

Blaskic Trial: Testimonies On Ethnic Cleansing In Central Bosnia

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Only two witnesses appeared publicly: Deborah Christy, a BBC producer, and the protected witness "LL." Their testimonies concerned the fate of two villages in the vicinity of Kiseljak, a town where one of Blaskic's headquarters was situated.

Deborah Christy described the situation she found in January 1993 in the village of Visnjica, where she was filming an episode of the television series "Disappearing World," which the court had the opportunity to see on Monday.

At first, Christy said, the relations between Croat and Muslim neighbors were very friendly: people visited each other and socialized together. But little by little, tension between the two communities emerged. People became increasingly worried because they could not grasp clearly what was happening around them and how things would develop in the future.

Then on 18 April 1993, Bosnian Croat forces (HVO) attacked the village, burned several Muslim houses, and expelled the Muslim population. The Visnjica the BBC crew encountered in January 1993 literally disappeared before their eyes within three months. Christy met Blaskic only once, immediately upon her arrival. He personally issued permits for work and movement on the ground to her crew. The permits proved very efficient: soldiers manning numerous HVO checkpoints would instantly let them pass as soon as they saw who had signed them.

The village of Gromeljak was attacked on the same day as Visnjica, and "LL" testified about its fate in the court. The scenario was identical: the attack began at dawn, the Muslim houses were set ablaze, and the men were taken away and detained at the HVO barracks in Kiseljak.

Soon thereafter, Muslims were thrown out of their houses and Croatian refugees from other parts of Bosnia moved in.

Location: [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

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

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