

Arbour Goes To Kosovo

Author: [IWPR](#)
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This was followed on Sunday with an announcement by the head of the Tribunal's Press and Information Unit, Christian Chartier, that the Prosecutor would fly from Amsterdam to Skopje the next day, from where she intended to cross into Kosovo with a team of OSCE Verification Mission representatives.

Louise Arbour left for Kosovo without the visa she had last applied for in November but was denied. This time, she did not even apply. Christian Chartier explained: "The time of stalling over visas and jurisdiction is past. This is a time for investigation and legal action."

The Yugoslav government have been explaining their denial of visas to Arbour and her Kosovo investigative team with the assertion that ICTY has no jurisdiction over Kosovo, since according to Belgrade, there is no armed conflict there, only an "anti-terrorist operation."

Prosecutor Arbour thinks otherwise and maintains that the Office of the Prosecutor (OTP) and FRY are involved in an argument that centres on a "contested legal question". She recently suggested that she might put his country's arguments before the Tribunal judges to Zoran Knezevic, Yugoslav Minister of Justice.

Arbour maintains that the OTP ought to be allowed unrestricted access for investigation in Kosovo while the Tribunal dwells on the legal argument. In his reply, Minister Knezevic promised to examine her proposal, but in the meantime Arbour decided to short-circuit the process by leaving for Kosovo at a short notice, with or without the minister's reply.

"Jurisdiction is an important and interesting legal question... but not for today," Chartier told Tribunal Update. "For today is the investigation, which can not wait on resolution of contested legal questions."

Location: [Kosovo](#)

Focus: [International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia](#)

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