

## **Kupreskic and Others Trial: Ban on Contact with Witnesses**

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Only the witness "M" and British army officer Michael Dudley testified publicly last week. "M" survived the attack on Ahmici and Dudley went with soldiers of the BritBat UNPROFOR to collect the dead.

On 16 April members of the BritBat found the bodies of some 20 men and women. Dudley concluded that, judging by the traces of bullets, they had been killed at point-blank range. When, six days later, they returned to Ahmici they found the charred remains of some 80 more victims in burnt houses.

According to defence sources, the prosecution's presentation of evidence against the accused Vlatko Kupreskic is underway. "M" stated in her testimony that a day before the massacre she saw a group of soldiers in HVO uniforms who got out of a truck and entered "a kind of a cellar" or storage room next to Vlatko Kupreskic's house. According to the indictment that house was used as the centre from which the Croat forces started the Ahmici attack at dawn.

After last week's surprise identification of accused Dragan Papic by British Army Captain Charles Stevens and defence accusations that the prosecution had used a break in the trial to "exert influence" on the witness, the Trial Chamber decided that both the prosecution and the defence should be forbidden contact with their witnesses from the moment when testimony begins until the end of cross-examination. Such a decision applies only to the Kupreskic & Others trial, but the parties in other cases will be able to refer to it should there emerge doubts about "inappropriate" contact with witnesses. The college of judges will most likely discuss this when they next revise the Rules of Procedure and Evidence. So far these rules have been amended 13 times.

**Location:** [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

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

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