



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, 14 February 2003
CC/ P.I.S/ 728e

VOJISLAV ŠEŠELJ INDICTED BY THE ICTY
FOR CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND WAR CRIMES

On Friday 14 February 2003, Judge O-Gon Kwon confirmed an Indictment against Vojislav Šešelj.

Signed by the Prosecutor on 15 January 2003, this Indictment charges Vojislav Šešelj with eight counts of crimes against humanity and six counts of violations of the laws or customs of war.

The Accused

According to the Indictment, Vojislav Šešelj was born on 11 October 1954 in Sarajevo, Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In June 1990 Vojislav Šešelj founded the "Serbian National Renewal Party", subsequently renamed the "Serbian Chetnik Movement". After the elections of December 1990 the authorities of the SFRY banned the "Serbian Chetnik Movement". On 23 February 1991, Vojislav Šešelj was appointed President of the newly founded "Serbian Radical Party" ("SRS"). In June 1991, he was elected a member of the Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. In almost daily rallies and election campaigns, he called for Serb unity and war against Serbia's "historic enemies", namely the ethnic Croat, Muslim and Albanian populations within the territories of the former Yugoslavia.

Joint Criminal Enterprise

According to the Indictment, Vojislav Šešelj participated in a joint criminal enterprise which purpose was the permanent forcible removal, through the commission of crimes in violation of Articles 3 and 5 of the Statute of the Tribunal, of a majority of the Croat, Muslim and other non-Serb populations from approximately one-third of the territory of Croatia, large parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and from parts of Vojvodina, in the Republic of Serbia, in order to make these areas part of a new Serb-dominated state. The joint criminal enterprise came into existence before 1 August 1991 and continued at least until December 1995. Šešelj participated in it until September 1993 when he had a conflict with Slobodan Milošević. He bears criminal individual responsibility for crimes which were part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against the Croat, Muslim and other non-Serb civilian populations within large areas of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Vojvodina, Serbia.

Factual allegations

The Indictment alleges that Vojislav Šešelj, as President of the SRS, was a prominent political figure in the SFRY/FRY in the time period relevant to this Indictment. He propagated

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

Public Information Services/Press Unit

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

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

a policy of uniting "all Serbian lands" in a homogeneous Serbian state. Acting alone and in concert with other members of the joint criminal enterprise, Vojislav Šešelj, participated in the recruitment, formation, financing, supply, support and direction of Serbian volunteers connected to the SRS, commonly known as "Chetniks", or "Šešeljevci".

He allegedly participated in war propaganda and incitement of hatred towards non-Serb people and instigated his volunteer units and other Serb forces in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina to commit crimes. In public speeches, he called for the expulsion of Croat civilians from parts of the Vojvodina region in Serbia and thus instigated his followers and the local authorities to engage in a persecution campaign against the local Croat population.

According to the Indictment, he also participated in the planning and preparation of the take-over of villages in Eastern and Western Slavonia (in the municipalities of Vukovar and Voćin) in Croatia and in the municipalities of Bosanski Šamac and Zvornik in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the subsequent forcible removal of the majority of the non-Serb population from these areas. He allegedly participated in the provision of financial, material, logistical and political support necessary for such take-overs; he obtained this support, with the help of Slobodan Milošević, from the Serbian authorities and from Serbs living abroad where he collected funds to support the aim of the joint criminal enterprise. He recruited Serbian volunteers connected to the SRS and indoctrinated them with his extreme ethnic rhetoric so that they engaged in the forcible removal of the non-Serb population in the targeted territories through the commission of crimes with particular violence and brutality.

The Charges

The Indictment charges Vojislav Šešelj on the basis of his individual criminal responsibility (Article 7(1) of the Statute) with :

- Eight counts of crimes against humanity (Article 5 of the Statute – murders, extermination, persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds, deportation, imprisonment, torture, inhumane acts), and
- Six counts of violations of the laws or customs of war (Article 3 of the Statute – murder, torture, cruel treatment, wanton destruction, destruction of institutions dedicated to religion or education, plunder of public or private property)
