

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



PRESS CLIPPINGS

**Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office
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Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.
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Man convicted for interfering with the administration of justice

Five persons facing trial in two separate proceedings appeared in court on Friday to plead to charges they attempted to induce witnesses to recant testimony they gave before the Special Court, and thus interfered with the administration of justice.

In the first case, two members of Sierra Leone's defunct Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), Hassan Papa Bangura (aka: "Bombblast") and Samuel Kargbo (aka: "Sammy Ragga") appeared in person before Justice Teresa Doherty at the Special Court in Freetown. Two other accused, convicted former AFRC leaders, Ibrahim Bazy Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu (aka: "Five-Five"), appeared in court via video link from Rwanda, where they are serving lengthy prison sentences.

All four were charged with two counts of offering a bribe to a witness, and of interfering with a witness, in violation of Rule 77 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence. Kamara faces a third count alleging that he knowingly disclosed the name of a protected witness.

Kamara, Kanu and Bangura all pleaded not guilty to the charges. Trial proceedings in the case will be scheduled at a later date.

Samuel Kargbo pleaded guilty to both counts, and convictions on these charges were entered by Justice

Doherty. In a written statement to the Court, Mr. Kargbo offered to testify as a prosecution witness in any future proceedings. Sentencing has been put off until after the trial of his co-accused.

In the second proceeding, former Revolutionary United Front (RUF) member Eric Koi Senessie pleaded not guilty to nine counts alleging he attempted to bribe or otherwise interfere with prosecution witnesses who testified in the trial of former Liberian President Charles Taylor.

Bangura, Kargbo and Senessie were granted bail and released on their own recognizance under conditions which include not contacting, directly or indirectly, either the witnesses or their co-accused, to maintain their current residences, to report once a week as directed, and to appear at hearings when directed by the Registrar.

Since none of the accused is deemed to have sufficient means to hire lawyers, the Defence Office has assisted them in securing experienced counsel to represent them in the proceedings.

A person convicted of contempt under Rule 77 faces a maximum term of imprisonment of seven years, a fine of up to two million leones (approximately \$500), or both.

Credit: Cocorioko News

AWARENESS TIMES NEWS BRIEFS

Former AFRC Junta Pleads Guilty

Samuel Kargbo, former Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) strongman over the weekend pleaded guilty to two counts charges of knowingly and willfully interfering with the Special Court administration. According to reports, the accused reportedly offered bribe to a witness who was given testimony before a trial chamber. Samuel Kargbo was sentenced to a maximum period of seven years imprisonment or pay the fine of two million leones. The other accused persons are still on trial as all of them have pleaded not guilty.

Retributive Justice- Who suffers It?

It is a fact that Sierra Leone's 11 year war was referred to as an act of civil butchery.

The war, which came to an end in 2002, left many homes in disarray and poverty.

Of course, it is to the resolved of Sierra Leoneans that perpetrators must be brought to book or made to reconcile with victims as prescribed in the truth and Reconciliation report.

Despite widespread sensitization on issues of vengeance, the spate of attacks, especially in the interior, suggest that the Truth and Reconciliation report has not been well implemented but rather abandoned on dusty shelves of successive governments.

That governments (past and present) have ignored the implementation of recommendations as officially endorsed in transitional justice advocacy books.

A case in point is the unfortunate and uncalled for attack meted Joseph Gandhi Sisay, who incidentally is the son AFRC junta strong man, Pa Lumpri Sisay.

It is also reported that experiences of reprisal continues befalling homes linked to militias and juntas of Sierra Leone's finished war.

As relatives and friends intensify their search for Joseph and other members of his family, it is reported that the entire family abandoned their homes and went to distant countries for solace.

And it is revealed also that victims of the scourges of Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) are desperately bent on barking the hell out of the Sisay family; whose dad, Mr. Lumpri Sisay was real time member of the fore-named junta government and was in fact their liaison officer.

The AFRC, in 1997, force-

fully took over governance from former President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah in a coup-d'etat. Disgruntled junior military officers were appointed to key positions and have instinctively seen themselves as rendering better services to people of Sierra Leone.

Joseph Gandhi Sisay's father served the AFRC as one its public relations officers from start to finish.

He was with those soldiers that flee to the bush after being removed from governance by ECOMOG forces. The AFRC, while in governance, rendered disservices to Sierra Leoneans consequently leading to serialized atrocities and carnages caused.

