

Karadzic Subpoena Request Turned Down

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Judges say information that Fikret Abdic might offer is similar to evidence already available.

Judges at the Hague tribunal this week refused Radovan Karadzic's request to subpoena former Bosniak rebel leader Fikret Abdic.

When war broke out in Bosnia in the early 1990s, Fikret Abdic broke with the central government in Sarajevo. He later established the Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia, which was allied with the Bosnian Serbs.

Abdic imprisoned and abused Bosniaks loyal to the government in Sarajevo. In 2002, he was convicted of war crimes by a court in Croatia. He was released in March 2012 after serving ten years of a 15-year sentence.

The accused claims that Abdic's testimony is necessary to his case, as it would show that Karadzic and members of his leadership "were willing to and did work with Muslims and their representatives who did not aspire to create an Islamic state in Europe and were ready to respect the rights of all ethnic groups".

"[Abdic's] testimony will further refute the prosecution's allegations that Dr Karadzic and the Bosnian Serbs wanted the war so they could expel Muslims from areas where Serbs were a majority," Karadzic stated in his February 6 request. (See **Karadzic Seeks Subpoena for Bosniak Rebel Leader.**)

In their February 26 decision, judges agreed that the testimony - which Abdic has been unwilling to provide - "pertains to clearly identified issues that are relevant to the accused's case" and that Karadzic has made "reasonable efforts" to obtain Abdic's cooperation.

However, the bench pointed out that the information that Karadzic is seeking to obtain is "generally similar to documentary evidence already in evidence which relates to Abdic's position and role in the conflict".

They recommended that Karadzic find out whether others could provide "comparable information relevant to his defence case, and in doing so obviate the need to subpoena Abdic".

The judges also stated, as they have in the past, that "subpoenas will not to be issued lightly" and should thus be used "sparingly, as a method of last resort".

"The chamber finds that the accused has not paid attention to this direction, and stressed that it is not an appropriate or valuable use of his resources or the chamber's time to seek subpoenas for so many witnesses," the decision said.

In January, judges refused a request to compel another Bosniak commander, Naser Oric, to appear in Karadzic's defence. (**Karadzic Denied Subpoena for Bosniak Commander.**)

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Location: [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

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

Focus: [ICTY - Radovan Karadžić Trial](#)

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