

REGIONAL REPORT: Bosnia to take on Hague Trials

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A special court may be set up in Bosnia to prosecute middle and low ranking Hague indictees.

The tribunal is set to allow the judiciary in Bosnia to try more war crimes suspects in an effort to help it get through its mounting caseload.

Courts in Bosnia are already trying locally charged war crimes suspects - the new initiative would permit the prosecution of low and middle ranking Hague indictees under tribunal conditions and regulations.

The Hague, however, has yet to decide what form the plan would take: whether there would be a local court dealing with crimes in Bosnia, or an international one handling atrocities throughout the former Yugoslavia.

It's also not clear if the UN Security Council would have to pass a special resolution transferring the powers it vested in The Hague to the new tribunal, or whether The Hague can do so on its own.

The chairman of the Bosnian presidency, Beriz Belkic, said tribunal officials have said the new war crimes court would require a budget of around 70 million dollars for the first five years. "If this project succeeds, trials will be held in this court probably for the next 20 or 30 years," he said.

The Federation has broadly welcomed the initiative, but Republika Srpska has some reservations. Sinisa Djordjevic, advisor to the RS prime minister Mladen Ivanic on tribunal matters, said while war crimes suspects should be tried locally, the creation of a special war crimes court in Bosnia was premature.

Djordjevic said the two entities had already signed a protocol on the exchange of judicial files and documents between their respective courts to facilitate inquiries and investigations and arrange the transfer of suspects from one entity to another.

The Office of the High Representative, OHR, has been closely consulted over the tribunal proposal - and a group of its officials are involved in setting up a legal framework for it, to be submitted to the UN Security Council by June.

The OHR team - comprising Almiro Rodriguez, an ex-Hague judge; John Ralston, a former head of tribunal investigations; Kjell Bj

Location: [Balkans](#)
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