

Nato Not Under OTP Investigation

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"If I am not willing to do that, I am not in the right place: I must give up the mission!" But she added that other inquiries would come first, saying: "It's not my priority, because I have inquiries about genocide, about bodies in mass graves."

In the way it was interpreted by the world media, the statement triggered quite a storm between The Hague, NATO HQ in Brussels and the US administration in Washington.

Paul Risley, spokesman for the prosecutor's office, has confirmed that previous chief prosecutor Louise Arbour requested her senior legal advisers to investigate possible violations of international humanitarian law by NATO - a charge which various associations and individuals have submitted to the prosecution. Some media and analysts took such statements as confirmation that indictments against political and military leaders of Western countries - and pilots - were a fait accompli.

In order to put an end to such speculations and calm the resultant storm caused in the midst of the Millennium holidays, Del Ponte issued the following statement:

"NATO is not under investigation by the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. There is no formal inquiry into the actions of NATO during the conflict in Kosovo.

"During the past six months, the Prosecutor has met with and received information from a variety of individuals and groups urging an investigation of NATO's actions during the Kosovo conflict, including members of the Russian Duma and several international legal experts.

"As with any other information provided to the Prosecutor, this information is reviewed by her staff."

According to the New York Times, the submitted information is understood to be a legal analysis of the basis for bringing charges of war crimes for NATO activities like the bombing of civilian power stations and bridges, which NATO said had military uses. The report also examines the wide use of cluster munitions, which NATO said were being used only against airfields and other military targets, but some of which fell into populated areas. The study looks at the history of such weapons and how they have been used in previous wars.

According to Risley, being an internal document, it will not be released to the public. If the Prosecutor decides to take no further action, the document will be filed away and made public at a future date for historians.

Location: [Balkans](#)
[Kosovo](#)

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

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