Pa. Lumpri, who later metamorphoses into becoming a member of the SLPP, was widely known for his instrumental role during periods of AFRC rule.

He was neither encouraged nor given any rest by members of the SLPP at all.

In 1994, there was an attempt by Pa Lumpri to assist the SLPP in their local election campaigns, but was singled out and in the process dealt with.

His son was kidnapped and brutally manhandled to the point of death. On his recovery, he revealed to his family that his assailants are out to kill all of them.

It was then that all including Joseph, took to their heels for safer destinations unknown to society.

Human Rights groups have also added their voices to forestall Retributive justice in society.

It could be recalled that the office of National Commission for Social Action (NACSA) in 2010, was with one of AFRC commanders, General Savage, to Tombodu Town in Kono District to cause him reconcile with indigenes of the town for atrocities caused, but met very stiff resistance.

Agence France Presse

Monday, 18 July 2011

West Africa: Mercenaries Breach Liberia-Ivory Coast Border Controls

West Africa leaders have requested the military assistance of the UN and ECOWAS, the regional political union, to improve monitoring of the Liberia-Ivory Coast border, which they say has been breached by mercenaries operating in the area.

The call came after talks between Ivory Coast President Alassane Ouattara and leaders of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, the three countries that make up the so-called Mano River Union.

"We have asked ECOWAS and UN to help us monitor the borders and to provide a helicopter, a combat helicopter for the various areas in the forest," Ouattara told reporters after talks in the Liberian capital Monrovia.

Liberian mercenaries

In a joint communique, the four leaders said insecurity on the porous Liberian-Ivory Coast represented a threat for the entire West African region.

The United Nations said in May it was concerned by the return to Liberia of mercenaries and had reinforced its local forces to patrol the long 700 km (400 mile) border between the two countries, which is mostly dense rainforest.

Liberian mercenaries were allegedly hired by supporters of former Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo during the four-month post-election conflict which ended with Gbagbo's capture and arrest in April.

Liberia Government

Ivorian President Alhassan Ouattara arrives in Liberia for a summit of the Mano River Union states.

Liberia is recovering from 14 years of intermittent civil war itself and plans to hold a constitutional referendum and presidential elections by the end of the year.

Cache of arms

Last month it said it had seized a cache of arms and ammunitions including assault rifles and rocket launchers in a town near its border with Ivory Coast. It said it was investigating 92 people after the haul.

Several thousand Ivorian refugees remain on the Liberian side of the border. Some say they are too scared to return homes in western Ivory Coast, which saw an outbreak of inter-ethnic violence as rebel troops loyal to Ouattara advanced from their northern stronghold on the main city Abidjan.

Source: AFP

CNN

Wednesday, 20 July 2011

Last Yugoslav war crimes suspect still at large is captured

By the CNN Wire Staff



Goran Hadzic pictured in a wanted poster.

(CNN) -- The last remaining Yugoslav war crimes suspect still at large, Goran Hadzic, has been captured, Serbian President Boris Tadic announced Wednesday.

Hadzic is wanted for crimes against humanity and war crimes in connection with the brutal wars that followed the break-up of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s.

The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia accuses him of the "extermination or murder of hundreds of Croat or other non-Serb civilians," among many other crimes.

The announcement comes less than two months after the highest-profile war crimes suspect still at large, former Bosnian Serb general Ratko Mladic, was captured.

Mladic was seized May 26 after more than 15 years in hiding and extradited to the Netherlands to face trial at the criminal tribunal five days later.

He has proved an obstructive defendant, arguing with judges about who should represent him, and in a recent appearance, a judge ordered him removed from the chamber.

UN's Balkan war crimes tribunal upholds contempt conviction against ex-staffer*Florence Hartmann*

The United Nations tribunal set up to deal with the worst war crimes committed during the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s today dismissed the appeal of a former staff member against her conviction for contempt of court.

Florence Hartmann, who served as a prosecution spokesperson at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), was convicted of contempt by the tribunal in September 2009 for disclosing confidential information in violation of a court order.

In a book she wrote and in a separate article Ms. Hartmann was found to have disclosed the contents, purported effect and confidential nature of two decisions by the ICTY appeals chamber in the case involving the former Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević.

