

BOSNIA AND HERCEGOVINA

The Unindicted: Reaping the Rewards of “Ethnic Cleansing”

SUMMARY	3
The Importance of Conditionality for Reconstruction Aid.....	5
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	7
BACKGROUND.....	12
THE ROLE OF THE PRIJEDOR AUTHORITIES DURING THE WAR AND AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE DAYTON PEACE AGREEMENT	14
The “Crisis Committee” and Co-Conspirators.....	14
WHO’S WHO IN PRIJEDOR	17
Simo Drljaca: Former Chief of Police and Head of Secret Police	17
Wartime Activities.....	18
Simo Drljaca and the Prijedor “Mafia”	22
Ranko Mijic: Acting Chief of Police	23
Zivko Jovic: Acting Deputy Chief of Police	23
Grozdan Mutic: Head of State Security	23
Milomir Stakic: Mayor of Prijedor.....	23
Momcilo Radanovic, a.k.a. “Cigo”: Deputy Mayor of Prijedor.....	25
Srdjo Srdic: President of the “Serbian Red Cross” Prijedor	26
The Role of the Local Red Cross in “Ethnic Cleansing	26
Milan “Mico” Kovacevic: Director of Prijedor Hospital.....	28
Pero Colic: (Former) Commander Fifth Kozara Brigade and the Forty-Third Brigade, Prijedor.....	29
Milenko Vukic: Infrastructure (Electricity).....	31
Marko Pavic: Infrastructure (Post Office, Telephone and Telegraph)	31
MEDIA.....	32
Radio Prijedor.....	32
<i>Kozarski Vjesnik</i> (Kozara Herald, Newspaper).....	33

Television Prijedor.....	34
THE PRIJEDOR AUTHORITIES AND VIOLATIONS OF THE DAYTON PEACE AGREEMENT	34
Non-Compliance with the Dayton Peace Agreement: The Prijedor Police	34
Drljaca Ousted, Turns Up Again	36
Persons Indicted for War Crimes Serve as Police Officers in Prijedor and Omarska	37
Restructuring the Police Force.....	39
Police Weapons	40
Ljubija Special Police Force.....	42
Obstruction of Freedom of Movement by Prijedor Authorities	43
Elections	47
“Disappearances”	48
Detention	51
Harassment of Journalists and Monitors	51
Evictions and Harassment of Persons Based Upon Their Ethnic or Political Affiliation.....	52
Destruction of Property to Prevent Repatriation	54
Linkages and Loyalties	55
THE ECONOMICS OF “ETHNIC CLEANSING”	59
Tangled in the Web: Reconstruction Aid and the Architects of “Ethnic Cleansing.....	63
British ODA Response to Information Gathered by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki.....	65
Aid to the Prijedor Hospital.....	66
CONCLUSION	67
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	69
APPENDIX A: Structure of the “Crisis Committee” of Prijedor Municipality: 1992	70
APPENDIX B: Letter from Republika Srpska President Biljana Plavsic to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan ...	71

SUMMARY

The same warlords who took control of the town of Prijedor, in northwestern Bosnia and Hercegovina, through systematic policies of ethnic cleansing -- including pre-meditated slaughter, concentration camps, mass rape, and the takeover of businesses, government offices, and all communal property -- have retained total control over key economic, infrastructure, and humanitarian sectors of the community in the post-war period. The architects of "ethnic cleansing," many of whom are under investigation by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, interact daily with representatives of international organizations. This contact grants them a wholly undeserved legitimacy, given that they achieved their positions by "disappearing" the duly elected mayor of the town, Muhamed Cehajic, and thousands of other Bosniak or Bosnian Croat community leaders and citizens. While international attention previously focused on the atrocities committed during and after the takeover of the town, little attention has been given to the fact that the mayor, deputy mayor, police chief, hospital director and director of the local "Red Cross" got away with their crimes and became rich men in the process, having expropriated businesses, homes, and other assets of the non-Serbs of the community, estimated to be worth several billion German marks.

In Prijedor, as elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia, the international community's failure to detain war criminals or to control ongoing abuses by unindicted war criminals has combined with the donation of aid to enrich and empower many of the very people most responsible for genocide and "ethnic cleansing." As we have recently also done in Doboj and Teslic, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has conducted field research in Prijedor to uncover who is continuing the cycle of human rights abuses and intimidation and why these criminals remain at large and in positions of power. The detrimental impact that Bosnia's war criminals continue to have on respect for human rights and on long-term prospects for peace is abundantly clear. It is essential to the peace process in Bosnia and Hercegovina that the international community strategically utilize the economic and political leverage at its disposal to facilitate the successful implementation of the civilian components of the Dayton agreement, most important of which is to hold war criminals accountable and to bring an end to ongoing abuses against vulnerable populations in the region.

The Bosnian administrative district of Prijedor, located west of the city of Banja Luka in what is now Republika Srpska, was before 1992 a multi-ethnic area with a non-Serb population of well over 50,000. After the Bosnian Serbs took control of the region in April 1992, the communities and homes of non-Serbs were destroyed, families were separated, and thousands of people were incarcerated in concentration camps, where many were tortured and executed. Tens of thousands were forcibly deported under inhumane conditions. Today, only about 600 Bosniaks remain. The town also has a small Bosnian Croat community, left without a parish priest since the abduction and "disappearance" of Roman Catholic priest Father Tomislav Matanovic in September 1995. According to the Roman Catholic charity Caritas, there are approximately 2,674 Bosnian Croats remaining in the Prijedor municipality (1,405 in the town of Prijedor, 592 in Ljubija, 416 in Ravska, and 261 in Surkovac), out of more than 6,000 Bosnian Croats registered in the 1991 census. The Catholic church and all mosques in Prijedor were destroyed in 1992. Prior to the war, more than half a million non-Serbs lived in what is now the northern region of Republika Srpska. Today, fewer than 20,000 non-Serbs remain throughout the territory.

The criminal administration established in the town of Prijedor achieved their goal of eliminating non-Serbs from the society, through the planned murder, "disappearance," and expulsion of non-Serb officials, such as Mayor Cehajic, and civilians. According to survivor reports, Mayor Cehajic and six other men were removed by Bosnian Serb guards from Omarska camp on July 26, 1992, and have never been seen again.

Many of the men responsible for these crimes were members of the "Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor," or "Crisis Committee of the Serbian Municipality of Prijedor," established to conduct the usurpation. The police, as will be shown in this report, also played a major part in the takeover and in subsequent abuses, both independently and as members of special units sent to round up community leaders or conduct "ethnic cleansing" operations. The police authorities and officers charged today with protecting the public good in Prijedor, are in many cases the same individuals who have been accused by numerous witnesses of participation in war crimes. As is true for many towns in the Republika Srpska today, the power structure in Prijedor mirrors that which existed during the war.

