

## **Potential Witness Dies in Croatia - Explosive device kills Milan Levar outside his home**

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Tribunal Deputy Prosecutor Graham Blewitt said no indictments followed from Levar's statements made to the Tribunal prosecutor's office, OTP, in 1998. Blewitt said Levar was a potential witness in the same sense as any other person who had made a statement to the OTP, but he could say no more than that.

Croatian police say Levar was killed by an explosive device. Blewitt said it was yet to be established whether Levar's murder was linked to his co-operation with the Tribunal two years ago. The Zagreb government has called for a full investigation into his death.

Levar had spoken to the OTP about crimes committed by Croatian soldiers on Serbian civilians in Gospić in 1991. After speaking to The Hague investigators, Levar went on to give a series of interviews in the Croatian press in which he levelled serious accusations against Croatian Army generals Mirko Norac and Tihomir Orešković. Levar also publicly pointed the finger at senior Croatian politicians he claimed knew of the killings but did nothing.

Blewitt said Levar had turned down protection from the Tribunal. Levar had wanted to maintain a public profile in Croatia, Blewitt said, and for that reason he was open about his co-operation with the Tribunal.

"This might not be seen by some as a wise thing to do if you were trying to protect yourself, however, he obviously took the view that his best protection was going public," Blewitt said.

Levar had, however, requested that the OTP seek the co-operation of the Croatian authorities in providing protection. An OTP press release following Levar's death claims the Tribunal wrote to the Croatian government regarding protection on April 1, 1998. A reply from the Croatian government acknowledging their responsibility for this was received on April 15, 1998 the press release said.

The Croatian Interior Ministry said the OTP request had been found in the archives, but admitted instructions had never been passed to the Gospić police.

**Location:** [Croatia](#)

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

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