When convicting her, the court had said Ms. Hartmann's actions could deter countries from cooperating with the ICTY regarding the provision of evidence.

The ICTY's appeals chamber, in dismissing the appeal today, noted that neither the parties to a case nor third parties can decide which aspects of a confidential decision may be disclosed.

The appeals chamber also upheld the imposition of a fine of €7,000 against Ms. Hartmann. She is required to pay the fine in two instalments by mid-August and mid-September respectively.

Leadership

Tuesday, 19 July 2011

The scene of own goals in peace efforts

A one-day summit attended by Nato and other leaders last Friday in Turkey asked United Nations special envoy, Abdul Elah al-Khatibe to negotiate a peace deal with Col Gaddafi that could see the Libyan leader stay in the country after stepping down. But by previously bringing charges against Gaddafi in the International Criminal Court (ICC), a devastating own goal might have already been scored against any efforts at a negotiated settlement.

To what extent the ICC and other instruments of international law have become rather a hindrance than help in international peace efforts and negotiated settlements in conflicts, is well argued by George Friedman in a July 11 article for Stratfor: “The current structure of international law, particularly the existence of the ICC and its rules, has an unintended consequence. Rather than serving as a tool for removing war criminals from power, it tends to enhance their power and remove incentives for capitulation or a negotiated exit.

“In Libya’s case, Gaddafi’s indictment was referred to the ICC by the UNSC, and he was formally indicted in late June. The existence of the ICC, and the clause that says that it has jurisdiction where signatory governments are unable or unwilling to carry out their own prosecutions, creates an especially interesting dilemma for Gaddafi and the intervening powers.

In the Libyan situation matters are further complicated by the fact there is ample ground for a case to be made out that the Nato-forces on a number of scores are themselves on the wrong side of the law.

By the premature filing of charges against Gaddafi the ICC has become an international political football. Further illustrated by the fact that the dictator himself is well aware of this and willing to play Nato at their own game, is that his daughter has filed a war crimes lawsuit of their own in Paris and Brussels over the alleged assassination of four of the Libyan leader’s family members in an illegal attack on a civilian target in Tripoli.

Aisha Gaddafi is herself an attorney and was part of the defense team of the late Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

Referring to the cases of Slobodan Milosevic of Yugoslavia and of Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb political leader, Friedman argues that leaders like Gaddafi could not be expected to place trust in assurances from the West regarding non-prosecution.

“He has no motivation to capitulate, since that could result in him being sent to The Hague, nor is there anyone that he can deal with who can hold the ICC in abeyance. In most criminal proceedings, a plea bargain is possible, but this is not simply a matter of a plea bargain.

“Regardless of what a country’s leader has done, he or she holds political power, and the transfer of that power is inherently a political process. What the ICC has done since 2002 — and the ICTY to an extent before that — is to make the political process moot by making amnesty impossible.

“It is not clear if any authority exists to offer and honour an amnesty. However, the ICC is a product of the United Nations, and the authority of the United Nations lies in the UNSC. Though there is no clear precedent, there is an implicit assumption that the UNSC would be the entity to offer a negotiated amnesty with a unanimous vote.

“In other words, the political process is transferred from Libya to the UNSC, where any number of countries might choose to abort the process for their own political ends. So the domestic political process is trumped by The Hague’s legal process, which can only be trumped by the UNSC’s political process. A potentially simple end to a civil war escalates to global politics,” he writes.

Under the present circumstances, and in the apparent standoff between a judicial process and political realities, the chances of ending the bloody war in Libya soon via a negotiated settlement, looks pretty slim.

In the words of Friedman: “The desire for justice is understandable, as is the need for an independent judiciary. But a judiciary that is impervious to political realities can create catastrophes in the name of justice.

“In both the Serbia and Libya cases, ICC indictments were used by Western countries in the midst of bombing campaigns to legitimise their humanitarian intervention. The problem is that the indictments left little room for negotiated settlements.

“The desire to punish the wicked is natural. But as in all things political — though not judicial — the price of justice must also be considered. If it means that thousands must die because the need to punish the guilty is an absolute, is that justice? Just as important, does it serve to alleviate or exacerbate human suffering?”

Maybe because, among others, the United States is well aware that the terms of justice at the end of conflicts is mostly determined by the victor it has decided to recognise the rebel Transitional National Council as the “legitimate governing authority” for Libya.