These same local Prijedor authorities have consistently refused to protect non-Serbs or to investigate crimes against them, even following the signing of the Dayton agreement. Civilian and police authorities work in tandem to prevent the return of refugees and displaced persons by organizing or inciting violence against those who attempt to return, and by orchestrating (with the assistance of the Bosnian Serb Army, according to NATO) the destruction of houses (see section "Destruction of Property to Prevent Repatriation"). Restrictions on freedom of movement, the destruction of property, and the ethnically-based eviction of persons through the application of discriminatory laws are further evidence that the Bosnian Serb authorities have maintained their goal of an ethnically pure entity (or as the Republika Srpska authorities put it, "state") -- the goal that led to massive "ethnic cleansing" campaigns during the war. Most recently, according to a reliable local source, the Prijedor authorities have reportedly destroyed property ownership records, which, if true, would make it nearly impossible for refugees and displaced persons who fled under immediate threat to prove ownership of their property.

To make matters worse, according to information gathered by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, the international community is investing large sums of money in Prijedor through "community projects," many of which were funded by the British government relief agency, the Overseas Development Agency (ODA) and implemented by IFOR/SFOR. The illicitly installed local authorities control virtually all economic sectors in Prijedor, including infrastructure, public construction and other companies, the media, health care, education, and humanitarian aid. In at least some cases, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has learned that persons believed responsible for flagrant abuses of the Geneva Conventions and international human rights law, and/or are participants in organized crime, have benefited from reconstruction and humanitarian assistance. Due to the current power structure in Prijedor, humanitarian aid and reconstruction assistance is easily misused.

Our research leads us to the conclusion that post-Dayton obstructionism by the Prijedor leadership is not only motivated by economic gain but represents a highly organized effort, directed to a significant extent by the Republika Srpska authorities in Pale (especially by the Ministry of the Interior), to prevent permanently the repatriation of non-Serb refugees and displaced persons to the Republika Srpska and to retain control over all municipal functions.

In addition, local Prijedor officials have consistently refused to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), and their cooperation with the International Police Task Force (IPTF), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international organizations charged with implementing the civilian aspects of the Dayton agreements has been minimal. This non-cooperation is in direct violation of their commitment under the Dayton agreement. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki believes that the failure of the Republika Srpska authorities to cooperate with certain aspects of the Dayton agreement is the result of an overall policy. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki's recent report on the municipalities of Doboje and Teslic, for example, reveals similar patterns to the policies carried out in Prijedor. Events in the Zone of Separation near Zvornik, the destruction of housing in Breko, and the expulsion and harassment of minorities in Banja Luka seem to bear this out. According to the U.N. Commission of Experts, "The Bosnian Serb implementation of practically identical strategies and tactics for the conquest of territories and subsequent detention of non-Serb pop[ulation]s [during the war] suggest an overall plan devised prior to the conflict and carried out locally." Subsequent to the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, this overall strategy seems to have continued.

According to a November 29, 1996 report by Laura Kay Rozen of the U.S. newspaper *The Christian Science Monitor*, of the seventy-four people indicted for war crimes in Bosnia, approximately twenty are in the Prijedor area. In November 1996, four persons indicted for war crimes were discovered to be police officers in the Prijedor area. Two other indicted persons are reportedly serving in the reserve police, and a third as a member of the "special police." Their commander, **Simo Drljaca**, who by his own admission was responsible, along with others, for the administration of concentration camps in the Prijedor area, and who is expected to be indicted for war crimes by the ICTY in the near future, continued to serve as police chief of Prijedor until IPTF demanded his removal from office in September 1996 following an armed altercation with soldiers of the International Implementation Force (IFOR). As of January 1997,

however, Drljaca has continued to act as chief of police, giving orders directly to Ranko Mijic, his supposed replacement.

Control by the Srpska Demokratska Stranka (SDS), or Serbian Democratic Party, expresses itself in abuses of the rights of anyone not pledging loyalty to the SDS agenda and methods. The ongoing removal of non-SDS members from businesses, threats against private business owners by the local mafia (with direct links to local SDS leaders), and the control of the media by hard-line SDS representatives, indicate that members of opposition groups and moderates are very limited in their ability to affect the situation and are, in fact, under threat themselves.

Despite all the above, some international actors in Prijedor often fail to criticize the municipal authorities. An international monitor, for example, when asked in June 1996 about his interactions with Drljaca, told our investigators: "Drljaca knows he can trust us. [We] are completely neutral...it is not our mandate to judge...we never take any side...we never say who's right and who's wrong...we are here to work for [our organization]...and we have fine relations with them all."

The Importance of Conditionality for Reconstruction Aid

The international community has squandered much of the leverage available to enforce compliance with the Dayton peace agreement, especially by lifting sanctions against Republika Srpska. Therefore, the strategic use of reconstruction aid in ensuring compliance has become all the more important.

The international community has an obligation to reassure donors, including U.S. and European taxpayers, that reconstruction aid is used wisely, and that those who used ethnic nationalism as an excuse to murder, imprison and expel compatriots, to steal the property of others and to control humanitarian assistance do not continue to reap the benefits of their criminal activities. Otherwise, aid intended by donors to benefit the ordinary people of Bosnia who have suffered due to the war will reward their very persecutors or those who have exploited the war situation for personal gain. For this reason, reconstruction aid should be denied to municipalities where the authorities are under investigation for war crimes by the ICTY, or where there has been serious and/or protracted non-compliance with the Dayton agreement, including involvement by the authorities in human rights abuses, incitement to violence against returnees, violation of election rules and regulations, failure to cooperate with the ICTY (e.g. when indicted persons are known to reside in a particular town and are not arrested by the authorities and turned over to the ICTY for trial), and/or non-cooperation with the IPTF or other international organizations charged with assisting in the implementation of the Dayton agreement.

Under these guidelines, Prijedor would be ineligible for international reconstruction aid until there was a change in leadership. The guidelines would not restrict humanitarian assistance, although such assistance should be carefully monitored. An international source who spent months in Prijedor told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in January 1997: "Only about 30 percent of humanitarian aid [to Prijedor] reaches the people."

In towns where there is general compliance with the Dayton agreement, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki recommends targeted reconstruction aid which will assist ordinary people directly, e.g. micro enterprise projects, support of the independent media, support for ethnically neutral educational programs, assistance to medical facilities which have demonstrated equity in the provision of treatment to all citizens, and bypassing publicly owned companies when possible. Strict guidelines should be established regarding equal access for all citizens as beneficiaries of these projects.

