to visually inspect the following video [URL was read out] which can be found on YouTube.

P41 said the video shows C1 who was arrested and detained at Al-Khatib Branch. The administration of Harsata was contacted by Al-Khatib Branch regarding the corpse. P41 took the video after the corpse was handed out.

The person in the video shows massive signs of torture and was arrested at Al-Khatib Branch during the indictment period.

Presiding Judge Kerber asked the parties for statements.

After a short discussion with his colleague Ritscher, Prosecutor Klinge said he doubts the required connectivity of the request. He added that the request would therefore not be a proper request. He further questioned the evidentiary value of the video without analyzing the metadata.

³ Note from the Trial Monitor: It is not clear if or why P41's counsel was not aware of the videos and did not prepare a relevant request prior to this hearing day. It is also noteworthy that P41 had to sit in the witness chair for more than one hour without being asked any questions and not fully comprehending the proceedings despite simultaneous interpretation.

Klinge proposed a calmer approach: to analyze the YouTube channel. Since P41 already joined the request, he would certainly be willing to return to court and be questioned about relevant videos.

Defense counsel Fratzky said he objected to the request for the same reasons that the prosecutor just mentioned. He added that it would be more like an exploration of certain things.

Plaintiff counsel Mohammed already joined Scharmer's request. None of the parties made additional statements regarding Bahn's request.

Judge Kerber's Questioning

Judge Kerber said she had a few additional questions for P41 regarding C2, asking P41 what he could tell the court about this corpse. P41 explained that out of these two videos, he filmed one himself. On this video [which he filmed himself] one could see C1 and another person in September 2011. P41 took this video himself and saw the corpse himself. He could clearly see the signs of torture on the corpse. He published the video on his channel [name redacted] but other channels also released it.

Kerber concluded that P41 was the one who took the video showing C1. P41 confirmed.

Kerber wanted to know how this corpse got to the place where P41 took the video. P41 recalled that security people from Al-Khatib Branch contacted the mayor of Harasta and told him that there would be two corpses at Tishreen hospital which needed to be picked up. The mayor then contacted the families and sent his deputy to Tishreen hospital by car. This person then took the corpses with him. When the corpses were with the families, P41 was called and filmed it.

Kerber asked how P41 knew the story involving the mayor and how the corpses were handed to the families. P41 said he did not witness that himself, but the families told him about it when he was with them to film the corpses.

Kerber asked P41 how he knew that these people were actually dead. She apologized for the question, adding that it would be sufficient if P41 could say that they stopped breathing or something similar. P41 said he saw the corpses himself when they were cleaned and he took the videos. He touched the corpses and turned them around to film all aspects. He said that this was what happened with C1.

Kerber wanted to know more about C2. P41 said he was his friend and he was arrested when P41 was in detention. When P41 was released, he was surprised to hear that C2 and four other people, among them P41's cousin died of torture. They were arrested in Harasta and their corpses were handed over a couple days later. P41 said his cousin did not even participate in demonstrations, he simply slept at his home. P41 said his cousin's brother was shocked when he was arrested and his body handed over as a corpse.

Kerber asked if P41 was there when the corpse was handed to the family. P41 said he was in detention at that time and surprised when he found out that he died.

Kerber asked if P41 was present when C2 was handed over to his family as corpse. P41 said he was in detention.

Kerber wanted to know how P41 found out about all that. P42 said he asked about it when he was released. He was told that he died as a martyr. There were videos showing him.

Kerber asked if P41 made these videos himself. P41 denied, adding he only saw these videos. He took the video showing C1.

Judge Wiedner intervened, asking how P41 knew that C2 was detained at Al-Khatib. P41 explained that he found out after his own detention when his relatives and friend told him that C2 was arrested together with four others and their corpses were released on the same day.

P41 asked the judges if he could add something. Judge Kerber allowed him to do so. P41 said there would be another person who might contribute to this: during P41's detention at Al-Khatib he was detained in solitary cell [information redacted] where he could hear how a person was tortured right in front of his cell. P41 knew the person and heard everything. The person was FD1, he was arrested because his brother [name redacted], a doctor was wanted.

Kerber said P41 already told the court about that. P41 added that he took a video of this corpse which also showed signs of torture.

Prosecutors' Questioning

Prosecutor Ritscher concluded that the video showing C2 was not taken by P41 personally but uploaded on his YouTube channel [name redacted]. P41 confirmed, adding that he was in detention at that time.

Ritscher wanted to know who took the video. P41 said it was a friend of his who currently lived in [information redacted].

Plaintiff Counsels' Questioning

Plaintiff counsel Scharmer referred to the video showing C2 [P41 consulted his counsel]. Scharmer asked whether P41 was able to identify the person from this video. P41 affirmed, saying it was his neighbor.

Scharmer asked if the person's parents told P41 which branch gave them the corpse. P41 said all corpses were handed over at Tishreen hospital.

