
BOSNIAN SERB SOLDIERS JAILED FOR ATTACKING BOSNIAK VILLAGES

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The Bosnian state court on Thursday jailed Stojan Kenjalo and Dragan Balaban for seven years each and Zoran Kenjalo for five years after they admitted guilt as part of a plea bargain.

The three former Bosnian Serb soldiers admitted participating, together with others, in the persecution of Bosniaks from the hamlets of Ekici and Alici in the Bosanski Novi municipality from May to September 1992 as part of a widespread and systematic attack on the civilian population.

The verdict said that, on June 22, 1992, the three men, who were accompanied by more than 20 other armed fighters, headed towards the hamlets of Maslovare, Alici and Ekici in order to attack them and on their way there killed a man driving a tractor.

After they arrived, they the forced Bosniak civilians to leave their houses and killed two more people.

They escorted the displaced civilians, who walked in a line, to the Orthodox cemetery, physically abused the men, hitting them with their fists and various objects and kicking them, while the women and children watched it all, presiding judge Mediha Pasic said.

After that, they separated the men and escorted them to the Muslim cemetery, where they were ordered to dig a communal grave. Acting on orders, the defendants and other people shot at them, killing 24 people, and then covered their bodies with earth, Pasic added.

The court also said that most of the corpses were dug up in 1996 and dumped into the estuary of the Japra and Sana rivers.

So far, parts of the human bones of three people have been found in the estuary and downstream in the Japra river, while six corpses were found and identified during an exhumation from the aforementioned grave. The bodies of the other men, who were dumped into the river, have still not been found, Pasic said.

She also said that the defendants signed the plea agreement voluntarily and gave up their right to file an appeal or stand trial.

Pasic said she considered the seven and five-year sentences were proportional to the gravity of the crime.

The court has also considered the mitigating circumstances, including the fact that the defendants

have fully admitted guilt and expressed sincere repentance, as well as the fact that defendant Zoran Kenjalo was only 19 when he committed the crime, she said.

Justice Report BIRN Sarajevo

<http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/kenjalos-and-balaban-sentenced-to-19-years-06-09-2016>

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