The World Bank, nongovernmental organizations, and government donors are advised to investigate carefully the ownership and history of companies applying for aid and to monitor closely spending. Donors should keep in mind the possibility that the legitimate owners or directors of companies may have been murdered or forcibly removed by local authorities, who assumed control as the result of an organized strategy, as was the case in Prijedor in 1992. In a more recent example, as the Office of the High Representative reported in November, the SPRS (Socialist Party of Republika Srpska), a Republika Srpska opposition party, alleged that, in 1996 alone, 112 of its members had been

removed from their jobs because of their political affiliation. According to a November-December 1996 report by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), local courts have ruled in many cases in favor of reinstatement, but in none of the cases have the judgements been enforced.

On January 2, 1997, Republika Srpska President Biljana Plavsic, in a letter to Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, informed him that the indictments of the ICTY were no longer valid and said that the arrest of Radovan Karadzic or Ratko Mladic would "threaten the existing peace" and rekindle "massive civil and political unrest." She continued, "The present position of the Republika Srpska is that we are unwilling to hand over Dr. Karadzic and General Mladic for trial in the Hague as we believe that any such trial now falls outside of the scope of the tribunal's constitutional framework." In a thinly veiled threat to the international community, Plavsic stated, "We believe that massive civil and military unrest would result in the Republika Srpska which might well prove uncontrollable by the civil authorities. The chances of fighting restarting would, in our judgement, be high. These would be even higher were any attempt made to hunt down Dr. Karadzic and General Mladic and forcibly bring them to trial." (See Plavsic letter attached as Appendix B.)

In response to Plavsic's letter, the European Commission stated that it would not consider giving aid to Republika Srpska (with the exception of inter-entity cooperation projects and humanitarian aid) until the Republika Srpska complied with its obligations to the ICTY. The Office of the High Representative (OHR), however, has sent mixed messages. In a statement to the London-based Institute for War and Peace Reporting, Carl Bildt said, "I do not accept that as an answer, and she knows that. I think that was a stupid letter. In direct talks with the leadership of the Republika Srpska, I made it very clear what we expect to happen, and what might be the consequences if that does not happen. Republika Srpska has an interest in cooperating with the Tribunal, and they are cooperating with the Tribunal better than they did...with the exception of handing over those that are indicted. Which is the fundamental exception. But that will not be tolerated for long, and they know that." Bildt's spokesman, however, seemed to send a different message, when he stated on January 10 that Plavsic's letter to Annan would not cause any disruption in aid going to the Republika Srpska. "It makes no difference as I would see it on the flow of reconstruction aid being discussed in Brussels at the moment," said spokesman Colum Murphy, who argued that Plavsic's assertions were legal arguments which she was entitled to make and did not constitute more than that, despite the apparent threat of violence. This response is most disappointing, particularly as it suggests to the Republika Srpska authorities that there will be no financial consequences for the outright defiance of binding agreements.

Many argue that economic aid should be used as a carrot rather than a stick. The infusion of aid money does not guarantee peace or respect for the rule of law, however. Huge expenditures of capital (over 260 million DM, or about US165 million) in the city of Mostar was invested to no avail between 1994 and 1996. The assistance did not serve to reunite the city or to prevent ongoing ethnically based harassment, evictions and expulsions. As has been shown in Mostar, in Prijedor, and in other towns, so long as those responsible for war crimes or involved in organized crime are allowed to retain control over resources, ordinary people, especially those who are now in the minority or who do not support the dominant parties, cannot expect to fully benefit from those resources.

More than a year has passed since the signing of the Dayton agreement, yet the vast majority of persons indicted for war crimes remain at large. There is increasing outrage about the failure to apprehend, detain and try these individuals. At a conference in Dayton, Ohio last November, OSCE Amb. Robert Frowick remarked, "The whole peace process rests on this issue. There will not be a better moment than right now," to apprehend the indicted persons. Action must be taken to ensure their apprehension; there must also be more focus on those who have not yet been indicted. Increased financial support to the ICTY is imperative to enable expedited investigations and indictments of those who have so far eluded international censure and to ensure their apprehension.

The failure of the Republika Srpska authorities to comply with the orders of the ICTY, combined with the refusal of IFOR/SFOR to arrest persons indicted for war crimes even when encountered in the course of their duty, has permitted war criminals to remain free and retain control. Furthermore, the international community's willingness to allow money to find its way into the hands of suspected war criminals and/or mafia members, leads to questions about

the international community's will to confront the real problems that threaten the peace and place the region's stability at risk.

The international community has tolerated the continued exercise of power by persons responsible for the worst atrocities seen in Europe since World War II. This report names some of those individuals, describes their involvement in serious abuses of international humanitarian and human rights law, and highlights their continued obstruction of the Dayton agreement, with the expectation that the international community will finally take action to hold them accountable -- and, in the meantime, will prevent them from lining their pockets at the expense of their intimidated neighbors, the displaced, the purged and the dead.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki urges the international bodies set up by the Dayton agreement, as well as the OSCE, to take action in the following ways:

- The Office of the High Representative (OHR) should form a civilian implementation council or task force, as recommended by the International Crisis Group. This council or task force, chaired by the High Representative, would have the authority to dismiss officials who have seriously obstructed or violated the Dayton Peace Agreement, as documented by the International Police Task Force (IPTF), the International Implementation Force (IFOR), the Stabilization Force (SFOR), the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsperson, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), or the OHR itself. Human Rights Watch recommends that such a council include representatives from the Federation of Bosnia and Hercegovina and from the Republika Srpska. Independent organizations and individuals, including human rights or advocacy NGOs or groups, should be permitted to submit evidence to this new council. Annex 7 of the General Framework Agreement, "Refugees and Displaced Persons," Article I, requires the Parties to engage in "the prosecution, dismissal or transfer, as appropriate, of persons in military, paramilitary, and police forces, or other public servants, responsible for serious violations of the basic rights of persons belonging to ethnic or minority groups.";
- The Stabilization Force (SFOR), the OHR, the OSCE and other international organizations operating in Bosnia and Hercegovina should articulate clearly a duty of their representatives to expose all serious or continuing human rights abuses, as well as to name known perpetrators. While sources and information which would directly endanger witnesses must obviously be protected, reports of human rights abuses should not be withheld from the public for political reasons, and disclosure should be timely. Further, investigations of human rights abuses must not be delayed or prevented for political reasons;
- SFOR, in partnership with the IPTF, should become more actively involved in guaranteeing and protecting the security, safety and human rights of non-Serbs and targeted Bosnian Serbs in Republika Srpska, and displaced persons and refugees wishing to return to their place of origin, especially when the local police have failed to take action or have been implicated in abuses. For example, SFOR and IPTF should establish and/or increase joint patrols in areas where there has been ethnically-based harassment.
- SFOR should redouble its efforts "to observe and prevent interference with the movement of civilian populations, refugees, and displaced persons and to respond appropriately to deliberate violence to life and person," as stated in the Dayton agreement. Human Rights Watch commends IFOR/SFOR on its efforts to assist persons under threat through targeted patrols and its investigations into bombings in the Zone of Separation, but we recommend more consistent and strategic protection planning. Further, SFOR is urged to publicly reveal the results of investigations into the destruction of housing in Hambarine and other villages in the Prijedor municipality.

