
BOSNIAN COURT CONVICTS SERB EX-FIGHTER OF WAR CRIMES

25.12.2018

Balkan Transnational Justice (24 December 2018)

Former Bosnian Serb fighter Zdravko Lubarda was sentenced to six years in prison on Monday for involvement in the persecution of Bosnian Muslim civilians in the Rogatica area of eastern Bosnia in 1992 and 1993 during the Bosnian war.

The Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina found Lubarda guilty of crimes against humanity.

On the basis of witness testimonies, the court determined that Lubarda participated in the persecution of the Bosniak population from late May 1992 until the end of 1993 as a member of the Bosnian Serb Army, VRS.

There is no doubt he knew about the attack and wanted to commit it, presiding Judge Jasmina Djedovic said in explaining the verdict.

The court acquitted former reserve policeman Ozren Planojevic of the same charges.

It also acquitted Lubarda of responsibility for the forcible disappearance of a Bosniak man, Midhat Aksamija, following the arrest of several Bosniaks on May 24, 1992.

The remains of Aksamija are yet to be found.

Lubarda and Planojevic were also both acquitted of responsibility for the disappearance of several Bosniaks who were arrested in a churchyard on June 20, 1992. They are also still listed as missing.

The Chamber acquitted Planojevic of charges that he hit a protected witness codenamed M-5 in front of his child, causing him severe bodily injuries, in the secondary school centre in mid-June 1992.

Judge Djedovic said that the court took into consideration mitigating circumstances when determining Lubarda's sentence.

[After] analysing all evidence, the Chamber determined that the defendant did not demonstrate brutality while committing the crimes, so we consider that the sentence is adequate to the degree of his guilt, Djedovic said.

The court's verdict can be appealed.

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