President Meron visits Bosnia and Herzegovina

ICTY and MICT President Theodor Meron conducted a three-day visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) on 25-27 November 2014. During his mission, the President met with victims of the conflicts that took place in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990’s and visited locations where the ICTY had established that crimes were committed against Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs during the war. He also took the opportunity to meet with the President of the BiH Court, Medžidža Kreso, and with High Representative, Ambassador Valentin Inzko.

President Meron visited the barracks of BiH Army in Čelebići, which had served as a detention centre for Serb civilians during the war, paying his respect to the victims and laying a wreath. He underlined that walking around “these deceptively peaceful grounds, the suffering of those once detained here resonated very strongly” with him.

The President then went to the village of Uzdol, where he laid a wreath at the monument erected in the memory of the Croat victims killed there in September 1993 and stated: “I am here to pay my respects to the victims of terrible cruelties and horrid crimes committed at this place on September 14, 1993. I am both honoured and sad to be here with you and I want to stress the importance of monuments such as this, as they can ensure tragic events will never be forgotten”.

At the end of his mission, President Meron paid his respects to the children of Sarajevo who were killed during the war and laid a wreath at the monument to them. He stressed that the monument served as a reminder of suffering in BiH. He invited the judicial institutions to complete the process of bringing to justice those responsible for war crimes. “This is something the ICTY cannot do anymore, but local courts and prosecutor’s offices can”, President Meron underlined.

In the 2nd Gymnasium in Sarajevo the President met with students who have learnt about the work of the Tribunal during ICTY Outreach presentations (see photo). During that visit he awarded diplomas of appreciation to teachers from a number of Sarajevo schools who are dedicated to teaching young people about the ICTY so that the tragic events of the 1990’s will not be forgotten.

Visit of Prosecutor Brammertz to Sarajevo and Belgrade

Prosecutor Serge Brammertz travelled to Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) from 12 to 14 November, and to Belgrade (Serbia) from 17 to 19 November as part of preparations for his regular six-month completion strategy report to the UN Security Council.

In Sarajevo, the Prosecutor met with Chief Prosecutor Goran Salihović, President of the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina Medžidža Kreso, Head of OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ambassador Jonathan Moore, and representatives of the international community. In addition, he met with 17 victims’ associations, from all three ethnic groups.

In Belgrade, the Prosecutor met with Prime Minister Aleksandar Vučić, Minister of Interior Nebojša Stefanović, Minister of Justice Nikola Selaković and War Crimes Prosecutor Vladimir Vukčević, as well as representatives of the international community. The main topics of discussion were cooperation with the ICTY, the processing of war crimes cases by the national judiciary and the need for improved regional cooperation between national judiciaries on war crimes matters. Discussions in Sarajevo also included the status of the Category II cases transferred from the ICTY.

During his missions, Prosecutor Brammertz conducted numerous interviews with the regional press on topics including the status of the ICTY’s trials and appeals and the Office of the Prosecutor’s position on the provisional release of Vojislav Šešelj. Prosecutor Brammertz is scheduled to brief the Security Council in the second week of December.
ICTR marks 20th anniversary and celebrates legacy

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) celebrated the 20th anniversary of its establishment on Saturday, 8 November 2014 in Arusha, Tanzania. The anniversary ceremony of ICTY’s sister tribunal was attended by ICTY and MICT President Theodor Meron, ICTR President Vagn Joensen, ICTR and MICT Prosecutor Justice Hassan B. Jallow, ICTR Registrar Bongani Majola, ICTY and MICT Registrar John Hocking, along with a number of dignitaries, including the UN Legal Counsel, the Tanzanian Minister of Foreign Affairs and members of the Rwandan and Tanzanian Governments.

President Meron noted that “the ICTR’s contribution to ending impunity for mass violations of international humanitarian law has been invaluable. Among the priorities of the Mechanism in the coming years is to ensure that the remarkable legacy of the ICTR lives on and that its archives are accessible not only to the legal community, but also the public at large in Rwanda and the world”.

Reflecting on the ICTR’s anniversary, ICTY and MICT Registrar John Hocking remarked, “Nearly at its closure, the ICTR is as relevant today as it was 20 years ago at the dawning of modern international criminal justice. Its legacy continues to enflame the global desire for justice, light the way for national and international courts, and rouse the hearts of the victims.”

High school and university lectures held in Kosovo

As in previous years, the ICTY Outreach Programme, with support of the Kosovo Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, organised presentations about the ICTY in 10 high schools, with the focus on some of the towns and regions which had been most affected by crimes committed during the conflict, including Klina/Klinë, Rogovo/Rogovë, Gnjilane/Gjilan and Uroševac/Ferizaj. Topics and questions covered during the presentations included the mandate and work of the Tribunal, witness protection, the contribution of the ICTY to international justice and specific trial cases and their judgements. The presentations were delivered by ICTY representatives Mr Astrit Lleshi and Mr Driton Gashi. Also in November, three university lectures were held in Pristina by Emiliya Viktorova, Legal Officer in the MICT Appeals Chamber, at the Law Faculty, the Law Faculty of AAB University, the “Juridica College”. Ms Viktorova explained the practice and jurisprudence of the ICTY in adjudicating war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. Students were particularly interested in learning more about the protection afforded to civilians during an armed conflict, the legal elements of the crime of genocide, and the various witness protection measures granted by the Tribunal.

Hasan Nuhanović presents his new book at the ICTY

On 12 November 2014, Bosnian author and activist Hasan Nuhanović, survivor of the Srebrenica massacres, presented his latest novel “Zbijeg - Put u Srebrenicu” (“Escape - the Road to Srebrenica”) at the Tribunal. The presentation was attended by His Excellency Ahmet Halilović, Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to The Netherlands, Bosniaks living in the Netherlands and ICTY staff members.

“Zbijeg - Put u Srebrenicu” is the story about the horror of daily life of more than 100,000 Bosniaks in Srebrenica and surrounding areas in 1992 and 1993. In his presentation, Mr Nuhanović stressed that the book was about survival. He added that in the book he tried to describe the constant battle people fought to stay alive despite the everyday shelling and shooting of the town.

The Tribunal has indicted 20 people for their responsibility for the Srebrenica killings in the summer of 1995. The ICTY found in the Krstić case that the crimes committed after the fall of Srebrenica constitute genocide.

Facts & Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>161 individuals indicted</th>
<th>141</th>
<th>Total number of accused whose proceedings have been completed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 have been acquitted, 74 sentenced (19 have been transferred to serve their sentence, 2 are awaiting transfer, 50 have served their term, and 3 died while serving their sentence), and 13 have had their cases transferred to local courts.</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Cases terminated (either because indictments were withdrawn or because the accused died, before or after transfer to the Tribunal).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Proceedings are on-going with regard to 20 accused: 4 are currently on trial, and 16 are at the appeals stage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>25 individuals were the subject of contempt proceedings before the ICTY.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>