- OSCE, SFOR, OHR, and IPTF, together with UNHCR, should develop detailed protection plans to prevent ethnically-based evictions or expulsions throughout Bosnia and Hercegovina, such as those being developed in Mostar. Human Rights Watch is concerned that any possible exodus of Serbs from the Eastern Slavonia region of Croatia may result in renewed evictions of non-Serbs in northern Bosnia. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki supports the recommendation of the Forced Migration Projects of the Open Society Institute to condition reconstruction aid on the repeal of discriminatory property laws which are used to expel persons on the basis of ethnicity.
- OSCE should move immediately to strike all candidates from the roster for the municipal elections who have demonstrated serious and/or protracted non-compliance with the Elections Annex of the Dayton agreement and with the rules and regulations set by the Provisional Election Commission (PEC). Non-compliance should be interpreted to include the failure to permit freedom of movement and other violations of the annex or the code of Conduct, as described within the PEC's rules and regulations.
- The international community, specifically High Representative Carl Bildt and IPTF Commissioner Peter FitzGerald, should demand the removal from office of Dragan Kijac, Republika Srpska minister of the interior due to his repeated and significant non-compliance with the Dayton Peace Agreement, i.e. his refusal to comply with the demands of IPTF to remove, arrest, and turn over for trial those persons indicted for war crimes who continue to work for the Republika Srpska police (in fact, Kijac denied that they work for the police at all); his refusal to remove Simo Drljaca, former police chief in Prijedor from a position of responsibility within the police system; his non-cooperation regarding the restructuring of the police force, which has included, among other things, a refusal to provide IPTF with a complete list of police officers in Republika Srpska; his failure to hold local police responsible for the deaths of Bosniaks in police custody which have occurred since the signing of the Dayton agreement; the holding of unauthorized weapons by police stations in Republika Srpska which are under his direct command; the use of Republika Srpska police to escort Radovan Karadzic, an indicted war criminal; and his interference with freedom of expression.
- OHR and OSCE should encourage the development of independent media in Prijedor. This is especially important since no independent media exist currently, and the media are controlled by persons who advocated "ethnic cleansing" during the war and have incited ethnically based violence since the signing of the Dayton agreement.

Human Rights Watch, recognizing the critical role that creation of a neutral and professional police force can play in the current situation, urges the International Police Task Force to forward that goal in the following ways:

- IPTF should press the Republika Srpska to sign an agreement which mirrors the formal police restructuring agreement signed by the Federation, including the screening process for all members of the police force. Failure to do so immediately should be declared non-compliance with the Dayton agreement and should trigger punitive measures, such as the reimposition of sanctions and the withholding of economic aid. This restructuring must include secret, "special," and reservist police forces, which should be vetted for persons believed responsible for war crimes, human rights abuses, non-cooperation with IPTF, and non-compliance with other provisions of the Dayton agreement.
- IPTF should ensure that all police officers throughout Bosnia and Hercegovina responsible for post-Dayton human rights abuses, or who have failed to investigate and punish those responsible for human rights abuses committed under their jurisdiction, be ineligible for police posts and be removed from their positions. Acts of non-compliance should be understood to include, but should not be limited to, the obstruction of freedom of movement, failure to respect the right to remain, violations of freedom of expression and association, and harassment and intimidation of persons based upon their ethnic or political affiliation. Police officials or officers who have threatened or committed acts of violence against IPTF should also be ineligible for police

posts and should be removed from their positions. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has provided a list of allegations against specific police officers in Prijedor to IPTF.

- IPTF should publicize the screening process of the Republika Srpska police structure through the international and, most importantly, local media. IPTF, as has been done in the Federation, should create mechanisms through which the local population can furnish the IPTF with information regarding abusive police officers and paramilitary members, and establish procedures to protect individuals who provide information on abusive officials to the IPTF. Without concrete protection mechanisms, intimidation may prevent civilians from reporting continuing human rights abuses at the hands of the authorities. For example, names of informants to IPTF should not be kept on file in IPTF stations due to the presence of local informants.
- IPTF should instruct stations in the Prijedor municipality to record, report and make public instances of continuing human rights abuses and protracted non-compliance with the Dayton agreement by local police forces or specific members of those forces.
- IPTF should instruct its stations throughout Bosnia and Hercegovina to inform IPTF headquarters of any sightings of persons indicted for war crimes. Any such instances, and specifically the discovery of indicted individuals within the local police forces, should be treated as a matter of highest priority. Information about serious human rights abuses gathered by IPTF should not be withheld from the public, especially in cases where local police are involved in the commission of such abuses. Specifically, the results of investigations into the issue of indicted persons working as police officers in the Prijedor area should be made public. This includes four regular police officers, two reserve police officers, and one special police officer.
- IPTF should share information regarding police involvement in war crimes or human rights abuses with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). An agreement should be established between IPTF and the ICTY to exchange information on records in the ICTY on police officials, politicians and members of paramilitary groups in the area. IPTF should be advised about any police officers under investigation by the ICTY, so that those police officers can be vetted.
- IPTF should make public its information regarding unauthorized weapons caches and/or weapons violations by police forces. In Banja Luka, shortly before the election, IFOR caught the Ljubija special police trying secretly to move anti-aircraft guns and other weapons in a police convoy. Since that time, a number of surprise visits by IFOR/SFOR have revealed substantial numbers of unauthorized weapons in police stations. Such acts are clear violations of the Dayton agreement and should result in appropriate action by IFOR and the international community. IPTF should also record, report and make public instances of continuing human rights abuses and protracted non-compliance with the Dayton agreement by local police forces or specific members of those forces.

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki urges the United States, Russia and the European Union to:

- fully support the IPTF, OSCE and OHR in carrying out the above recommendations.
- publicly disclose or demand the public disclosure of information which implicates government officials, including police officials, or members of political parties in the direction or support of groups engaged in the organized commission of human rights abuses through local political, police and military bodies, agencies or branches.

- exert pressure on the Pale authorities to ensure that Republika Srpska respects and upholds the human rights norms and other obligations relating to the implementation of the civilian aspects of the Dayton agreement.
- consider the establishment of a Human Rights Ombudsman's Office for the Republika Srpska similar to the one operating in the Federation entity of Bosnia and Hercegovina, to act as a legal representative for individual victims of human rights abuses, and to seek remedies for such abuses from governmental authorities, in liaison with the Office of the Ombudsperson established by the Dayton agreement.
- provide crucial financial and material support for the ICTY to enable the continued investigations of war crimes which will result in further indictments. We strongly encourage support for investigations into the wartime activities of Simo Drljaca, Momcilo Radanovic a.k.a. "Cigo", Pero Colic, Milomir Stakic, Srdjo Srdic, Milan Kovacevic, Slobodan Kuruzovic, and other persons named in this report and reportedly responsible for war crimes in the Prijedor area.

