



High Representative Tightens Noose Around Stojan Zupljanin Support Network

Acting in coordination with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and BiH security sector agencies, the High Representative, Miroslav Lajčák, today ordered all BiH law enforcement agencies to seize the travel documents of 16 individuals linked to ICTY indictee Stojan Zupljanin.

Stojan Zupljanin was initially indicted by the ICTY in December 1999 and is accused of genocide and crimes against humanity amongst other crimes.

There is clear evidence which shows that these 16 individuals have met or had contact with Stojan Zupljanin since he became a fugitive from international justice.

These 16 individuals are subject to investigation by BiH authorities. The High Representative acted to prevent these individuals leaving the country and evading justice. In order not to impede potential investigations the High Representative has decided not to make the names of the 16 individuals public.

Cooperation with the ICTY is a core priority and obligation for the International Community and BiH authorities. "We must ensure justice and the rule of law if we are to build confidence among the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina," said Miroslav Lajčák. "There can be no doubt about our willingness to act."

The international community with our security partners in the region has changed its tactics with regard to those individuals indicted by the ICTY and who remain at large, taking on the networks that provide them support and so reducing their ability to manoeuvre beyond the reach of the authorities.

After consultation with the ICTY Chief Prosecutor, the High Representative also today removed Predrag Ceranic from his post in the Intelligence and Security Agency.

Mr Ceranic transferred to OSA from the OBS at its inception in 2004. Mr Ceranic had failed OBS security clearance procedures because of links to indicted war criminals or the networks that allow them to remain at large and was therefore ineligible to hold a post in OSA. OSA, in line with their procedures removed Ceranic from his post.

Mr Ceranic took this dismissal decision to the court. Although the Court noted that Mr Ceranic failed the OSA's security procedure, it took the view that the administrative steps needed to remove Mr Ceranic from his post had not been followed and ordered his reinstatement.

Given the sensitivity of the post held by Mr Ceranic, the High Representative has deemed it necessary to prohibit him from accessing classified information which would compromise the ability of OSA to perform its legal responsibility to cooperate with the ICTY.

"It is my responsibility to ensure there is no impediment to efforts to bring those indicted for war crimes to justice," said the High Representative today. "Zupljanin's flight just 24 hours before his Nis safe house was raided shows that indicted war criminals are receiving information on the efforts to bring them to justice."

"Justice in war crimes cases is a core element of my mandate and such a fundamental issue for Bosnia and Herzegovina and that I can not bind the use of my powers to procedural failings," said Miroslav Lajčák. "I take the view that my powers should be used when the hands of the domestic institutions are tied."