

Krajisnik & Plavsic Case

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Judge says a two-year long joint trial would be "unacceptable"

Judge Richard May has dismissed a prosecutors' proposal for a two-year long joint trial of Bosnian Serb leaders Momcilo Krajisnik and Biljana Plavsic as "unacceptable".

The prosecution asked for the cases to be joined on January 23. Krajisnik, the former speaker in the Bosnian Serb parliament and Plavsic, a former Bosnian Serb president, face separate but identical indictments.

Goran Neskovic, representing Krajisnik, said he would declare his position on the request within the required 14 days, but pointed that a joint trial, given the defendants held different offices, would prolong the case and affect the work of the defence teams.

Plavsic's lawyer, Krstan Simic, expressed reservations over the prosecution proposal, citing a possible conflict of interests between the defences of the two accused.

But as Plavsic and Krajisnik face identical charges, it seems highly unlikely the defence teams will be able to prevent the cases being joined.

Prosecutor Brenda Hollis said this would not significantly prolong the trial because a majority of the 100 or so witnesses would be summoned as 'joint witnesses' whose testimony would concern the activities and powers of Krajisnik and Plavsic.

The prosecution has already handed the defence tens of thousands of documents relevant to the case.

Last year, Judge May set May 28, 2001 as the target date for the Krajisnik trial. May said he found it difficult to revise this but, in light of Plavsic's surrender to The Hague and the request to hold a joint trial, he would agree to set the date back. However, he called on all sides to speed up preparations so the trial could begin "as soon as possible".

The trial is expected to begin before the end of the year.

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

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