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki urges the World Bank, donor governments and agencies, and international non-governmental organizations to:

- ensure the linkage of reconstruction assistance given to the entity of the Republika Srpska to cooperation with the ICTY, respect for human rights, the repeal of wartime property laws, and cooperation with the UNHCR's repatriation plan. Aid should be disbursed in a non-discriminatory manner, with guidelines which ensure assistance to all needy persons regardless of ethnicity. Projects should be monitored closely for compliance with such guidelines. Donors should investigate the ownership and control of companies prior to the awarding of contracts to ensure that persons indicted for war crimes, persons implicated in the commission of war crimes, and persons who have obstructed the Dayton agreement do not benefit from such contracts. Companies whose non-Serb directors were killed, imprisoned, or "disappeared," or whose directors were removed due to their political affiliation, should not receive any reconstruction monies whatsoever. Further, given the open defiance of the Republika Srpska demonstrated by President Biljana Plavsic's letter of January 2, 1997 to U.N. Secretary General, Kofi Annan, in which she reiterated that the Republika Srpska has no intention of cooperating with the ICTY, no reconstruction monies should be given to any government entity or public company controlled by the SDS. The World Bank and other lending institutions and donors should give assurances that reconstruction loans or donations will not be given to structures under the control of the SDS.
- in towns where there is general compliance with the Dayton agreement, target reconstruction aid which will aid ordinary people directly, i.e. micro enterprise projects, support of the independent media, support for non-biased educational programs, assistance to medical facilities which have demonstrated equity in the provision of treatment to all citizens, etc., bypassing publicly owned companies when possible. Strict guidelines regarding equal access for all citizens as beneficiaries of projects should be established. It is also recommended that reconstruction assistance be geared toward the development of expertise which would enable privately owned companies to compete with publicly owned companies for contracts in infrastructure and other sectors.
- withhold economic aid from those specific municipalities controlled by individuals under investigation of war crimes by the ICTY, or those responsible for human rights violations or other non-compliance with the provisions of the Dayton agreement. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki calls attention specifically to U.N. Security Council Resolution 1088 of December 12, 1996, which "underlines the link, as agreed by the Presidency of Bosnia and Hercegovina in the conclusions of the Paris Conference, between the availability of international financial assistance and the degree to which all the authorities in Bosnia and Hercegovina implement the Peace Agreement, including cooperation with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and cooperation with the Action Plan which has been approved by the London Conference."

- link all financial support which is targeted for the restructuring of the local police with the IPTF screening/vetting process. Police authorities who fail to agree to participate in the IPTF screening and vetting process must not receive financial or material aid, and aid should only be provided upon the completion of the screening process or when significant progress has been made.

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki urges the authorities of the entity of Republika Srpska to:

- immediately arrest and remand to the ICTY for trial all persons indicted for war crimes in the Prijedor area, and immediately to arrest Simo Drljaca for crimes he committed during the 1992 takeover of Prijedor and for the “disappearance” of Father Tomislav Matanovic and his parents. As U.N. Security Council Resolution 1088 states, the Security Council “reminds the parties that, in accordance with the Peace Agreement, they have committed themselves to cooperate fully with all entities involved in the implementation of this peace settlement...including the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia...and underlines that full cooperation by States and entities with the International Tribunal includes, inter alia, the surrender for trial of all persons indicted by the Tribunal and provision of information to assist in Tribunal investigations.”
- arrest, prosecute and punish persons responsible for human rights abuses and the recent destruction of property in the Prijedor area.
- cooperate with UNHCR repatriation plans and permit the return of refugees and displaced persons without impediment or fear of persecution.
- immediately reveal the whereabouts of Father Tomislav Matanovic and his parents, “disappeared” in September 1995, and the fates of the medical personnel and other community leaders who “disappeared” during the Serb takeover in 1992.

BACKGROUND

The Prijedor *opstina*, or administrative district, includes at least seventy-one smaller towns and villages.¹ The names of some are now familiar due to the atrocities which took place there; among them are Kozarac, Omarska, and Trnopolje. While the towns and villages within the wider Prijedor district have their own officials, they are governed

¹ According to the 1991 census, Opstina (administrative district) Prijedor had a total population of 112,470 people, of whom 44 percent were Muslims, 42.5 percent Serbs, 5.6 percent Croats, 5.7 percent “Yugoslavs,” and 2.2 percent others (Ukrainians, Russians, and Italians). In April 1992, the total population was approximately 120,000 people, augmented, inter alia, by an influx of people who had fled the destruction of their villages in the west of Opstina Prijedor. United Nations, *Final Report of the United Nations Commission of Experts, established pursuant to Security Council resolution 780*, (New York: United Nations, 1992), S/1994674/Add.2 (Vol.), December 28, 1994, Annex V, Part 2, Section II, Subsection B.

by the opstina. Thus, the Prijedor authorities wield influence over a considerable area. Prijedor was considered a strategically important town by the Bosnian Serbs, who wanted to create a corridor between Serbia proper and the Croatian Krajina, which was until 1995 controlled by rebel Serbs in Croatia. As early as 1991, the Serbs organized a Serb-only alternative administration in Opstina Prijedor, under the guidance of a central administration in Banja Luka. The designated Serb “mayor” was Milomir Stakic, a medical doctor who functioned as deputy mayor under the duly elected Bosniak mayor of the town, Muhamed Cehajic.

After the Serbs took power on April 30, 1992, they opened at least four detention camps in the Prijedor opstina. Two of the concentration camps, Omarska and Keraterm, were places where killings, torture, and brutal interrogations were carried out. The third, Trnopolje, had another purpose; it functioned as a staging area for massive deportations of mostly women, children, and elderly men, and killings and rapes² also occurred there. The fourth, Manjaca, was referred to by the Bosnian Serbs as a “prisoner of war camp,” although most if not all detainees were civilians.³

² The U.N. Commission of Experts and many journalists and witnesses have reported extensively on the rape of women by Bosnian Serb forces. The commission, which conducted a special investigation of rape during the war, concluded: “Rape is prevalent in the camps. . . Captors have killed women who resisted being raped, often in front of other prisoners. Rapes were also committed in the presence of other prisoners. Women are frequently selected at random during the night. These rapes are done in a way that instills terror in the women prisoner population. The commission has information indicating that girls as young as seven years old and women as old as sixty-five have been raped while in captivity. . . Mothers of young children are often raped in front of their children and are threatened with the death of their children if they do not submit to being raped. Sometimes young women are separated from older women and taken to separate camps where they are raped several times a day, for many days, often by more than one man. Many of these women disappear, or after they have been raped and brutalized to the point where they are traumatized, they are returned to the camps and are replaced by other young women. There have also been instances of sexual abuse of men as well as castration and mutilation of male sexual organs. *Final Report of the United Nations Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section IV.

