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Tribunal Pénal
International pour
l'ex-Yougoslavie

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VLASTIMIR ĐORĐEVIĆ IN TRIBUNAL CUSTODY

Vlastimir Đorđević, a senior Serbian police officer indicted for crimes against humanity and war crimes committed against Kosovo Albanians in 1999, was today transferred into the Tribunal's custody. Đorđević was arrested earlier today in Montenegro after having been on the run for more than three years. His arrest came as a result of the cooperation between ICTY's Office of the Prosecutor, Montenegrin and Serbian authorities.

Đorđević, the former Assistant Minister of the Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs and its Public Security Department Chief, is accused of participating in a widespread and systemic campaign of terror and violence directed at Kosovo Albanian civilians in 1999. The indictment alleges that he participated in a joint criminal enterprise whose aim was expel the majority of the Kosovo Albanian population from Kosovo to ensure continued Serbian control over the territory. According to the charges, this was to be achieved by a widespread or systematic campaign of murders, deportations, forcible transfers and persecutions directed at the Kosovo Albanians.

The indictment alleges that Đorđević was a member of the Joint Command of Yugoslav and Serbian armed forces that deported some 800,000 Albanians from Kosovo, killed over 700 named Kosovo Albanians, sexually assaulted many women, and looted and destroyed civilian property. He is alleged to have had effective command of the Serbian police operating in Kosovo.

One of the 40 specific incidents of these crimes occurred in March 1999 in the Kosovo town of Suva Reka. Armed forces, including those under Đorđević's command, forced some 50 members of the Berisha family into a coffee shop, opened fire on the people inside and afterwards threw in explosives, killing 44 and seriously wounding several others. Property belonging to at least five of the people killed in the coffee shop was found on bodies exhumed from a mass grave located in Batajnica, near Belgrade, some 350km away from the crime scene.

Đorđević was originally indicted in October 2003 together with Yugoslav Army generals Nebojša Pavković and Vladimir Lazarević and Serbian police General Sreten Lukić. Their case has been joined with that against former Serbian President Milan Milutinović, Yugoslav Army Chief of Staff Dragoljub Ojdanić and Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister Nikola Šainović and the trial commenced in July 2006. The prosecution completed the presentation of its evidence in May this year and the defence is expected to commence with its case-in-chief in August.

A date for Vlastimir Đorđević initial appearance before the Tribunal will be announced in due course.

Of a total of 161 persons indicted by the Tribunal since its establishment in 1993, only four persons remain fugitives, including the most wanted, General Ratko Mladić and Radovan Karadžić.

Internet address: <http://www.un.org/icty>

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*The full text of the indictment is available on the Tribunal's website
www.un.org/icty.*

*Hard copies of the indictment can be obtained from the Media Office.
All proceedings can also be followed on the Tribunal's website.*