

Briefly Noted

Author: IWPR

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Appearing before Judge Carmel Agius on April 7, Borovcanin told the court that he would prefer to wait until a decision has been made on whether his chosen lawyer will be allowed to act as his defence counsel before responding to the charges.

Having been read his rights as an accused before the tribunal and asked if he understood them, Borovcanin replied that he did and revealed, "I have been following several trials [at the Hague tribunal] on television and this was one of the pieces of information I have [learned]."

Borovcanin surrendered on March 29 and was transferred to the UN detention unit in The Hague three days later. He is charged with one count of complicity in genocide, four counts of crimes against humanity - extermination, murder, persecutions and forcible transfer - and one count of murder as a violation of the laws or customs of war.

Prosecutors say from July 12 to July 19 1995, he was part of a joint criminal enterprise aimed at driving the Muslim women and children of Srebrenica out of Serb-controlled territory, and capturing and killing thousands of men and boys from the town.

Borovcanin confirmed at the hearing that he had read and understood the indictment against him.

Judge Agius ruled that a further hearing would be held within a period of 30 days, as allowed by the tribunal's rules of procedure and evidence, in order for the accused to enter a plea.

Senior Serbian general Sreten Lukic, appearing before the Hague court for the first time this week, postponed entering a plea on charges relating to his alleged role in a campaign to drive thousands of ethnic Albanian civilians from their Kosovo homes in 1999.

Lukic, who faces five charges of crimes against humanity and violations of the laws and customs of war, will have another chance to enter a plea at a further hearing sometime over the next 30 days.

He is charged jointly along with three other high-profile Serbian generals for massacres and deportations allegedly carried out by Belgrade security forces during fighting with Albanian rebels in the region.

Tribunal chief prosecutor Carla Del Ponte has already filed an application to join the generals' case with that of Milan Milutinovic, Nikola Sainovic and Drogoljub Ojdanic, who are also in detention in the Hague for the same crimes.

Lukic, who has repeatedly claimed he is too ill to stand trial, was transferred into UN custody on April 4, a week after undergoing surgery on a blood vessel in Belgrade.

He said nothing during his initial appearance before the court to suggest how he was transferred to The Hague. Rumours have been circulating among Serbian nationalists that he was arrested, but the Belgrade authorities insist he gave himself up voluntarily.

Prosecutors have revealed that a second indictee has been charged and detained under an amended version of the indictment against Serb general Vinko Pandurevic, accused of involvement in the massacre of thousands of Muslim men from Srebrenica in July 1995.

The amended indictment against Pandurevic was confirmed on March 24 - but an extra name that had been added was kept under seal until April 8, when it was announced that one Milorad Trbic had been transferred to the UN detention unit in The Hague the day before.

Trbic is charged with one count of murder, a crime against humanity. Prosecutors say as a reserve captain in the Zvornik Brigade, he personally took part in the mass murders.

Pandurevic faces seven counts of genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide and crimes against humanity - extermination, murder, persecution and forcible transfer - relating to his alleged role in the massacre of over 7,000 Srebrenica residents.

Prosecutors say at the time of the massacre he was in charge of the Zvornik Brigade, whose members were involved not only in the murders of Srebrenica inhabitants but also in disposing of their bodies.

During his initial appearance before judges this week, the general asked for a further thirty days to consult with his defence counsel before entering a plea.

Trbic is due to appear before the tribunal on April 13, when he will have the chance to respond to the charges against him.

Location: [Kosovo](#)

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