

## **Mladic's Eyes and Ears**

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Srebrenica accused, Ljubisa Beara, had a long association with Bosnian Serb fugitive Ratko Mladic.

Former Bosnian Serb army security chief Ljubisa "Ljubo" Beara, who has made his first appearance before the Hague tribunal in connection with the Srebrenica massacre, was a member of the so-called "Knin Clan" close to most-wanted fugitive Ratko Mladic.

Beara, who served under the Bosnian Serb army chief for many years, is one of the most senior figures to appear in connection with the Srebrenica massacre, in which thousands of Muslim men and boys were executed after the Bosnian Serb army overran the United Nations safe haven in July 1995.

The resulting murders are generally accepted to be the worst crime committed on European soil since the Second World War, and was officially classed as genocide by the Hague tribunal earlier this year.

Beara, 65, was first indicted on March 26, 2002, but remained at large until his apparent surrender to the Belgrade authorities on October 10. During this time, the United States authorities were offering a reward of up to five million dollars for his capture.

The indictment charges him with six counts of genocide or complicity to commit genocide, violations of the laws and customs of war and crimes against humanity.

Beara, in his role as the Bosnian Serb army chief of security, is charged with being part of a joint criminal enterprise to, among other things, forcibly transfer the women and children from the Srebrenica enclave to Kladanj as well as to capture, detain, summarily execute by firing squad, bury, and rebury the remains of over 7,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys aged from 16 to 60.

The indictment specifies that the Bosnian Serb forces initially planned to summarily execute more than 1,000 of them on July 12 and 13.

However, the plan was expanded to include the execution of a further 6,000 who had been captured while trying to flee the enclave.

In his capacity as the head of security, Beara was responsible for the treatment of the Bosnian Muslim prisoners of war at Srebrenica.

The role of Bosnian Serb army security chief, which Beara held from May 1992, through the period specified in the indictment, was one of the most influential and powerful positions in the forces.

He was ultimately responsible for monitoring enemy activities and proposing appropriate countermeasures, and was also in command of military police units and counterintelligence activities.

Given its ideological background from the times of communist Yugoslavia, the Bosnian Serb military security department would often engage in detection and persecution of political dissidents and dissenters

from within its own ranks. As a result, it is considered the most rigid and the most conservative segment of all military structures.

Army sources describe Beara, who is married with a son, as “a typically rigid old-style Yugoslav security officer”.

His closeness to Mladic has been well-noted. He was chief of security in Mladic’s infamous Ninth (Knin) Corps, part of the Yugoslav National Army, JNA, which fought in the war against Croatia in 1991. Before the break-up of Yugoslavia, he was JNA head of military security for the Naval-Military district of Split.

Mladic is just one of Beara’s former associates to be indicted by the Hague tribunal in connection with the Srebrenica massacres but remain at large.

Bosnian Serb political leader Radovan Karadzic has been on the run since 1995, and army officers Vinko Pandurevic, Drago Nikolic, Vujadin Popovic and Ljubisa Borovcanin have also evaded capture.

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