

SITUATION REPORT SPECIAL - WALID HEARINGS

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[The summary of Day 1 & Day 2 of the hearing can be accessed on EEPA website.](#)

Walid hearing: Summary of Day 3 (per 5 November 2025)

- Day 3 of the court hearing in the case of alleged human trafficker Tewelde Goitom “Walid” has brought more witness testimonies read out by the presiding judge.
- As the court is ahead of schedule, the next hearing date of 11 November 2025 will be cancelled. The next hearing will take place on Monday, 17 November, starting at 9.30am CET.
- The next hearing will cover the personal circumstances of the defendant and the court will hear about the impact that Walid’s actions have had on his victims as they exercise their right to speak.
- 18 November remains in reserve for a potential hearing of Kidane in Walid’s case. Kidane is on the list to be extradited from the United Arab Emirates but the timing of his extradition is uncertain.
- The investigative judge refrained from hearing witnesses in a select few cases; in one of these cases, a man was facing extreme mental pressure because he was afraid of being monitored.
- The public prosecutor asked Walid why he smiled during one of the witness statements which talked about Walid being perceived as a boss. Walid said he wants to remain silent.

Witness testimonies (per 5 November 2025)

- More witnesses were heard today who testified on the cruelty of Walid in the compound in Bani Walid, in which other traffickers Kidane, Wedi Babu and Wedi Keshi were also active.
 - The last and ‘earliest’ group of witnesses, with arrival date in Europe in 2015, were held in a different compound in which only Walid was active.
 - The witnesses describe Walid as a fairly short man, stocky, with a big belly and a balding head. They also mention a limp.
 - Witnesses stated that Walid was always carrying a gun, which he used to threaten people and shoot in the air when he wanted their attention or to demand silence.
 - “When he arrives even a baby shuts up,” said a witness adding “everyone was in shock when he arrived”.
 - “We were taken inside like cattle. It was horrible at Walid’s. We were woken at 4am to start calling. When you called your family, you had to get back in line and call again. What else can you say to them? You are beaten and tortured every day,” stated one witness.
 - Families were threatened that if they did not pay, their family members would die. “The only thing I could say in the line was please, pay for me. Sometimes they take the phone and say: either you pay, or he will be killed. The choice is yours.”
 - Witnesses testified that they saw people die from starvation, disease and torture. One young man begged for help, but Walid denied him medical attention and told anyone who complained about it to be silent. The young man died soon after.
 - A witness described how another young man died after being tortured while being forced to call.
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- Multiple witnesses referred to a car crash that took place while refugees were transported to the sea, killing many people. One of the witnesses stated this was the worst thing she saw, as the survivors of the crash were sent back to their warehouse.
- "In the first car everyone was dead, and in the second there were survivors. They received no medical treatment. They had broken legs, broken necks, dislocations... they received no care," said the witness.
- Most of the refugees in Walid's warehouses were Eritrean, but Somali refugees were also treated particularly horribly. "The Somalis were beaten with electric cords. The Somalis lost someone practically every week to starvation, exhaustion, and abuse and torture."
- Witnesses describe many instances of sexual abuse and rape. Walid tried to force one witness, a young woman, to have sex with one of his henchmen. He threatened to kill her if she did not do it. Even so, she tried to refuse, stating "I am in charge of my own body".
- She was raped by Walid's henchman anyway. After trying to defy him, Walid constantly beat her. At some point he beat her so hard with a garden hose that her teeth were bleeding.
- Another witness stated that she was summoned by Walid to his house where she was held for 72 hours during which she was repeatedly raped and abused.
- "You are not the first one who begged me to stop. I will not," said Walid to the victim and he continued to sexually abuse her.
- This witness escaped from the camp into a nearby village from where she called a house of another trafficker "Aziz", where she knew some people, asking for help. Two men working for Aziz brought her back to Walid where she was severely beaten and abused for many weeks.
- She describes being tied up with her hands and feet behind her back, beaten by garden hoses by Walid himself as well as other henchmen, as punishment for escaping.
- "I had to lie on my stomach, he tied my hands and feet behind my back. The blood flow was cut off. I thought I was going to die. I couldn't hold on any longer and I called out my mother's name. I thought I was going to die," she says.
- For three days, she was tied up like this in the burning sun. The woman she was sleeping next to was seen as a co-conspirator. Although she was seven months pregnant, she was also tied up for half a day. She ended up giving birth early and her baby died after some days.
- Walid put her together with the Somali refugees and told them they could do anything they wanted to her. The Somali refugees gave her a sheet to sleep under and offered her food, which she could not eat due to the pain.
- Witnesses state that Walid would often say "who the hell you think you are? I'm also trained at Sawa. I know the same thing as you know". The prosecutor explained that Sawa is a military training camp where all Eritreans, men and women, go through compulsory military training.
- One witness mentions the relationship between Walid and another Libyan person known as "Musa", who was in charge of the location.
- Witnesses testified that men working for Walid were following orders to beat them saying "we don't like it but we have to". Another person was in charge of keeping the books on who had paid.
- Several witnesses stated in their testimonies that they wanted Walid to be put to justice. "I read on social media that Walid and Kidane have been arrested. I would like to see him sitting with his head bowed down, after everything he has done."
- Witnesses stated that their families paid thousands of dollars to pay the ransoms, often by begging in the community. The judge commented that it appeared from the statements that that money is supposed to be paid back, leaving people in debt.
- A witness states that Eritreans help each other to make the payments. "It can happen to any Eritrean. Almost everyone experiences this situation at some point."

Links of interest

[Bij mensensmokkelaar W. was niemand veilig: 'Als hij een meisje leuk vond, kon niemand hem tegenhouden'](#)
[Nederlandse rechtbank behandelt uitzonderlijke zaak rond internationale mensensmokkel](#)

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