

**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

**3 July 2006**

**Examination of witness Tomislav Kovač**

Until September 1995 the witness was deputy RS Minister of Internal Affairs and commander of the RS police forces headquartered in Pale. In September 1995 he was appointed RS Minister of Internal Affairs.

**The unit's arrival in the Trnovo front**

The RSK Army dispatched from Erdut a unit composed of three companies as a reinforcement on the Sarajevo front, which the witness said was of key importance for the defence of Sarajevo and the RS. The unit's commander was Vasilije Mijović.

The Chamber President asked whether this was the same unit that the court records referred to under the name of 'Škorpioni' and the witness replied in the affirmative, adding however that he knew nothing of a 'Škorpioni' commander named Slobodan Medić. He said he was sure that the unit's commander was Vasilije Mijović.

**Presentation of documents on the links between 'Škorpioni' and the Serbian MUP**

i) The Trial Chamber member, Judge Vesko Krstajić, presented a dispatch addressed to Tomislav Kovač from the Forward Command Post and signed by an RS MUP officer named Savo Cvjetinović, the document reading: 'The replacement of the Serbian MUP Škorpije [sic] unit has entered into effect...'

Asked whether it was true that the unit belonged to the Serbian MUP, the witness replied: 'To put it simply, this imprecision, the listing of that unit by Savo Cvjetinović and Milenko Kariška, my deputy, as [belonging to] the Serbian MUP, and by others, [they] did that on purpose, they

threw in the “Serbian MUP” bit to bolster morale so the fighters out there would think the Serbian MUP was helping us at the time - which wasn’t true.’

**Victims’ Legal Representative notes:**

*The explanation is unconvincing and illogical because the said dispatch was sent to the minister and other senior RS MUP officials, not to the fighters in the field, so, contrary to what the witness says, the contents of the dispatch could not have improved the morale of the fighters.*

ii) The Prosecutor showed the witness document No. 64-95 dated 10 July 1995 indicating that joint MUP detachments of the RSK, Serbia and the RS were used on the Trnovo front. The witness ignored this and insisted that the said unit was not detached from the joint force and dispatched to the Srebrenica area, as requested by the order, and that it remained on the Trnovo front until its departure from the theatre of war around 20 July 1995.

**Victims’ Legal Representative notes:**

*Although the contents of the order indicates that the Serbian MUP unit ‘Škorpioni’ was stationed on the Trnovo front as part of a joint detachment also comprising RSK and RS MUP units, the witness made no statement in this regard.*

iii) Asked by the victims’ representative, Nataša Kandić, to explain the letters, contained in the court documents, from the Srbinje [Foča] Public Security Centre (CJB) informing the Police Forces Command Staff headquartered in Pale that Serbian MUP members wounded on the Trnovo front have been brought to the hospital in Foča, the witness categorically denied that they were Serbian MUP members.

**Composition of the police forces on the Trnovo front**

Drawn out by questions by the Trial Chamber member, Judge Krstajić, Slobodan Medić identified the units present on the Trnovo front as follows: a police unit from Erdut [seat of the Ministry of Defence of the self-styled Republic of Serb Krajina commanded by one nicknamed ‘Plavi’, Željko ‘Arkan’ Ražnatović’s unit incorporated in the VRS and commanded by ‘Arkan’s’ colonel known as ‘Kajman’, and the ‘Škorpioni’, the RSK Army unit from Đeletovci.

The witness, Tomislav Kovač, confirmed that the three units referred to by Slobodan Medić were actually the three companies under the command of Vasilije Mijović, those he identified as the group from the RSK sent to the Trnovo front as reinforcements. As to why the ‘Škorpioni’ commander took no orders from Vasilije Mijović, the witness said there was a practice at the front for orders to be given by the line commanders; consequently, in the front sector manned by the ‘Škorpioni’ orders were issued by the line commander Goran Šehovac, who was in charge of the Sarajevo Security Centre Special Police Units. Slobodan Medić agreed to this.

The witness was adamant that none of the units mentioned above was a paramilitary unit because, he said, it was not possible for a paramilitary unit to enter the territory of the RS. ‘[A unit] could have come only as a unit belonging to the Ministry of Defence or Army, or to a defence headquarters, to the Army of the RSK, Serbia, other parts, other countries, whatever.’

### **The Jahorina–Trnovo front road**

In contrast to the witnesses who insisted that buses could not have negotiated the road over Mount Jahorina, Kovač allowed that this was possible: ‘Why, you could cross Jahorina in an all-terrain vehicle, though you couldn’t do it in a luxury [...] I know that lorries could pass, but as to buses, they might have passed in summer, buses could have passed in the summer period.’

#### **Victims’ Legal Representative notes:**

The hearing was attended by Nura Alispahić, mother of Azmir, Safeta Muhić, sister of Safet, Refija Alić, Naza Hasanović, Bahra Kandžetović, Rejha Avdić and Nura Begović, victim family members of the Srebrenica Women’s Association.

Humanitarian Law Centre