

## **Talic And Brdjanin Plead Not Guilty To Genocide**

**Author:** IWPR

Tribunal Update 159: Last Week in The Hague (10-14 January 2000)

Momir Talic (former commander of 1st Krajina Corps) appeared before the

court last week to enter their pleas against an indictment, which was

significantly amended by the prosecutor at the end of last year.

The revised

indictment includes the charges of genocide against Bosniaks and Croats in

the area of Bosnian Krajina (see Tribunal Update 157) and 10 additional

counts.

In addition to two counts of genocide, Brdjanin and Talic are charged with

persecution, extermination and wilful killing, torture, deportation,

unlawful and wanton extensive destruction, appropriation of property and the

wanton destruction or devastation of villages and institutions dedicated to

religion.

Brdjanin and Talic pleaded "not guilty" to all charges.

After entering his plea, Talic unexpectedly requested permission to address

the Court.

"I personally feel that justice and law would be satisfied if I would be

tried by a military court. That is to say by generals who have taken part in civil wars, and there are enough of them," he said.

He added he believed that it would "not only be logical, but also just, since the military judiciary deals with the military and knows the military organisation."

When asked by Judge David Hunt, whether the defendant's statement raised the issue of the Tribunal's jurisdiction, Talic's French lawyer, Michel Pitron, answered that his client "reacted quite personally" to being detained for four months and that he "hasn't been shown the evidence". Pitron concluded the statement did not, therefore, represent a challenge to the jurisdiction of the Tribunal.

**Focus:** International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia

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