

Rights Activist Faces Jail for Urging Mladic Arrest

Author: [Merdijana Sadović](#)

Amnesty International says protester will be considered a prisoner of conscience if she is jailed. Amnesty International and the Youth Initiative for Human Rights this week condemned the imprisonment of a human rights activist who had put up posters demanding the arrest of the Hague tribunal's most wanted fugitive, General Ratko Mladic.

A municipal court in the southern Serbian city of Nis sentenced Maja Stojanovic to be detained for ten days because in July 2005 she refused to pay a fine for putting up the posters in an area not designated for such purposes.

Stojanovic claims her refusal to pay the fine was an act of civil disobedience, because the posters were being put up over existing ones, for which no one had been penalised before.

"It is unacceptable that Maja Stojanovic should end up behind bars for a publicly stated view that Mladic must be sent to The Hague and for reminding the public of the Srebrenica genocide," said president of the Youth Initiative for Human Rights, YIHR, Andrej Nosov in a statement issued this week.

London-based Amnesty International strongly condemned the court's decision to detain Stojanovic.

"Maja Stojanovic was sentenced at a trial which raised serious doubts about the independence of the Serbian judiciary. If she ends up in prison, Amnesty International will consider her a prisoner of conscience," the organisation said in a statement issued this week.

Amnesty is especially concerned about some media reports that a judge hearing Stojanovic's case allegedly said that the victims of the 1995 Srebrenica genocide, with which Mladic has been charged, "deserved what happened to them" and that they are "the same as those Muslims who burnt [his] house in Kosovo".

"Given that Serbia's senior officials advocate in public the cooperation with The Hague tribunal, we would urge the state to pay this fine, if the Serbian president and others whom we have appealed to have no legal mechanisms at their disposal to suspend the fine," Nosov said this week.

Amnesty claims the Stojanovic case is another attempt by the Serbian authorities to punish human rights organisations who are trying to force Serbia to face up its recent past.

A number of other Serbian NGOs have joined the protest against Stojanovic's sentence, including the Humanitarian Law Center, the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights and Women in Black.

Merdijana Sadovic is IWPR's Hague project manager.

Location: [Serbia](#)

Topic: [Briefly Noted](#)

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

Source URL: <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/rights-activist-faces-jail-urging-mladic>