

## **Martić Experiences Psychological Crises**

**Author:** IWPR

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A psychiastrist and a doctor examined the accused and have reported that he his suffering from “a temporary psychological crises”. In their medical report, they recommended that Martić “stay at home for the next fourteen days”, and prescribed him medication.

Martić is accused of expelling the non-Serb population of the self-proclaimed SAO Krajina Serb rebel territory inside Croatia between 1991-1995, and for attacking civilian targets in the Croatian capital Zagreb in revenge for Croatian military action.

This week Martić told the court he “can’t follow the trial because of the shock caused by deaths of two close men”.

Two days earlier, former Yugolsav president Slobodan Milošević suffered a fatal heart attack, and Martić’s former-ally-turned prosecution witness, Milan Babić, killed himself a week before. All three men were being held at the time in the United Nations detention in the Hague.

“I’m in terrible shock after deaths of two men I knew very well and was emotionally attached to,” said Martić asking for trial break “until he pull himself together a little bit”.

The three mens’ roles in court had been closely linked. Babic had testified against Milosevic as a prosecution witness in 2002. Martić was expected to testify as defence witness in the same trial. Babic, whom Martić had ousted as president of the SAO Karjina, was the star witness in the case against Martić.

Defence counsel Predrag Milovančević harshly criticised the management of the UN’s detention unit for the deaths of “the most important witness against Martić and most important of the Hague’s accused”, alleging lack of control over the inmates access to medicines and food brought into the prison.

Milovančević presented the doctors’ report to support Martić’s request for the trial to be suspended.

Prosecutor Colin Black opposed the defence request arguing the trial should continue until the defence proves that Martić is unable to attend proceedings.

Presiding judge Bakone Justice Moloto expressed dissatisfaction with the medical report, remarking that although Babić’s death was mentioned as a trigger for Martić’s problems, “the accused didn’t show signs of emotional instability after Babić’s suicide and was present at the trial during the whole week afterwards”.

Judge Moloto concluded that Martić’s current crisis could only have been produced by Milošević’s death, which is not even mentioned in the medical report.

The chamber decided to suspend the proceedings for the rest of the week and continue on March 20.

**Location:** Croatia

**Topic:** Briefly Noted

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