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Tribunal Pénal  
International pour  
l'ex-Yougoslavie

## Press Release . Communiqué de presse

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**OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR**  
**BUREAU DU PROCUREUR**

CC/PIU/315-E  
The Hague, 13 May 1998

### STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY PROSECUTOR : "MRS PLAVSIC HAS NEVER BEEN INDICTED"

" I wish to respond to reports coming from Austrian, Bosnian and Croatian media sources which suggest that President Biljana Plavsic was arrested at Vienna airport on 6 May 1998 in respect of a warrant which is said to have been issued by this Tribunal on 10 August 1995.

It is the policy of the Prosecutor to refrain from making public comment about the existence or otherwise of non-public indictments. It is, however, necessary to make an exception to this policy in view of the latest media report which suggests that this Tribunal, according to "reliable sources", was "warned to cancel the warrant for her [Biljana Plavsic] arrest...in January 1998.....after she began co-operating with the international community and recommended Milorad Dodik as the Prime Minister of RS Government.....".

I wish to make the clearest possible statement that Biljana Plavsic has never been indicted by this Tribunal nor has any warrant of arrest ever been issued by this Tribunal for her arrest.

Further, the Prosecutor regards her independence, which was granted by the Security Council when the Tribunal's Statute was enacted, as being a matter of fundamental principle. Any attempt to exert any political influence on the Prosecutor would not be tolerated and would be publicly condemned.

Accordingly, the Prosecutor rejects in the strongest possible terms, the suggestion in the media that this Tribunal, and by implication the Prosecutor, was influenced for political reasons to withdraw a warrant of arrest in respect of Biljana Plavsic.

There is absolutely no basis for any further speculation in this regard and the Prosecutor questions the motives behind the recent statements in some media reports.

Finally, the media report also suggests that "Since legal proceedings against 14 Bosnian Serbs were dropped, it seems that indictments from 1995 were issued without considerable and reliable evidence, therefore, they can be easily cancelled". In response to such unfounded and inaccurate claims I merely wish to repeat what the Prosecutor said on the occasion of the withdrawal of these charges, namely "I wish to emphasise that this decision is not based on any lack of evidence in respect of these accused.....I took this course of action without prejudice to my right to pursue the same or other charges against these accused if, in the future, the circumstances change. I am also prepared to provide assistance to those domestic jurisdictions which pursue, in good faith, charges of serious violations of international humanitarian law against any of these fourteen accused."

Graham Blewitt, Deputy Prosecutor  
The Hague, 13 May 1998

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