

## **Seselj Contempt Conviction Upheld**

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Judges say there is no cause for altering defendants 15-month prison sentence.

Appeal judges last week upheld a contempt conviction for Serbian nationalist politician Vojislav Seselj, who was found guilty in July 2009 of revealing information about protected witnesses in books he wrote.

Judges last week dismissed all eight grounds of his appeal and also affirmed his 15-month prison sentence.

In parallel criminal proceedings, Seselj is charged with nine counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity including murder, torture and forcible transfer for atrocities carried out between August 1991 and September 1993, in an effort to expel the non-Serb population from parts of Croatia and Bosnia.

In the appeal judgement, judges wrote that Seseljs complaints about the length of his prison sentence included vague and unsubstantiated assertions regarding anti-Serb bias that are insufficient to show an abuse of discretion on the part of the trial chamber.

They said there is no cause for altering Seseljs sentence on that particular ground of appeal.

Seselj also argued that trial judges failed to find that his actions actually compromised any witness safety or testimony.

Appeal judges wrote that Seseljs defiance of the tribunals order regarding protecting witnesses could potentially disrupt the tribunals ability to obtain witness testimony and thus obstruct the tribunals administration of justice.

This is a grave matter, the appeal judges said.

Seselj is also facing trial in a second contempt case, where he is accused of disclosing information about 11 protected witnesses in one of his books.

An order issued in lieu of an indictment states that the book contains the real names, occupations and places of residence of these witnesses, allowing them to be identified.

That case is currently on hold because Seselj is seeking to disqualify two of the judges set to preside over the trial.

Arrested in 2003, Seselj remains leader of the Serbian Radical Party, SRS, based in Belgrade.

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

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

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