It might also explain why it is reported about the peace initiative started in Turkey that Britain and the United States remain sceptical.

Britain’s official position, is that it has a “strong preference” that Col Gaddafi be handed over for trial at the International Criminal Court, which has indicted him, his son Saif al-Islam and his security chief Abdullah al-Senussi for war crimes.

According to a report in The Telegraph in London the “added firepower Britain is promising, along with the extra money that might be on its way, will be welcomed by the TNC, which claims rebel-held areas are suffering severe shortages. It is also demanding more help from Nato to push its military campaign forward.

“It said it did not expect a ceasefire until after Col Gaddafi had been defeated.”

But what is also becoming a reality is that the ICC and broader regime of international justice, and how it is used as a bargaining chip in conflicts and to what extent it deals evenhandedly with all sides in those conflicts is itself on trial in the Libyan Desert.

BBC

Monday, 18 July 2011

Sudan's South Kordofan fighting: UN warns of war crimes



Fighting in South Kordofan has forced thousands of people to flee their homes

A UN report has warned that war crimes may have been committed in Sudan's South Kordofan region.

The report, leaked to the BBC, said both government and rebel forces were guilty of atrocities but the army's actions were "especially egregious".

It called for a special investigation into the conflict, which has displaced about 70,000 people.

Sudan's government says it is responding to rebel attacks in the region which borders South Sudan.

The BBC's James Copnall in the capital, Khartoum, says the report refers to summary executions, aerial bombardments and the shelling of neighbourhoods.

One eyewitness told UN investigators that he had seen 150 bodies at an army barracks in South Kordofan.

The report said the UN Security Council should establish a commission of inquiry to investigate the allegations, possibly with the help of the International Criminal Court.

If the allegations were true, they would amount to war crimes and crimes against humanity, the report said.

Arrest warrant

A government spokesman rejected the allegations, saying the army was trying to achieve stability in South Kordofan.



He said the region's rebels - not the army - had directed their weapons at civilians.

Last week, the Satellite Sentinel project, a campaign group set up by Hollywood star George Clooney, said it had visual evidence of three mass graves in South Kordofan.

Our reporter says the findings of the UN investigators will increase pressure on President Omar al-Bashir and his government.

The ICC has already issued an arrest warrant for Mr Bashir for alleged genocide and crimes against humanity during the separate eight-year conflict in Sudan's Darfur region.

There is also an arrest warrant for Ahmed Haroun, a former Darfur governor who is now South Kordofan's governor.

Many people in South Kordofan, especially residents of the Nuba mountains, fought with southern rebels during the two decade north-south war but now find themselves in the north.

The two sides agreed last month, in a deal brokered by the African Union, to integrate the pro-southern Nuba fighters into the national army or disarm them voluntarily.

Now Lebanon

Tuesday, 19 July 2011

STL Appeals Chamber sends Sayyed's file back to Pre-Trial Judge

Special Tribunal for Lebanon's Appeals Chamber issued on Tuesday a decision to send back the file of former General Security chief Jamil as-Sayyed back to Pre-Trial Judge Daniel Fransen.

"The file was sent back to the Pre-Trial Judge for further consideration," according to a statement posted on the tribunal's website.

Sayyed was detained by the Lebanese authorities for more than three years as part of the probe into the 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

After the STL was set up, Sayyed was released without charge by order of the Pre-Trial Judge. He applied to the court for disclosure of documents in its possession to enable him to bring proceedings before national courts against persons allegedly responsible for false allegations against him.

The Appeals Chamber previously upheld a decision of the Pre-Trial Judge that Sayyed has standing to make the application and that the tribunal has jurisdiction to entertain it. It confirmed the existence of a generally expressed right to such disclosure and remanded the case for further consideration by Fransen.

Sayyed now challenges on appeal the decision of Fransen that three categories of documents were exempt from disclosure, namely correspondence between the Lebanese authorities and the UN International Independent Investigation Commission.

CNN

Tuesday, 19 July 2011

Lebanon's prime minister says he will back tribunal

By the CNN Wire Staff



Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati has said that he will support the U.N. tribunal.

(CNN) -- Lebanon's prime minister said Monday his government will support the U.N. special tribunal that is investigating the 2005 killing of a previous Lebanese prime minister.

"Whatever we can do from our side," Najib Mikati told CNN, "we are going to do it fully."

