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Tribunal Pénal
International pour
l'ex-Yougoslavie



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CHAMBERS

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TRIAL OF MILE MRKŠIĆ, MIROSLAV RADIĆ AND VESELIN ŠLJIVANČANIN TO COMMENCE ON TUESDAY, 11 OCTOBER, 2005

The trial of Mile Mrkšić, Miroslav Radić and Veselin Šljivančanin, indicted for crimes allegedly committed after the fall of Vukovar in eastern Croatia in 1991, will commence on Tuesday, 11 October 2005 at 10 a.m. in Courtroom III.

Indictment

According to the indictment, in late August 1991, the federal Yugoslav Peoples Army (JNA) laid siege to the city of Vukovar and engaged in a sustained artillery attack, resulting in its fall on 18 November 1991. In the last days of the siege, several hundred people sought refuge at Vukovar Hospital believing it would be evacuated in the presence of international observers.

The indictment alleges that on about 20 November 1991, the JNA and Serb paramilitary soldiers, under the command or supervision of Mrkšić, Radić and Šljivančanin, removed about 400 non-Serb individuals from the Vukovar Hospital and then transported around 300 of them to a farm building in Ovčara, where they beat them for several hours. Afterwards, soldiers transported their non-Serb captives in groups of about 10 to 20 to a site between the Ovčara farm and Grabovo, where they shot and otherwise killed at least 264 of them. After the killings, the bodies of the victims were buried by bulldozer in a mass grave at the same location.

Charges

Mile Mrkšić, Miroslav Radić and Veselin Šljivančanin are charged on the basis of their individual criminal responsibility (Article 7(1) of the Statute of the Tribunal) and their superior criminal responsibility (Article 7(3)) with:

- five counts of crimes against humanity (Article 5 of the Statute) - persecutions on political, racial and religious grounds; extermination; murder; torture; inhumane acts,
- three counts of violation of the laws or customs of war (Article 3 of the Statute) - murder; torture; cruel treatment.

Background

Mrkšić, Radić and Šljivančanin were originally indicted on 7 November 1995.

According to the third consolidated amended indictment, confirmed on 15 November 2004, Mile Mrkšić was a Colonel in the JNA and Commander of the 1st

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

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Guards Motorized Brigade and Operational Group South. He was transferred to the ICTY on 15 May 2002.

Miloslav Radić was a JNA captain and commanded an infantry company in the 1st Battalion of the 1st Guards Motorized Brigade. He was transferred to the ICTY on 17 May 2003.

Veselin Šljivančanin was a major in the JNA. He was the security officer of the 1st Guards Motorized Brigade and Operational Group South. As such, he was, according to the indictment, *de facto* in charge of a military police battalion subordinated to the 1st Guards Motorized Brigade. Šljivančanin was transferred to the ICTY on 1 July 2003.

Slavko Dokmanović, President of the Vukovar municipality in 1991, was also charged on the first amended indictment, which was confirmed on 3 April 1996. Dokmanović was transferred to the ICTY on 27 June 1997, but died in ICTY custody on 29 June 1998 after his trial had been completed. All Tribunal proceedings against him were terminated.

A pre-trial conference will be held on Monday, 10 October 2005 at 3 p.m. in Courtroom III.

*The indictment can be found on the Tribunal's website www.un.org/icty.
Courtroom proceedings can be followed on the Tribunal's website.*