

## **Reception for Launch of ICTY Website and Court Records Database**

**6 May 2009, ICTY, Hague**

### **Address of Judge Patrick Robinson, ICTY President**

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome and thank you for attending this reception marking the official launch of the Tribunal's new website and the Tribunal's on-line Court Records Database.

I am proud that the Tribunal has over the years been at the forefront of efforts to safeguard and promote judicial accountability. Transparency and accessibility are two watchwords for our work. The new website and the Court Records Database are a vital part of this endeavour.

Many aspects of the Tribunal's communications work has been pioneering. The establishment, for example, of an Outreach Programme by former President, Judge Gabrielle Kirk MacDonald in the late nineties was considered a bold step, but today it is regarded an essential requirement for international Tribunals. The Tribunal was also the first to conduct audio-visual webcasts of its court proceedings. This innovation is now a model for all international tribunals and can be fairly regarded as a landmark development in the field of communications and justice.

Today, the Tribunal's multi-lingual website continues to spearhead developments. It contains an impressive range of new information products, ranging from interactive maps to a variety legal databases, as well as *plain English* introductions to the many different activities and achievements of the Tribunal. Great effort has been made to provide materials that are of interest and relevance to the general public, as well as the diverse specialised audiences who follow our important mission.

One key new resource, to which I am especially pleased to draw your attention, is the Tribunal's Court Records Database. This prodigious repository of information, numbering more than 150,000 documents with around two million pages, contains every public documents filed in the Tribunal's court proceedings, from the very first in 1994, through to today. I am delighted to recommend this service to you.

The website and subsidiary databases are not only critical information tools for us here at the Tribunal. They are also an important part of the Tribunal's legacy and will be available to those working in the judiciaries in the former Yugoslavia in continuing war crimes prosecutions. The site will be updated and continually improved in the coming years and will provide an authoritative history of the Tribunal's development, work, and achievements.

Among the exciting projects currently underway is one to place on the website a complete audio-visual archive of every public court session to have taken place at the Tribunal. When completed, this ambitious project will be another first of its kind and will provide a remarkable facility for future audiences to study the Tribunal's work.

Before I close, I wish on behalf of the Tribunal to express my sincere appreciation to a number of people and organisations without whom we could not have produced such an outstanding website. The Tribunal has been blessed to work in partnership with

- Frank Tiggelaar of Domovina,
- the Amsterdam-based internet server provider "xs4all",
- and the Dublin-based developers, Tower Interactive.

We are grateful to their dedication to this project and proud of what we have achieved together.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the **European Union** and **The Charles Stewart Foundation** for their generous contributions to the continuous development of the Tribunal's website.

Finally, please permit me, esteemed guests, to thank all of you for your on-going support of the Tribunal and for your strong support of projects such as the website, which will enhance the mission of the Tribunal and promote global respect for international humanitarian law.