



United Nations
Nations Unies



International
Criminal Tribunal
for the former
Yugoslavia

Tribunal Pénal
International pour
l'ex-Yougoslavie

Press Release. Communiqué de presse

(Exclusively for the use of the media. Not an official document)

REGISTRY

GREFFE

The Hague, 19 May 2002

JL/P.I.S./676e

DUŠAN KNEŽEVIĆ TRANSFERRED TO THE HAGUE

On Saturday 18 May 2002, Dušan Knežević was transferred to the Detention Unit of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

Dušan Knežević, also known as “Duško” or “Duća”, was born on 17 June 1967 in the Orlovci area of Prijedor municipality. He is charged in two separate Indictments for crimes allegedly committed in the Omarska and Keraterm camps.

The Omarska Camp

The amended “Omarska” Indictment dated 18 July 2001, alleges that, from about 25 May to about 30 August 1992, Serb forces detained and confined more than 3,000 Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats from the Prijedor municipality, Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the Omarska camp, a former mining complex approximately 15 kilometers from the town of Prijedor. Many of Prijedor’s Muslim and Croat intellectuals, professional and political leaders were sent to Omarska. There were approximately 40 women in the camp, all the other prisoners in the camp were men.

It is alleged that living conditions at the Omarska camp were brutal. Severe beatings were commonplace. The camp guards and others who came to the camp and physically abused the prisoners used all manner of weapons during these beatings. Both female and male prisoners were beaten, tortured, raped, sexually assaulted, and humiliated. In addition to regular beatings and abuse, there were incidents of multiple killings. Many, whose identities are known and unknown, did not survive the camp.

According to the indictment, Dušan Knežević entered the camp to kill, beat or otherwise physically abuse prisoners.

Charges

Dušan Knežević is charged on the basis of individual criminal responsibility (Article 7(1)) with:

- Six counts of grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions (Article 2 – wilful killing; wilfully causing serious injury to body or health),
- Six counts of violations of the laws or customs of war (Article 3 – murder; cruel treatment), and
- Six counts of crimes against humanity (Article 5 – inhumane acts; murder).

The Keraterm Camp

According to the Indictment, detainees at the Keraterm camp were crowded together so badly in the various rooms of the camp that often they could not sit or lie down. There were few

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

Public Information Services/Press Unit

Churchillplein 1, 2517 JW The Hague. P.O. Box 13888, 2501 EW The Hague. Netherlands

Tel.: +31-70-512-5356; 512-5343 Fax: +31-70-512-5355

or no toilets or facilities for personal hygiene and the water supply was inadequate. The detainees had no change of clothing, bedding or medical care and were fed starvation rations once a day. Interrogations were allegedly conducted on a daily basis and regularly accompanied by beatings and torture. The Indictment states that killings, sexual assault and other forms of physical and psychological abuse were also commonplace at the Keraterm camp. The camp guards and others who came to the camps used all types of weapons and instruments to beat and otherwise physically abuse the detainees. Bosnian Muslim and Bosnian Croat political and civic leaders, intellectuals, the wealthy, and non-Serbs who were considered as extremists or to have resisted the Bosnian Serbs were especially subjected to beatings, torture and/or killed. At a minimum, hundreds of detainees, whose identities are known and unknown, did not survive.

Dušan Knežević did not appear to hold a position in the Keraterm camp, but entered the Keraterm camp on numerous occasions for the purpose of abusing, beating torturing and/or killing detainees.

Charges

He is charged on the basis of individual criminal responsibility (Article 7(1)) with:

- 15 counts of crimes against humanity (Article 5 – inhumane acts; murder),
- 13 counts of violations of the laws or customs of war (Article 3 – murder; cruel treatment).

The date and time for his initial appearance will be announced in due course.