The tribunal -- established by the United Nations at Lebanon's request in 2005, after the death of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri -- called last week on Interpol to circulate a request for police agencies worldwide to detain the suspects. But it has not publicly said how many people were indicted or revealed their identities.

Interpol, the international police agency, issued wanted persons alerts last week in connection with the killing of Hariri and 22 others.

The move came after a Special Tribunal for Lebanon judge issued arrest warrants for the suspects.

The indictment named four people, all members of the Shiite group Hezbollah, a highly placed source in the Lebanese Army has told CNN. The source identified them as Mustafa Badreddine, Hasan Oneisa, Salim Ayyah and Asad Sabra.

Hariri, a wealthy entrepreneur turned politician, died when his motorcade passed a bomb that exploded in Beirut on February 14, 2005.

Supporters say he was killed because of his opposition to Syrian influence in Lebanon. His death prompted mass protests that led to the withdrawal of Syrian troops who had been in Lebanon for nearly 30 years.

Hezbollah has ties to Syria as well as to Iran. It provides social services in Lebanon, but has long been regarded as a terrorist organization by the United States.

Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah has said he believes Israel was behind Hariri's death and has accused the tribunal of being a tool of the United Nations and the United States with a goal of creating strife within Lebanon.

Mikati said the Lebanese government would hand over the suspects "if they are in Lebanon." He rejected suggestions that Hezbollah allies would prevent him from cooperating with the tribunal.

Though some may perceive him to be in a difficult position, his overriding goal is to serve the interests of his country, he said, adding, "And I'm going to do it fully."

Asked about the current crisis in neighboring Syria, where mass demonstrations have been met by violent crackdowns, Mikati called on Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to introduce the necessary reforms.

"I wish that President Assad can do the reform himself," he said. "I wish the peace and good for the Syrian citizen and the Syrian regime."

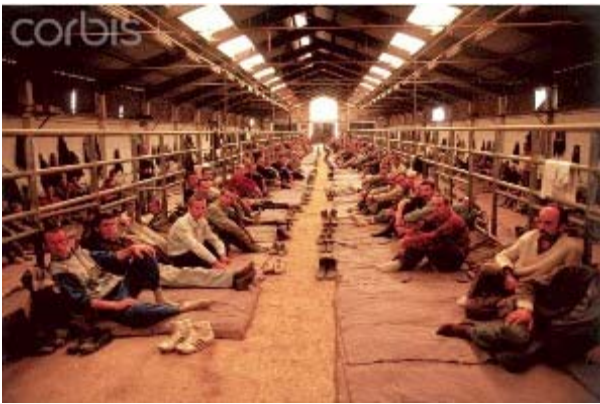
Bosniak.com

Tuesday, 19 July 2011

<http://www.bosniak.org/genocide-in-prijedor-is-a-black-spot-on-the-conscience-of-the-international-community-and-on-the-conscience-of-those-who-committed-the-crime/>

Genocide in Prijedor is a black spot on the conscience of the international community and on the conscience of those who committed the crime

Author: Prof. Emir Ramic, Institute for Genocide Research in Canada
(<http://www.instituteforgenocide.ca>)



On 6 December 1992 *The New York Times* described a May 1992 attack in Prijedor:

“When the attack began, Serbs from the village guided the tanks to the homes of certain Muslims...and the inhabitants were asked to come out and show their identity cards. Many of those who did were summarily executed...The bodies of the dead were carried away by trucks, which left a trail of blood. Those not killed on the spot were transferred to a convoy heading toward Omarska, a Serb concentration camp.”

19th Anniversary of Prijedor Genocide

Institute for Research of Genocide of Canada {IRGC} wants to show respect of the dignity and humanity of the victims of the genocide that happened in Prijedor. We express our regret for the destruction of life, and our solidarity and compassion for the suffering of the victims. All the killed ones are important to us, it is important that their suffering is recognized and respected, because, without that, their families and entire communities of victims of genocide in Prijedor cannot overcome the past, nor can they accept reconciliation without accountability.

IRGC wants to show that those murdered left the deepest marks in our lives, and that ignorance or indifference towards what happened to the victims is, in fact, the denial of their and our human dignity. We want to share the sorrow, compassion, solidarity and responsibility towards the victims of genocide with our fellow Canadian citizens.

