

Kolundzija Or (Another) 'Mistaken Identity' Case?

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Apart from the man-in-the-dock's verbal statement, O'Sullivan's claim was substantiated on grounds that his surname was Kolundzija, not "Kulundzija," and that he was born on 19 December 1959 in the town of Bosanski Novi, not on 31 July 1966 in Gradina, as claimed in the indictment. When asked whether that means that the man in the dock denies any connection with crimes committed in the Keraterm prison camp, O'Sullivan replied: "Yes."

Prosecutor Grant Niemann admitted the mistake in the spelling of the surname, and the date and place of birth, but added that he was convinced that SFOR troops "delivered the right man." His belief is based on the earlier photo identification by witnesses - former Keraterm prison-camp inmates, where the accused Kulundzija (or Kolundzija) was one of the shift commanders. Prosecutor believes he would succeed in proving this at the "identification hearing" that the presiding Judge Richard May set for 24 June 1999.

Should the Prosecutor fail to prove his case, this would be the third such instance of a "mistaken identity" in the Tribunal's history so far. In March 1996 German authorities arrested and extradited to the Tribunal certain Goran Lajic, who was found to be a different person from the one sought by the Tribunal despite having in common with him the same name and surname and date and place of birth.

In July last year, British special forces arrested a wrong pair of twins - Miroslav and Milan Vuckovic - instead of Predrag and Nenad Banovic. The mistake was found quickly and they were returned from the Hague to Bosnia on the same day (see Tribunal Update No. 86 for details).

It may be of interest to remind us of the statement given by the Chief Prosecutor, Louise Arbour, on that occasion. She revealed that "several of the accused who have been arrested by SFOR this year [i.e. 1998], have had in their possession when arrested false official identity paper, including photographs, issued by various Republika Srpska authorities." This is why, Arbour warned last year, "it is possible that other incidents of mistaken identity will occur (...) particularly while Republika Srpska continues to supply indicted accused with false identification papers."

Location: [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

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

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