

## **International Justice/ICTY: Aug '08**

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IWPR war crimes justice reports said to be helping locals gain more objective understanding of the conflict. Local commentators in Bosnia and Serbia say IWPR's reports on key justice issues should help the public to form balanced views of war-time events.

Sociology professor at Belgrade's Faculty for Political Sciences Cedomir Cupic said he was impressed by a tribunal project special report published on August 8 – What Will Karadzic Trial Draw From Milosevic Case? by IWPR editor in London Caroline Tosh.

The report looked into lessons that those prosecutors and judges assigned to the case of former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic can learn from the experience of their counterparts during the trial of ex-Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic.

“This report provides an interesting angle to the whole Karadzic story. It really makes you think. I found it fascinating to see what problems prosecutors, judges and legal experts foresee [arising] in this trial,” said Cupic.

He added that articles like this can help people form a rational and unbiased view of important cases, such as that of Karadzic.

Commenting on the same report, Professor of Philosophy at Sarajevo University Ugo Vlasisavljevic said it helped him get “detailed and thorough information on a subject I am not so familiar with”.

“There is no doubt that articles on war crimes proceedings and related issues are of great interest for the people here, but I would like to emphasise that it is very important to have the sort of reporting IWPR provides – reporting which offers not only different opinions of competent and informed stakeholders on certain processes, but also explanations on why certain processes are taking place,” he said.

“When these processes are explained from different points of view – as in this article – a reader can make his own, informed opinion on these issues, and that's crucial.”

Columnist with Sarajevo-based *Oslobodjenje* daily Mirko Sagolj said the piece was published at a perfect moment – before the trial actually started.

“This report is very analytical and professional, but also easy to understand. This subject should be tackled by the media as long as Karadzic's trial lasts, as a reminder for the tribunal not to repeat the mistakes it made in the Milosevic case,” he said.

Meanwhile, IWPR's radio programme *Facing Justice*, co-produced with Radio Free Europe, RFE, continued to spark debate in the region.

Editor-in-chief of Sarajevo-based Student Radio, EFM, Zoran Catic said it is very useful to have transcripts of all Facing Justice features published on the RFE website, because they can be read long after the actual programmes were broadcast.

He noted that open discussion about war crimes issues was extremely important for Bosnian society.

A Sarajevo student, Haris Muminovic, agreed.

“Testimonies of victims of war crimes are always moving and we have to hear more of them; we have to find out what these people went through,” said Muminovic.

He added that unlike other media, Facing Justice frequently has testimonies of victims through its courtroom reporting and coverage of special events.

“Young people usually have neither time nor patience to listen to programmes related to war crimes, but I think more of them should hear Facing Justice – the issues you deal with are of key importance for the future of Bosnia,” he concluded.

A Sarajevo pensioner Alija Arnautovic said, “I listen to this programme occasionally, and every time I hear things I didn't know before.

“I think it's very important that you always provide different views on any given subject. Some of the [opinions] are completely opposing, but that gives the audience a full picture.

“We also have to learn to listen to the other side, even when we disagree with what we hear, because as long as we are not ready to hear all sides of the story, there won't be true reconciliation in Bosnia.”

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