On this occasion, we want to point out again that the arrest and extradition of Ratko Mladic, indicted for genocide in Bosnian and Herzegovina and for other most serious war crimes, to The Hague Tribunal is extremely important act. However, as the arrest was made after 16 years, we demand from the representatives of the Serbian institutions to launch an investigation and find out who hid, protected and guarded Mladic all these years. In what military and/or other facility was he kept? How much has the hiding of Mladic cost the citizens of Serbia? If, in due time, representatives of the Serbian institutions do

not provide the answers to these and other questions, it will be clear that the arrest was solely a pragmatic act, which has nothing to do with justice for victims, nor with the changing of the system of values and the abandonment of ideological, moral and cultural patterns that enabled and justified war and war crimes, and turned criminals into heroes.

The Trial Chamber found that the takeover of Prijedor was an illegal coup d'état

As the Trial Chamber found in its decision, the Serb takeover in Prijedor was accompanied by and accomplished through the commission of atrocities on a massive scale, including the establishment of internment camps at Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje. These atrocities include frequent killings, rapes and sexual assaults. Moreover, thousands of individuals were subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment, including routine beatings and torture. The cleansing of Prijedor also resulted in the expulsion of Bosniaks from their homes as well as their deportation in huge numbers, often in convoys organized and supervised by Serb authorities. According to the Trial Chamber, more than 20,000 civilians were victims of the expulsion campaign and more than 1,500 were killed in massacres carried out by Serbs during the takeover. Others have reported that the death toll from the internment camps was equally high – according to one source, nearly 2000 Bosniaks died at Omarska alone. We first heard of Omarska in the summer of 1992. That is when Roy Gutman, a foreign correspondent working for Newsday, reported on the existence, at a mining complex, of a camp run by Bosnian Serb militants that held several thousand non-Serb prisoners, primarily Bosniaks but also Croats. Based on the later reports of the detainees who survived their ordeal at Omarska, Gutman called it a “death camp” and reported on the appalling conditions and the rape, torture and execution of detainees. International reporting, especially by British journalists Ed Vulliamy, Penny Marshall and Ian Williams, exposed the horrors of Omarska and ultimately forced the camp to close. After Omarska, it became clear to many people that, in Bosnia, we were dealing with evil on such a scale that can neither be explained away nor ignored. Eventually, the international community organized an international tribunal to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide in the former Yugoslavia. The tribunal convicted several of the camp guards, commandants and associated others for crimes committed at Omarska.

The municipality of Prijedor is located in the north-western region of Bosnia and Herzegovina known as the Bosanska Krajina. The town of Prijedor is the largest settlement in the municipality. According to the 1991 census, out of a total population of 112,543, 43,9% regarded themselves as Bosniaks, 42.3% as Serbs, 5.7% as Yugoslavs, 5.6% as Croats and 2.5% as “others”. The census, for the first time, identified the Bosniaks as the largest ethnic group in the municipality of Prijedor. The shifting demographic balance in favour of the Muslim population was considered a challenge by the Serbs and became one of the central issues in the municipality’s political life during 1991 and 1992.

During the war in Croatia, the tension increased between the Serbs and the communities of Bosniaks and Croats. There was a huge influx of Serb refugees from Slovenia and Croatia into the municipality. At the same time, Bosniaks and Croats began to leave the municipality because of a growing sense of insecurity and fear amongst the population.

Pro-Serb propaganda became increasingly visible. The Serb media propagandised the idea that the Serbs had to arm themselves in order to avoid a situation similar to that which happened during World War II when the Serbs were massacred. As a result of the takeover of the transmitter station on Mount Kozara in August 1991 by the Serbian paramilitary unit the “Wolves of Vučjak”, TV Sarajevo was cut off. It was replaced by broadcasts from Belgrade and Banja Luka with interviews from Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) politicians who argued that, while Serbs sought to preserve Yugoslavia, the Bosniaks and Croats wanted to destroy the country.

At the meeting of the Prijedor Municipal Board of the SDS on 27 December 1991 it was decided to overthrow the existing authorities in the town, replace legitimate central authorities with SDS or SDS-loyal personnel, and form independent Serb bodies. At the session on 7 January 1992, the Serbian

members of the Prijedor Municipal Assembly and the presidents of the local Municipal Boards of the SDS proclaimed the Assembly of the Serbian People of the Municipality of Prijedor. Milomir Stakić was elected President of this Assembly.

