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## CONVICTED WAR CRIMINAL EXTRADITED TO CROATIA FROM NETHERLANDS

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Balkan Transnational Justice (25 April 2019)

The Croatian Interior Ministry said on Wednesday that a Dutch citizen who was sentenced to 15 years in prison in absentia for war crimes in 1991 has been extradited to Zagreb.

The ministry only gave his initials and year of birth, but local media reported that the man was 53-year-old Milorad Barac.

Novi List newspaper reported that Barac fled to Serbia after the Croatian Army's 1995 military operation Storm, which defeated rebel Serbs, and then to the Netherlands, where he acquired Dutch citizenship.

He lived freely in the Netherlands until he was handed over to Croatia on Wednesday.

Croatian police said the extradition, on the basis of an arrest warrant issued by Karlovac County Court in 2017, passed off without incident.

In 1994, Gospić County Court found Barac, a member of Serb paramilitary forces, guilty of war crimes against civilians in Siroka Kula, a village 11 kilometres north-east of Gospić, in September and October 1991.

On October 13, 1991, eight people were killed, with the youngest victim being 13-year-old Verica Nikšić. Thirty-two others were killed in the following days.

Barac was tried in absentia together with five other defendants in the case, and all were pronounced guilty.

Three of them were sentenced to 20 years in prison, while the rest, including Barac, were sentenced to 15 years.

The Croatian Supreme Court rejected their appeals in 1994, although defendant Dane Serdar, who was also initially sentenced to 15 years in prison, was acquitted in 2004.

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