

Tudjman Not Indicted

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Biljana Plavsic received her 'confirmation' from the Prosecution in May last year after she was detained for several hours at the airport in Vienna, while the Austrian police checked whether there was a warrant for her arrest. To prevent the affair being used for political purposes, the Prosecution abandoned its usual practice and publicly announced that there was neither a public or secret warrant for her arrest. (See Tribunal Update No. 76).

The Croatian President received a similar confirmation from deputy Chief Prosecutor Graham Blewitt last week. Blewitt, first in talks with the Croatian ambassador in The Hague, and then in a telephone interview with the Zagreb paper Vecernji list, stated that there is no sealed indictment against Franjo Tudjman.

But according to Paul Risley, the Prosecution's press representative, Blewitt specified that this "refers to the present situation," that is that there is no such indictment, "now".

At last week's press conference, Risley said that the confirmation represents an "exception" and that it did not imply a change of policy on the secret indictments - which up to the moment of the arrest of the accused are kept top secret. On the same occasion, Chief Prosecutor Louise Arbour stressed that the secrecy of the "sealed indictments must be protected," even if that meant denying the existence of sealed indictments.

"Never believe a denial," Risley added, enigmatically.

(Zeljko Raznatovic, also known as 'Arkan', has already discovered this for himself. At the request of his lawyer, Giovanni Di Stefano, Arkan got a written certificate saying "that the name Raznatovic is not on the list of the persons indicted to-date by the ICTY" - see Tribunal Update No. 31. But even as Arkan brandished his 'certificate', announcing his intention to sue the US CNN network for calling him a 'war criminal', the prosecution's secret investigation into his role as leader of the Tigers paramilitary groups was drawing to an end. That investigation was to result in a secret indictment in September 1997 that was only publicly announced in March this year.)

Location: [Balkans](#)

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