By the end of April 1992, a number of clandestine Serb police stations were created in the municipality and more than 1,500 armed men were ready to take part in the takeover. In the night of the 29 to 30 April 1992, the takeover of power took place “without a single bullet fired”.

Employees of the public security station and reserve police gathered in Čirkin Polje, part of the town of Prijedor. They were broadly divided into five groups. One group was responsible for the Municipal Assembly building, one for the SUP building, one for the courts, one for the bank and the last for the postoffice.

The Trial Chamber found that the takeover of Prijedor was an illegal coup d'état which had been planned and coordinated for months and which had as its final goal the creation of a Serbian municipality eventually to form part of an envisaged pure Serbian state. After the takeover, Milomir Stakić became, amongst other things, President of the Municipal Assembly and President of the Prijedor Municipal Peoples' (National) Defence Council. From May 1992, he served as President of the Prijedor Municipal Crisis Staff. The Trial Chamber established that Milomir Stakić was the leading political figure in Prijedor municipality in 1992.

A comprehensive pattern of atrocities amounting to a campaign of a persecutorial nature was proved to have been committed against non-Serbs in Prijedor municipality in 1992. This included killings on a massive scale in the Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje camps, in Bosniak towns and villages throughout the municipality, and, finally, on Mount Vlašić.

The takeover of Prijedor, deportation of civilian from Prijedor and the operation of capturing, detention, and execution of Bosniacs are the acts of genocide, well planned, envisaged, efficiently organized, widespread, ordered from the top political and military leadership, and executed systematically according to the plan.

Number of the killed and execution, quick formation of mass graves, quick burials in mass graves, dislocation of mortal remains to secondary and tertiary mass graves suggest that the political, military, administrative, and police potential of the Serb forces supported by a large number of disciplined perpetrators took part in the plan, preparation, execution and the cover up of genocide.

Perpetrators of crime took all the steps, including the systematic digging, transfer, and reburial of the victims' bodies, so as to cover up the genocide and prevent the justice, which constitutes yet another systematic form of crime committed against the killed, which has not been known in history. This speaks of the perpetrators as being aware of the criminal character of their actions, and there is no dilemma related to their subjective accountability and liability and/or firm intention related to the perpetration of this graves form of crime.

Mass graves of the genocide victims in Prijedor are apparent evidence of the planned and organized system of crimes, which resulted in genocide – the worst form of crimes against humanity and international law. Simultaneously, they are also one of the ways of concealing and destruction of clues of crimes. Unfortunately, International Court of Justice in The Hague in the case *Bosnia and Herzegovina vs. Federal Republic of Yugoslavia* (Serbia and Montenegro), did not mention at all the mass graves of the genocide victims in Prijedor.

The massive crime against Bosniacs of Islamic religion was committed in Prijedor. That crime is an act of genocide against Muslims. The area where the crimes were committed, speed of execution of several

thousands of people, territory in which the bodies were buried, multiple transfer of mortal remains, and the number of individuals who took part in the execution and the covering of the crime absolutely indicate that the crimes were known to a large number of people and that they were persistently concealed.

Genocide against Bosniacs of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Prijedor was committed before the eyes of the world public. This was a part of direct preparation for the Dayton Accord following the traditional manner of placing everyone before the final act while securing strategically important border area to Serbia. This crime of genocide is only a tip of the iceberg within the crimes against humanity and international law committed continuously in the period of four years in the territory of three quarters of the state territory of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina – in all the occupied places and towns under the siege.

There is a lot of evidence to prove that crimes against humanity and war crimes had been committed in Prijedor, Bosnia and Herzegovina such as widespread killings, the siege of town, mass rapes, torture, deportation to camps and detention centers.

Conclusions of the Final Prijedor Report of the United Nations Commission of Experts established pursuant to security council resolution 780 (1992)

“It is unquestionable that the events in Opstina Prijedor since 30 April 1992 qualifies as crimes against humanity. Furthermore, it is likely to be confirmed in court under due process of law that these events constitute genocide”.

More of the Prijedor Report : <http://www.ess.uwe.ac.uk/comexpert/anx/V.htm>

IRGC wants to take this chance to restate its conviction that the world must never again allow such atrocities to occur unopposed and its determination that justice will seek out any who choose such barbaric paths.