Scharmer recalled P41 mentioning that the person's parents said employees of Al-Khatib Branch gave them the corpse. P41 explained that the common procedure was the following: such corpses were first transferred to the military hospital, then the mayor was informed who in turn informed the family who then went to the hospital to get the corpse.

Scharmer said he understood from what P41 told him during the break that C2 died at Al-Khatib Branch. Scharmer wanted to know from P41 what he knew about that and how he knew that. P41 said it was not only C2 who was detained at Al-Khatib and died there.

Scharmer recalled P41 saying that the corpse was picked up at the hospital and asked P41 how he knew that the person did not die there which would also be a possibility. P41 said he had no information about that. He only knew that five corpses were handed over there [at the hospital] all of whom were previously detained at Al-Khatib Branch.

Plaintiff counsel Kroker said he had some questions regarding FD1, recalling that P41 previously mentioned him and a relevant video on YouTube. Kroker asked P41 what he could say about that. P41 explained the video would show how the corpse was handed to the family after he was detained at Al-Khatib. He was then buried. P41 added this person also knew one of P41's cousins. P41 said he personally knows that this person was detained and tortured at Al-Khatib.

Kroker recalled P41 identifying this person based on his screams, asking if there were other features that helped P41 identify the person. P41 said he recognized his voice because he was a friend. He also identified him based on the questions he was asked about his brother: where his brother went, where the field hospitals were located, and how his brother moved around. P41 said the answer to these questions was that the person's brother was a doctor from [information redacted] who had the duty to help all injured people. P41 added the doctor was eventually arrested and tortured with electric shocks. His kidneys stopped working and he would currently live in [information redacted].

Kroker wanted to know if P41 was involved in the making of the video showing how the corpse was given to the family, which can be found on P41's YouTube channel. P41 said he did not personally see FD1. However, he could confirm that he was at Al-Khatib and tortured there. P41 said he did not take the video himself as he was already outside Syria when the corpse was handed over.

Kroker wanted to know whether P41 knew the link to the relevant video and would be willing to share it. P41 affirmed, saying he was willing to share it with his counsel.

Judge Wiedner's Questioning

Judge Wiedner wanted to know if it was correct that P41 had already left Syria when the corpse was handed to the family. P41 confirmed.

Wiedner asked when P41 left Syria. P41 said he left Syria at the end of May 2012.

Plaintiff Counsels' Questioning

Plaintiff counsel Scharmer asked if he understood correctly that some videos were deleted by YouTube and then uploaded again. P41 confirmed that the video was still available. He added that some videos were not released and would be stored in an archive.

Scharmer concluded that the date the video was uploaded is not necessarily the date the video was created. P41 explained that for the public videos, the date they were uploaded would be the same date they were created. He added that they were timely back then.

Scharmer said he understood earlier that some videos were taken down and then uploaded again. P41 explained that the videos relating to FD1 and others would still be available on YouTube and were not taken down. They were released by different channels.

Plaintiff counsel Bahns asked P41 what else he knew about C1 regarding date of arrest and other things. P41 said this person was arrested in [information redacted] where he was hiding. His corpse was handed to his family like P41 already described. P41 added he was a friend of his.

Bahns wanted to know when this person was arrested. P41 said September 2011.

Presiding Judge Kerber recalled P41 telling the court that he left Syria in May 2012. The police transcript however said he left Syria in May 2013. Kerber wanted to know if P41 left Syria in 2012 or 2013. P41 said he left Syria in 2012. He joined the coalition in 2013.

Plaintiff counsel Scharmer said he and his colleagues had no further questions, however, they requested a break to discuss their request.

P41's counsel Mohammed asked if his client was dismissed as a witness. Judge Kerber denied. Scharmer added that although he wished P41 could be dismissed as a witness, the requests were no requests to take evidence, but to visually inspect items together with the witness. P41 would therefore be needed for further questions.

[15 minute break]

Plaintiff counsel Scharmer said that some facts would be different after the questioning, in particular whether the people actually died at Al-Khatib Branch. He suggested to inspect screenshots of the videos in order for P41 to identify the people. This would also prevent P41 from having to come to court from abroad a second time.

Presiding Judge Kerber wanted to know what this means in regard to the plaintiff counsels' requests. Scharmer said they would be redundant. After some confusion about how to display the relevant screenshots in court, Judge Kerber ordered to visually inspect the black and white printed pictures of the two documents that Scharmer just send the court via email.

When the first picture [showing the face of an apparently dead person with bruises and injuries] was shown, Scharmer asked P41 whether he knew that person and if so, who it would be. P41 said he knew this person, his name was C2, a friend of his.

When the second picture was shown [again showing the face of an apparently dead person with bruises and injuries] Scharmer asked P41 the same question than before. P41 again confirmed that he knew this person, saying his name was C1.

Plaintiff counsel Bahns said he would take back his request, Kroker and Scharmer said they would also take back their requests. Presiding Judge Kerber concluded that all requests were taken back.

P41 was dismissed as a witness.

Judge Kerber cancelled the trial day initially scheduled for the following day.

The Proceedings were adjourned at 3:10PM.

The next session will be on July 21, 2021.