

## **Tribunal's President Calls for Continued Support**

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Judge Robinson urges international community to allow court to fulfill mandate.

In an address to the United Nations Security Council, the newly elected president of the Hague tribunal pressed world leaders to keep financing the court until it completes its work.

"I address you today, humbled by the magnitude and complexity of the pioneering role of the tribunal, and deeply concerned that as [its] work draws towards its final stages it should remain sufficiently resourced to discharge its mandate," said Judge Patrick Robinson in his speech delivered in New York on December 12.

"I therefore implore you today, members of the Security Council and of the international community, give the tribunal the support it needs to enable it to discharge its historic role," he concluded.

According to the tribunal's completion strategy, all trials were supposed to be completed by the end of 2008 and all appeals by the end of 2010. However, it is already clear that the tribunal will not be able to meet these deadlines.

According to President Robinson, while the majority of trials should be completed during 2009, some trials will continue into 2010. With regard to appeals, Judge Robinson noted that it is likely that a number of them will continue into 2012.

In his report, the judge said the main causes of the delays were the late arrests of several key fugitives. Three of them, including former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, were transferred to the Hague tribunal only this year, and their trials can not start before 2009.

The court president also urged the international community to focus its efforts on securing the immediate arrest of the remaining fugitives, Ratko Mladic and Goran Hadzic, so that the work of the tribunal can continue apace.

"The international community must recognise the risks posed to international justice if these fugitives are not apprehended and brought to justice," he said.

Judge Robinson also emphasised the importance of strengthening partnerships with domestic judiciaries.

"As you know, a key component of this cooperation was the referral of 13 accused to jurisdictions in the former Yugoslavia, ten accused having been transferred to Bosnia and Hercegovina, two accused to Croatia, and one accused to Serbia," he said.

"The referral bench continues to monitor referred cases and is thus far satisfied that they are being conducted in full compliance with international norms of due process."

The tribunal's chief prosecutor, Serge Brammertz, also addressed the Security Council on December 12, outlining the efforts of his office in conducting the current cases against senior political and military figures, and the steps taken to present these broad and complex cases more efficiently and expeditiously.

He expressed his concern with witness interference and emphasised the great importance of protection of witnesses who testify before the tribunal, asking for the support of states in which witnesses reside in this respect.

Talking of cooperation of the Balkan states with the tribunal, Prosecutor Brammertz said that it "remains critical in several areas: the access to archives and the provision of documents, access to and protection of witnesses, the search for, arrest and transfer of the remaining fugitives".

He also said the arrest of the two remaining fugitives, Mladic and Hadzic, "remains the highest priority".

"To fulfill the mandate of the tribunal, they must be arrested and brought to trial as soon as possible," concluded Brammertz in his report.

Merdijana Sadovic is IWPR's Hague tribunal manager.

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