

**Case: Slobodan Medić *et al***  
**War Crimes Chamber**  
**Belgrade District Court, Republic of Serbia**  
**Case number: K.br. 6-05**

**Trial Chamber:** Gordana Božilović-Petrović, Judge, Trial Chamber President, Vesko Krstajić, Judge, Trial Chamber Member, Vinka Beraha-Nikićević, Judge, Trial Chamber Member

**Prosecutor:** Bogdan Stanković

**Accused:** Slobodan Medić, Pera Petrašević, Aleksandar Medić, Aleksandar Vukov and Branislav Medić

**Report:** Nataša Kandić, Humanitarian Law Center (HLC) and Dragoljub Todorović, Attorney, victims representatives

**23 December 2005**

**Aleksandar Vukov's defence**

The accused joined the 'Škorpioni' on 1 April 1994, after serving six months with the Serbian Volunteers' Guard.

The Trial Chamber sought to clarify and establish whether the accused acted as deputy to the unit's commander Slobodan Medić and his connection, if any, with the subject-matter of the indictment (the execution of the six Bosniak civilians).

As to the first question, the accused said: 'At the time the unit left for the Cazin Krajina, that is in November 1994, I informally discharged the duties of deputy commander. At that time I was officially commander of the Reconnaissance Platoon, but my platoon had been sent into the field without me. I was given the charge of 12 km of line and I performed the duties of commander following the unit's return...'

Further, the accused stated that there was no formal decision appointing him as deputy commander and that he occasionally discharged these duties in the commander's absence. He explained that when the commander was not with the unit he performed duties giving rise to his greater responsibility.

Asked by the Trial Chamber what kinds of decisions he could have taken in his capacity as deputy commander, the accused replied that he kept in touch with the commander by telephone, but when this was not possible, he took decisions without consulting the commander and informed him of these decisions later when he was able to re-establish contact with him.

Regarding his alleged participation in the incident, the accused said that throughout his service on the Trnovo front he was at the front with his Reconnaissance Platoon numbering over 20 soldiers. He said that he paid visits to the command post only a few times, making sure he did so

at night in order to avoid being seen. During the 20 days he spent in the front line, commander Medić never appeared there and they communicated by radio.

As to how they were kept supplied with food and ammunition, the accused said: 'It was not customary for me to go down, I mostly sent down men who weren't charged with any duties at the time.' Between the command post and the front line there was a spot 4 km from the front line which could be reached safely by lorry carrying ammunition and food. It was to this spot that Vukov walked down on the day of the execution, saying he was to pick up a food parcel following a prior call from the commander. Asked by the Trial Chamber President to explain how he knew where to go, he replied: 'It was understood that I was to go down to the spot the lorry could reach.' Having arrived there, he saw a group of soldiers some 40 metres away. Petrašević detached himself from the group and approached him. The accused saw some men with hands tied behind their backs and Petrašević informed him that they were prisoners. He asked Petrašević whether he had brought the parcel, to which Petrašević replied that he knew nothing about it and that he had come on other business. The accused also said that it was not usual for Petrašević to bring food. Vukov said he was not sure whether the lorry was there on his arrival on the scene. Asked by the Trial Chamber President why he had left his two men behind, he replied unconvincingly that they stayed there in case the food delivery was late.

#### **Victims' Legal Representative notes:**

*In his defence the accused failed to account for the following manifest illogicalities: why he went downhill to collect the food given that he had never done that before; why he had been instructed personally by his commander to collect the food given that that was not his responsibility; why he left the line without first finding out whether the food was on its way at all; why he left the two soldiers behind with Petrašević and returned to the front line on his own; why he made no further inquiries regarding the prisoners he had seen lying beside the road with their hands tied and what was the other task Petrašević was supposed to carry out.*

The hearing was attended by eight victim family members from the Srebrenica Women's Association headquartered in Tuzla, as well as by Sajma Salkić, sister of Saib, and Smaila Ibrahimović, daughter Smail.