³ As of June 23, 1993, according to the United Nations Commission of Experts, which conducted an extensive review of war crimes committed in Prijedor municipality, the total number of killed and deported persons was 52,811 (including limited numbers of refugees and people missing). Camps located in or around Prijedor included Omarska, Manjaca, Keraterm, and Trnopolje. See *Final Report of the United Nations Commission of Experts*, for a detailed description of events around Prijedor in 1992 and throughout the war.

“Despite the absence of a real non-Serbian threat, the main objective of the concentration camps, especially Omarska but also Keraterm, seems to have been to eliminate the non-Serb leadership,” the U.N. Commission of Experts found. “From the time when the Serbs took power in the district of Prijedor, non-Serbs in reality became outlaws. At times, non-Serbs were instructed to wear white arm bands to identify themselves...According to Serbian regulations, those leaving the district had to sign over their property rights and accept never to return, being told their names would simultaneously be deleted from the census.”⁴

According to Ed Vulliamy⁵, the first journalist to report from the Omarska camp, “Omarska was a monstrosity: an inferno of murder, torture and rape. It was a stain upon our century.”⁶

During the period when many persons were interned in the concentration camps, family members sometimes tried to obtain information from the police station in town. “Instead of receiving information concerning the whereabouts of their family members, they were in some cases offered the alternative of paying for an “exit visa” for the family at large.⁷ In order to receive an “exit visa,” sums of money had to be paid to various municipal authorities and to the local “Red Cross,” run by the Bosnian Serb authorities, and real property had to be signed over to the municipality.

The Commission of Experts determined that the systematic destruction of the Bosniak community in the Prijedor area met the definition of genocide.⁸

The persecution of non-Serbs in Prijedor did not ease after international pressure succeeded in forcing the Bosnian Serbs to close the concentration camps in 1992, as evidenced by the ICRC’s attempt to evacuate all remaining non-Serbs from Opstina Prijedor in March 1994.⁹

⁴ *Final Report of the United Nations Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section IV.

⁵ Ed Vulliamy of *The Guardian* and Roy Gutman of *Newsday* were among the first to uncover and gain access to the concentration camps in the Prijedor area in 1992. Vulliamy accompanied non-Serbs as they were being “ethnically cleansed” from the territory, posing as a deaf mute. The two conducted extensive interviews over many months with Bosnian Serb officials, representatives of international organizations including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and with survivors of the camps. Roy Gutman was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his work, and Vulliamy has also been honored. Both Gutman’s and Vulliamy’s findings have been utilized in war crimes investigations by the ICTY.

⁶ Ed Vulliamy, “Yugoslavia: Horror Hidden Beneath Ice and Lies,” *The Guardian*, London, February 19, 1996, p. 9.

⁷ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section IX, Subsection D.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ The ICRC’s plans to evacuate all non-Serb residents of the town was abandoned after Karadzic refused to grant safe passage for convoys out.

As documented by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, a final wave of mass expulsions of non-Serbs from Prijedor and many other towns in Serb-controlled territory occurred in September and October 1995, when the infamous Zeljko "Arkan" Raznatovic joined local forces to conduct "ethnic cleansing" operations.¹⁰ Forced expulsions in Prijedor began on October 5 during which those expelled were again forced to finance their own "ethnic cleansing" by paying transportation fees to the local "Red Cross" and were harassed, robbed, and threatened while waiting for the buses which would later dump them at the confrontation line.¹¹

One woman told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki during a 1995 investigation of the expulsions, "All the Muslims from the city [Prijedor] were expelled. We went to the [local] Red Cross, gave them seventy DM for each family member and got on the buses. . . There were thirteen buses in the convoy leaving from Prijedor for Teslic. Men were taken off my bus. . . My husband was taken off the bus in Blatnica, a Serbian village in the woods." She had not seen her husband since.¹²

Many draft-age males were separated from their families during round-ups in other Bosnian Serb-controlled areas, and transferred to Prijedor, where they were interned at the "Autoprevoz" facility or other local detention centers. Following the official closing of the camps in 1992, and until the present, rumors have abounded about the reopening of the Omarska, Manjaca and Keraterm camps, but Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has been unable to confirm them. Prisoners released from "Autoprevoz" in an exchange told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that when the International Committee of the Red Cross tried to visit them, they were moved by bus onto the Kozara mountain and hidden until the visitors had gone away.¹³

Oppression of the now-minority Bosniak and Bosnian Croat populations throughout Republika Srpska continues today through restrictions on freedom of movement; evictions and expulsions; arbitrary arrest and detention; ethnically motivated harassment and direct physical attack; denial of employment, humanitarian assistance, medical care, and social insurance; discrimination in access to education; and restrictions on religious freedom.

THE ROLE OF THE PRIJEDOR AUTHORITIES DURING THE WAR AND AFTER THE SIGNING OF THE DAYTON PEACE AGREEMENT

The "Crisis Committee" and Co-Conspirators

¹⁰ A person who in 1994 left Prijedor told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that "I hid for two years. People were being killed on the road and I wouldn't have been caught dead walking outside. I stayed in my house from the day I was released from the Keraterm concentration camp on August 13, 1992 until I came here [to Bosnian government-controlled territory] on Saturday [September 17, 1994]. See Human Rights Watch/Helsinki report, "Bosnia-Herzegovina: "Ethnic Cleansing" Continues in Northern Bosnia," *A Human Rights Watch Short Report*, vol. 6, no. 16, November 1994. Numerous similar stories have been related to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki representatives.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ The information on the expulsion of non-Serbs from Prijedor comes in part from a report of a human rights fact-finding mission which included staff from UNPF-HQ, United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), and the U.N. Center for Human Rights. The report is titled "Human Rights Abuses in Northwestern Bosnia: Report on Forced Expulsions from 5-12 October 1995." For a detailed description of how the forced expulsions were conducted, see Human Rights Watch/Helsinki's report titled "*Northwestern Bosnia: Human Rights Abuses during a Cease-Fire and Peace Negotiations.*" Vol. 8, No. 1 (D), February 1996. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki

In 1992, the "Crisis Committee of the Serbian District of Prijedor" (Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor) was established to organize the takeover of the town by Serbs and to eliminate the non-Serb population through a systematic "ethnic cleansing" campaign coordinated with Serbian and Bosnian Serb army and paramilitary units.¹⁴ The goal of the "Crisis Committee" was to establish complete Serb control over the Prijedor opstina, to arm Serbs within that area, to block communications of non-Serbs, to destroy multi-ethnic relations in all sectors of the community through the use of propaganda (to instill within the local Serb population the fear that they were under threat from non-Serbs), to provide logistical support and production for the army through the takeover of industry and production units, and to conduct the organized and meticulous larceny of funds from non-Serbs through control of the bank, expropriation of property, and burglary.¹⁵

Crisis committees were formed in a number of towns and villages in Bosnia and Hercegovina in order to facilitate the takeover by Serb forces and authorities. The "Crisis Committee" in Prijedor, aided by many others, targeted non-Serb community leaders and business owners, many of whom were summarily executed or immediately rounded up and imprisoned in concentration camps, particularly in Omarska camp.¹⁶ During the period when such committees were being set up in various towns in 1992, the Prijedor Bosnian Serb authorities secretly began developing nine new police stations. In early April 1992, Serb police officers in Croatia and Bosnia and Hercegovina simultaneously left the established police forces to form their own police. Simo Drljaca headed the secret effort in Opstina Prijedor to create such a force. The local Prijedor police, according to numerous witness accounts and independent investigations, played a major role in violations of international humanitarian and human rights law during and after the war. Local police were often involved in paramilitary-type activities, such as armed attacks on civilians in and around Prijedor, and in interrogations and torture in the concentration camps.

