

**Case: Branko Grujić *et al* – ‘Zvornik’**  
**War Crimes Chamber**  
**Belgrade District Court, Republic of Serbia**  
**Case number: KV.5/05**

**Trial Chamber:** Tatjana Vuković, Trial Chamber President, Vesko Krstajić, Judge, Trial Chamber Member, Olivera Anđelković, Judge, Trial Chamber Member

**War Crimes Prosecutor:** Milan Petrović

Accused: Branko Grujić, Branko Popović, Dragan Slavković a.k.a. Toro, Ivan Korać a.k.a. Zoks, Siniša Filipović a.k.a. Lopov, and Dragutin Dragičević a.k.a. Bosanac

Report: Nataša Kandić, Executive Director of the Humanitarian Law Centre (HLC), and Dragoljub Todorović, Attorney, victims representatives

### **10 March 2006**

#### **Examination of witness Asim Alić**

Until October 1991 the witness worked as an inspector at the City of Belgrade SUP and after that as an assistant to the police station commander in Zvornik. At that time witness K was the police commander and Osman Mustafić the chief of police. The witness was told by witness K that he had been appointed by the SDS. The witness himself was brought there by the SDS president, the accused Branko Grujić, who, the witness said, was ‘big daddy whose word was law.’ The witness knew that witness K and Grujić were close friends and were often together; from October 1991 to 6 April 1992, when the Serb police and government moved to Karakaj, he saw Grujić drop into the office of witness K every day.

The station had about 130 police officers, half of them Bosniaks and the other half Serbs. The Zvornik OUP [Internal Affairs Organ - police station] was responsible to the Security Services Centre in Tuzla and to the Republic MUP in Sarajevo. Long columns of military lorries and soldiers crossed from Serbia into Bosnia as early as the end of 1991 while the Croatia war raged. Some of the soldiers were drunk and fired shots from the lorries. The witness said that the situation was fraught with danger and that joint police and army patrols were detailed to guard the vital facilities.

Although Zvornik had no JNA garrison at the time, an armoured battalion from Jastrebarski in Croatia stationed itself in Čelopek. The soldiers distributed weapons from the lorries only to Serbs. The witness registered all army activities – such as the distribution of weapons, the passage of army columns, and the establishment of bases – drew up official records and forwarded them to the superior authorities in Tuzla and Sarajevo.

The witness said that the Serbs did not try to conceal the fact that they had been issued weapons, and they walked the streets carrying light machine guns and submachine-guns on their backs.

The police seized these weapons but since the Serbs protested and raised barricades they had to give them back for the sake of 'domestic peace'.

### **The Serb policemen break away**

The witness said he remembered that on 6 April 1992 the Serb policemen left the station and moved to Karakaj. He was told by witness K that the decision had been taken by the SDS, i.e. by Grujić.

### **The arrest of Radicals and Arkanites**

About 1 or 2 o'clock on the morning of 8 April, the witness was summoned to the station and told that they had four prisoners. He went there at once and interrogated the prisoners for a long time. He identified two as the brothers Vučković from Umka near Belgrade, one of them named Duško a.k.a. Repić and the other nicknamed Žučo. They had identification papers of the Serb Chetnik Movement. The third was Milorad Luković [Ulemek] a.k.a. Legija, who had a military ID booklet issued by Pančevo military police and an ID issued by Arkan. He also had many passes permitting him to move through various battle areas and an ID of the French Foreign Legion, which the witness discovered sawn into the tunic. The fourth was also a member of the Arkan unit. They were caught in a Mercedes car with automatic rifles, pistols, commando knives, lengths of choke wire, fingerless gloves, and ski masks. The prisoners said that they were on their way to the Hotel Jezero in Mali Zvornik and that Arkan, witness K, and Branko Grujić were waiting for them there. They also said they had come to defend imperilled Serbdom against Muslims.

### **The witness's information about the camps**

On 8 April 1992 the witness managed to leave Zvornik, took refuge in Kula grad, and escaped to Tuzla through the woods. In Tuzla, he reported to the Security Services Centre chief who told him to rest a few days and then to gather together all the police officers and set up a police station for Zvornik at Sapna. The witness did this and was put in charge of some 40-50 policemen at the Sapna station, where he received information on the developments and situation in Zvornik. His sources of information were Bosniaks who had crossed to free territory, escaped, been exchanged, or moved out. He interviewed them, recorded their statements, drew up criminal reports against known and unknown perpetrators and forwarded them to the competent authorities. He kept copies of these reports and made them available to the Cantonal Prosecutor's Office. The reports pertained to the rape of small girls in the Liplje camp and the crimes in the Zvornik camps.

The witness collected a great many statements about the crimes committed in the Čelopek Cultural Centre. According to his information, the Čelopek Cultural Centre was a camp for Bosniaks and that prisoners were daily abused, raped, forced to help loot Muslim houses, and murdered. He learned details of what went on in the camps from former detainees: '[...] and then they would say, the camp commander was So-and-So, the guards were such-and-such, So-and-So used to come and maltreat us, beat us, cut off an ear, genitals...'

Asked by the Trial Chamber President who organized and ran those camps and prisons, the witness replied, 'Everything was directed by the SDS...the Arkanites and the Šešeljites and all those groups turned up at the call of the SDS.'

Speaking about Kozluk, the witness said that he had had relatives there and knew that they had had no opportunity of leaving the village until they were driven out. With them were Muslims from neighbouring villages. 'Before they got out, they had to sign a statement that they were giving up their entire property,' he said.

As for Grujić, the witness said that while 'his very function made him the most responsible person' he did not know whether this was so in practice. As for Popović, he said that he had 'heard many ugly things [about him] later.'

Humanitarian Law Center