

## **Arkan Indicted**

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By Mirko Klarin

Last week the Tribunal's Chief Prosecutor, Louise Arbour, 'removed the seal' on the arrest warrant of Zeljko Raznjatovic, also known as 'Arkan', the well-known Serbian warlord and leader of the paramilitary 'Tigers'.

This followed recent media and intelligence reports of his alleged involvement in the 'ethnic cleansing' of Albanians from the Serbian province of Kosovo. The 'seal' was only removed from his arrest warrant, and not from the indictment itself, which will remain sealed until and if Raznjatovic is arrested.

Chief Prosecutor Arbour aims, by this unusual step, to make her work more pro-active. She believes that by announcing the existence of the indictments, it would serve, as she put it, "to put on notice those who might be inclined to retain his services, or to obey his orders, that they too will be tainted by their association with an indicted war criminal".

Judging by latest reports from Kosovo, however, neither those who "retain his services," nor those who "obey his orders" have lost much sleep over Arbour's disclosure. NATO military spokesperson Air Commodore David Wilby told a briefing four days after Arbour's announcement, that Arkan's Tigers, along with the equally notorious Serbian 'White Eagles' continue to actively "terrorise Albanian population in Kosovo".

The secret indictment was confirmed on September 30, 1997, but its actual existence not revealed until last week. The indictments are kept secret to increase the chances of an arrest off Yugoslav soil. Arkan, however, has long before that stopped travelling outside Yugoslavia. Even before he drew the attention of the Tribunal, Raznjatovic was already sought by European police, investigating his alleged part in a string of robberies across the continent before the break-up of the former Yugoslavia.

Speaking on Wednesday last week, Arbour said that the arrest warrant had not been previously issued in Belgrade, "in light of the refusal of the Serb government to comply with its international obligations to execute arrest warrants issued by the Tribunal, despite the explicit call for compliance issued by the Security Council in that respect. I can only hope that in the present circumstances the FRY will see fit to comply with the dictates of the Security Council and will proceed immediately to the arrest of Arkan and to his transfer to The Hague."

Arbour may not have anticipated the immediate effect of the arrest order, which was to make him an instant TV star. Not only Serbian TV stations, but also major western TV networks competed against each other to include him in their talk shows. Arkan does not know what charges have been made against him in the sealed indictment, but nevertheless he used the media attention to reject them all. He also denounced the Tribunal's actions as 'politically motivated', and used the opportunity to explain and defend the Serbian cause in Kosovo.

The name Arkan and his Tigers have been mentioned several times in past Tribunal hearings, during the trials of Dusko Tadic and Slavko Dokmanovic, the former mayor of Vukovar, and at a public hearing on the indictment against Bosnian Serb war leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. Most references came up in the testimonies related to the conduct of the campaigns in Eastern Slavonia and Baranja in late 1991, and in Eastern Bosnia from April to end of 1992.

**Location:** Balkans  
Kosovo  
Bosnia and  
Herzegovina

**Focus:** International Criminal Tribunal for the former  
Yugoslavia

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