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## **BOSNIA: MLADIC FACING 11-POINT WAR CRIMES INDICTMENT**

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The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in The Hague on Wednesday will announce its final verdict on former Bosnian Serb commander Ratko Mladic, once dubbed the Butcher of Bosnia.

Mladic, 74, could be convicted of individual and collective crimes on an 11-point indictment, including the Srebrenica genocide where more than 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were killed in 1995 by Serb forces.

Prosecutors want Mladic to be sentenced to life imprisonment.

Ratko Mladic was born on 12 March 1942 in the Kalinovik area of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Mladic, trained in the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) Military Academy in Belgrade. He first served in the JNA, then in the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS) which was established in Bosnia-Herzegovina as Yugoslavia broke apart.

The VRS was founded at the beginning of the war in Bosnia, on May 12, 1992, and Mladic was its commander. JNA forces in Bosnia were also converted to VRS units.

After the end of the war with the Dayton Accords reached on Nov. 21 1995, Mladic became a fugitive for over a decade. He was eventually arrested in Serbia on May 26, 2011, and handed over to The Hague tribunal for trial on 31 May 2011.

Mladic's case began on May 16, 2012 and ended with summations between 5-15 Dec. 2016. The more-than-500-day trial called 591 witnesses and saw 9,914 pieces of evidence accepted by the court.

### **Indictment**

The first indictment against the former Bosnian Serb commander was made on June 25, 1995.

In an amended indictment of Dec. 16, 2011, Mladic was presented with a list of crimes over in 11 articles, two of which were genocide.

He is accused of planning and promoting ethnic or religious genocide against Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks) and Croats in the first article titled "genocide".

In the first article, it is stated that in 1992, Mladic knew of the destruction of Bosniaks and Croats in the cities of Foca, Kljuc, Kotor-Varos, Prijedor, Sanski Most and Vlasenica.

In the same issue, there are countless claims of inhuman actions against captives in concentration camps established by Bosnian Serb troops in these cities, plus the killing of inmates.

The second article, also titled "genocide", is about the murder of more than 8,000 Bosniak civilians by Serb forces in Srebrenica in 1995.

Mladic is said to have participated in the genocide against Bosniak males and the forced exile of women, children and old people in Srebrenica. In this article of the indictment, it is stated: "Ratko Mladic planned the destruction of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica as an ethnic and religious group and shared this plan with other participants of the collective crime initiative."

In this article, it is stated that on July 6, 1995, Serb troops commanded by Mladic attacked Srebrenica; only a few days later Mladic accompanied the murder of Muslim men in Srebrenica, while women, children and the elderly were forcibly separated.

It is also mentioned in this article that thousands of people killed in Srebrenica were buried in mass graves to hide the killers' guilt and then exhumed and re-buried at other sites.

#### Exiles

In a third article of the overall indictment, entitled "Exiles", it is claimed Mladic promoted, ordered and planned for Bosniaks and Croats to be exiled from the cities of Banja Luka, Bijelina, Foca, Ilidza (Sarajevo), Kalinovik, Kljuc, Kotor-Varos, Novi Grad (Sarajevo), Pale, Prijedor, Rogatica, Sanski Most, Sokolac, Trnovo, Vlasenica and Srebrenica.

It is noted that Mladic was aware of these expulsions but did not take the necessary steps to prevent or punish the perpetrators. The deportations continued from May 12, 1992 to Nov. 30, 1995.

#### Destroying and killing

In Articles four, five and six of the indictment -- "destroying and killing" -- Mladic's forces are accused of targeting Bosniak and Croat populations. In the article, sniper attacks in Sarajevo, under siege by Serb forces between 1992 and 1995, and bombardments took place with Mladic's participation. This part of the indictment also includes two marketplace massacres in Sarajevo in 1994 and 1995.

#### Deporting and inhuman actions

In the seventh and eighth articles on "deporting and inhuman actions", Mladic is accused of forcibly removing Bosniaks and Croats from Srebrenica and other cities and territories, and also of planning, encouraging and helping such forced movements.

The claims say these actions were aimed at the complete cleansing of Croats and Bosniaks from these towns and villages and events such as discrimination, arrest, torture, rape, killing, destruction of homes and cultural monuments were carried out from 1992.

## Terrorism and unlawful attacks

In the ninth and tenth articles, entitled "Terrorism, unlawful attacks", Mladic is said to be responsible for unlawful attacks against civilians plus terrorist acts against civilians.

In these articles, it is stated that barricades were established by the Serb forces at many points in Sarajevo on 6 April, when Bosnia's independence was recognized internationally.

## Taking prisoners

In the last article, entitled "Taking prisoners", the indictment says there was the seizure of UN observers and peacekeepers by Serb forces.

It is stated Mladic accomplished, planned, helped and ordered this action. It is also stated that Mladic did not take the necessary steps despite knowing UN members had been taken prisoners.

Serbs reportedly seized more than 200 UN members to block NATO airstrikes; these prisoners were held in critical Serb military bases to deter warplanes.

In summary, Mladic is accused of genocide in articles one and two of the indictment. He is also accused of crimes against humanity (exile, destruction, killing, deportation and inhuman actions) and violations of the laws and customs of war.

Photo: Anadolu Agency

By Talha Ozturk

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