A number of current officials in Prijedor were members of the Crisis Committee, including the recently-ousted but still powerful police chief, **Simo Drljaca**; current Mayor **Milomir Stakic**; the president of the local (self-designated) Serbian Red Cross, **Srdjo Srdic**; and Prijedor Hospital Director **Milan ("Mico") Kovacevic** (previously president of the Prijedor Executive Committee, or city council). According to the U.N. Commission of Experts, **Slobodan Kuruzovic**, now director of a local newspaper, was an officer in the Bosnian Serb Army, a key military figure on the "Crisis Committee" and the commander of the Trnopolje concentration camp.

Other alleged abettors in the "ethnic cleansing" include Deputy Mayor **Momcilo Radanovic** (*nom de guerre* "**Cigo**"), who has been accused of atrocities in Kozarac and in the concentration camps; **Marko Pavic**, director of the PTT (Post Office, Telegraph and Telephone); and **Milenko Vukic**, director of the electric company.¹⁷

¹⁴ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section IX. It is important to note that the "Crisis Committee" may have been formed as early as February 1992.

¹⁵ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section V, Subsection C.

¹⁶ It is difficult to determine how many people died at the Omarska camp. According to Roy Gutman of *Newsday* (New York), who conducted numerous interviews with persons who were survivors of Omarska, the U.S. State Department and other Western officials confirmed to him that between 4,000 and 5,000 persons, the vast majority of them non-Serb civilians, were killed in Omarska. Some were held and killed in open pits. Thousands more would probably have died if the camps had not been closed due to international outrage. A number of detainees "disappeared" at the time of the closing of the camp. Some were later found at the Batkovic camp, having been moved there without proper notification of the ICRC, but at least 130 transferred detainees have never been found.

¹⁷ See Appendix A for a list of known members of the Serb "Crisis Committee" of Prijedor. Information about additional members has been documented by the U.N. Commission of Experts and is in the possession of the ICTY. The information is not currently available for public use. Crisis Committees were created in other towns in Bosnian-Serb controlled areas as well.

Several police officials and numerous police officers have been accused of participation in war crimes. The civil, secret, and military police provided the camps with guards and interrogators. Joint police and military “intervention units” were used to trace and capture the non-Serb leadership. These units participated in mass killings.

According to the Commission of Experts, “members of the ‘Crisis Committee’ ran the community in which all these violations occurred. They participated in administrative decision-making. The gains of the systematic looting of non-Serbian property were shared by many Serbs on different levels.”¹⁸

¹⁸ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts, Annex V, Part 2, Section IX.*

A local resident of Prijedor recently told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that the "Crisis Committee" "got rich during the war through theft and looting of those killed, and through bribery [i.e. freedom offered for cash]. They also stole businesses of those killed. That is how they got some of the businesses they have now in Prijedor. Others took that money and opened businesses or companies. Only those with connections to these guys can have a business because that is the only way to be sure you are protected."¹⁹ Those without connections or those who refuse to pay protection money run the risk of having their business destroyed or worse.

A survivor of Keraterm and Trnopolje told Omarska survivor Jadranka Cigelj in November 1992:

I blame the following for the atrocities that were committed: 1. The entire county authorities – [including] president of the county **Milomir Stakic**, medic by profession; 2. The local police forces - chief of staff **Simo Drljaca**, lawyer, and head commander **Zivko Jovic**; 3. **Simo Miskovic**, leader of the Serbian Democratic Party, a policeman from the communist era, now retired, and successor to **Srdljko Srdic**, now president of the Prijedor Red Cross; 4. An army representative, **Colonel Arsic**...who was in charge of the brigade which destroyed Pakrac and other Slavonian and Banian towns and villages, he participated in the events and gave orders; he and **Major Radmilo Zeljaja** practically controlled all of the events until now, therefore, the destroyed town of Kozarac is now called Radmilovo in honor of Major Zeljaja."²⁰

Another survivor of Keraterm also mentions the names of some of those responsible for "ethnic cleansing":

I have not [yet] described here the horrible sufferings of famished, sick and beaten people, who died in the worst pain imaginable, the bestiality of guards who forced the beaten people to put their genitals in each other's mouths, the beaten up boy who died in his father's arms. According to my estimate, over 300 people were killed in "Keraterm" during my stay from June 10 to August 5, 1992. Besides the already mentioned, the perpetrators of those crimes include: **Banovic called Cupa, Kondic, Radic, Rodic, D[jo]rd[je] Dosen called Dole, Lajic, Stojan Madzar, Civerica** and others whose names are known by their commanders. The investigators were: **Gostimir Modic, Brane Siljegovic, Ranko Bucalo, Dragan Radetic, and Dragan Radakovic**. Order-issuing authorities were: **Simo Miskovic** (president of the Serbian Democratic Party of Prijedor), **Milomir Stakic** (Prijedor county supervisor), **Simo Drljaca** (head of the Prijedor police), **Dule Jankovic** (the police commander) and **Jovic** (the commander of the military police).²¹

¹⁹ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview, Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 1996.

²⁰ Interview conducted by Jadranka Cigelj, Zagreb, Croatia, November 5, 1992.

²¹ Interview conducted by Jadranka Cigelj, Zagreb, Croatia, January 8, 1993.

Although Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has not itself conducted a comprehensive investigation into the activities of all of the individuals named in this report, they have been included because they were mentioned by survivors and witnesses to atrocities (and often corroborated by other sources), and it is believed that further investigation of their activities is warranted.

