

## **Date set for Stanistic/Simatovic trial; and calls for Tolimir case to be joined with ongoing Srebrenica trial.**

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By IWPR staff in The Hague (TU No 505, 08-Jun-07)

The trial of two former senior members of the Serbian state security service will begin on August 27.

Jovica Stanistic, the ex-head of the security service, and Franko Simatovic, onetime commander of its special operations unit, are charged with "murder, persecutions on political, racial and religious grounds, deportation and inhumane acts".

They are accused of forcibly removing non-Serbs, principally Croats, Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats, from large areas of Croatia and Bosnia.

In a pre-trial hearing last week, Judge Frank Hoepfel ordered the prosecution and defense to be ready to go to trial in three months.

Both men are on provisional release.

There will be another pre-trial hearing on August 20.

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At the initial hearing of the former Bosnian Serb army general Zdravko Tolimir this week, the tribunal's prosecutor Peter McCloskey said his team would seek to join Tolimir's case with the ongoing case against seven high-ranking former Bosnian Serb military and political leaders.

The indictment against the accused - whose cases had themselves been joined - charges them over their leadership roles in the 1995 Srebrenica genocide. Tolimir has been indicted for genocide and complicity to commit genocide, as well as crimes against humanity.

However, because Tolimir was on the run at the time when the trial began in July last year, the cases were separated to allow for the trial against the seven in custody to start.

Bosnian and Serbian officials claim Tolimir was arrested on May 31 near the eastern Bosnian town of Srebrenica as a result of combined efforts by Republika Srpska and Serbia. However, Tolimir told the court this week he was actually arrested in Serbia, which Belgrade and Banja Luka later denied.

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