

## **Tribunal: May '07**

### **Author: IWPR**

International media follow up on IWPR coverage of Blagojevic appeal judgment and plans underway for regional radio programme.

The most significant development at the tribunal this month was the acquittal of former Bosnian Serb army commander Vidoje Blagojevic for complicity in genocide, after appeal judges concluded that there was insufficient evidence of genocidal intent.

On May 9, the appeal chamber cut Blagojevic's 18-year prison sentence to 15 years, after upholding other convictions for his role in the mass killings that took place at Srebrenica in July 1995. This decision again highlighted the difficulties prosecutors face in proving genocidal intent, and judges' differing interpretations of the legal definition of genocide.

In response to the appeals judgment, IWPR produced two articles, which discussed the most pertinent issues raised.

Two days later, reporters and analysts from other renowned international media, such as The Guardian, followed suit and wrote articles on the same subject. Their angle was very similar to the one taken by IWPR.

A number of representatives of local media organisations in Bosnia also called the project and asked for background information on this case.

This once again proves that we are seen as one of very few reliable sources for local and international journalists, who want to know more about war crimes issues and trials at the Hague tribunal.

In spite of this, it also became clear this month that the project's profile needs to be raised in the regional media.

An unofficial poll the project conducted recently with NGOs, international organisations and representatives of the media in Bosnia and Serbia indicated that those who know about IWPR's Tribunal Update and receive the weekly newsletters by email have much respect for its output.

While almost all of them spoke very highly of the quality and relevance of the project's reports, there was a consensus that not enough people in the Balkans are aware of the project, and said we should put more efforts into reaching a wider audience.

In another development - that should help raise the project's profile - a verbal agreement has been made this month with the director of Radio Free Europe's programme for the Balkans on future cooperation with IWPR.

The director has set aside a half-hour slot on Sunday afternoons - which will be used for a radio programme produced by IWPR staff and contributors on issues related to war crimes and trials at the

Hague tribunal.

We also held discussions with RFE editors about the possibility of broadcasting those radio programmes on other regional radio stations, which are not RFE affiliates. The editors have indicated that this will be possible and could be regulated with contracts with the radio stations in question.

Other interesting stories published this month included a profile of one of the most controversial defence lawyers at the Hague tribunal, Michael Karnavas, which was picked up by the online version of The Economist.

Another was a piece which looked at the upcoming trial of two Croatian generals, which is the first case transferred from the Hague to the local judiciary in Croatia.

This article pointed to a number of issues this country has to deal with if it wants to prove it is capable of holding war crimes trials in the future.

Finally, Sara Goodman of the Northwestern University in Chicago has just completed an internship with the project. Sara's time in The Hague has been very successful, and she is now embarking on a field trip in Macedonia, where she will gather material for a feature to be posted on the website next month.

**Location:** Balkans  
Macedonia  
Albania  
Serbia

**Topic:** Project Highlight

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

---

**Source URL:** <https://iwpr.net/global-voices/tribunal-may-07>