Dispatches, a British documentary film series, covered the story of the concentration camps in and around Prijedor in 1992 and featured interviews with survivors of the Omarska, Keraterm, and Trnopolje camps.²² Some of the witnesses interviewed bravely named those responsible. Among those named were **Simo Drljaca**, **Milomir Stakic**, **Zeljko Meakic** [indicted], **Mlado Krkan** [Mladen "Krkan" Radic, indicted], and **Nada Balaban**. *Dispatches* also gained access to the Omarska and Trnopolje camps, resulting in powerful footage of the conditions there. The film makers went to the main office inside Omarska camp, where they met and filmed Simo Drljaca with his assistant Nada Balaban. Balaban states in the film, as Drljaca stands next to her, "This is not a camp, this is a center, a transit center. Omarska and Trnopolje. Both are centers, not camps." *Dispatches* interviewed Mayor Stakic in his office after their visit to the camps. Stakic told the crew:

Those places like Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje were the necessity of the moment and were formed on decisions of the Prijedor civil authorities. . . According to the information there was no mistreatment or violence in the centers themselves. . . There were cases [of death] as the commander in charge let me know--natural deaths with medical documentation of death, but not of murder. . . not many [deaths occurred].

The U.N. Commission of Experts states: "It is claimed that young women from '*inter alia*,' the villages Gornja Ravska, Gornji Volar, Stara Rijeka and Surkovac together with young women from other districts were detained and sexually abused by Serbian military in Korcanica motel [Korcanica is a village near Sanski Most]. It is claimed that they were abused to 'give birth to better and more beautiful Serbs.' Among the high ranking Serbian military named as rapists and/or organizers of these sexual orgies are two identified members of the 'Krizni Stab Srpske Opstina Prijedor' ['Crisis Committee of the Serb Municipality of Prijedor'], whose names are not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutorial reasons."²³

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki's investigations indicate that the "Crisis Committee" presently continues to operate in Prijedor in much the same way as it did during the war, although more informally and with some changes in the positions of individuals. This conclusion is based upon evidence regarding the continued, well-coordinated involvement of "Crisis Committee" members and their collaborators in preventing the return of non-Serbs and retaining near-total control over the municipality.

WHO'S WHO IN PRIJEDOR

Simo Drljaca: Former Chief of Police and Head of Secret Police

Simo Drljaca, one of the most notorious police officials in the whole of former Yugoslavia, controlled the civil and secret police during the Serb takeover of the Prijedor area in 1992 and was later appointed vice-minister of internal affairs (under the Ministry of the Interior) of the [then so-called] Republika Srpska. Numerous news reports, survivor accounts, and an extensive investigation by the U.N. Commission of Experts have indicated that Drljaca played a major role in the organization and management of the concentration camps in the Prijedor area.

According to an IFOR source, Drljaca was appointed directly by Radovan Karadzic to command the police force of five municipalities in the Prijedor area. He reportedly led a brutal military police-type unit during Operation Storm [in Croatia], which gave him a bad reputation among young soldiers and police.²⁴ From 1992-1995, Drljaca's

²² *Dispatches*, "A Town Called Kozarac," Gold Hawk Productions, April 2, 1993. Written and directed by Ed Harriman, produced by Alan Lowery.

²³ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Part 2, Section V, Subsection A.

²⁴ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with an IFOR officer, Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 8, 1996.

police force continued to persecute non-Serbs, and there is ample evidence to suggest his direct involvement in the “disappearance” of a Catholic priest, Father Tomislav Matanovic, and his parents in September 1995 (see section on “Disappearances”).

After the signing of the Dayton agreement, Drljaca personally obstructed freedom of movement and the return of refugees and displaced persons, going so far as to hand out weapons to the local population to threaten returnees.²⁵

Drljaca’s immediate supervisor is Minister of the Interior Dragan Kijac who is based in Bjeljina, the seat of the Ministry of the Interior and the Republika Srpska police. In June 1996, an IFOR source told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, “Drljaca has complete power, maintaining control through the police and the military. [Mayor] Stakic is under Drljaca’s thumb...Stakic won’t meet with me on certain subjects unless Drljaca is present.” The source claimed that Drljaca was “controlled by Pale”, through limiting or granting him funds, calling him to Pale frequently, and controlling information passed to him.

Drljaca’s cooperation with the U.N. mission, and more recently, with IPTF has been minimal, but there was surprisingly little international attention to his behavior until an altercation with IFOR in September 1996 (described later in this report). He remained police chief for nine months following the signing of the Dayton agreement, despite his history and his numerous violations of the Dayton agreement, which are detailed below (see Section C: “Violations of the Dayton Agreement by the Prijedor Authorities, The Role of the Police”).

An IPTF report dated November 2, 1996, which was given by a third party to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, states, “The impression by Prijedor IPTF, IFOR and ECMM, is that Drljaca is clearly wielding power and influence in Prijedor. The question at hand is whether this influence extends to the local police. From the sightings listed above [in the IPTF report] and the information of Drljaca’s new position with the Ministry, it appears to be the case. The fact that Drljaca is traveling in police vehicles gives further credence to this conclusion.”²⁶ Rather than being dismissed from his post, Drljaca was actually promoted to special assistant to Minister of the Interior Dragan Kijac. Drljaca describes his new role as “security advisor,” according to IPTF. Drljaca has also referred to himself as “logistics officer.”

At a November 29 IFOR press conference, IPTF spokesman Alexander Ivanko acknowledged that Drljaca had been seen four times by IPTF, and that IPTF Prijedor believed he was still in operational control of the Prijedor police. Ivanko stated “We’ve raised this with Minister Kijac, he has reassured us--I’m not sure we can believe his reassurances--but he has reassured us that Simo Drljaca no longer has any influence in the area of Prijedor. As far as we know, Simo Drljaca nevertheless is an assistant to Minister Kijac, in charge of logistics.” Drljaca was also seen in December 1996 by IPTF in an apparent police function.

According to information given to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in January 1997 by an IPTF source, Drljaca is still the *de facto* chief of police, and “controls all police issues.” He also carries an illegal weapon and is accompanied by armed body guards at all time.

IFOR sources have confirmed to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, and IPTF sources strongly suspect, that Drljaca is heavily involved in organized crime.²⁷

Simo Drljaca: Wartime Activities

According to *Kozarski Vjesnik*, a Serbian-controlled newspaper in Prijedor:

²⁵ OSCE Human Rights Report, May 1996. See section on police, “Non-Compliance with the Dayton Agreement: The Prijedor Police,” p. 31.

²⁶ IPTF Prijedor report, November 2, 1996.

²⁷ See “Simo Drljaca and the Prijedor Mafia,” p. 20.

The man (Simo Drljaca), who the Serbian Democratic Party of the Opstina Prijedor put in charge of forming the Serbian police after half a year of illegal work, had done his job so well that in thirteen police stations, 1,775 well-armed persons were waiting to undertake any difficult duty in the time which was coming. Between April 29 and 30, 1992, he directed the takeover of power [by the Serbs] which was successfully achieved in only thirty minutes without any shots fired. The assembly of the Srpske Opstine Prijedor, at the end of March last year [1992], appointed him chief of the public security station (i.e. in charge of the secret police). He was in charge of this job during the most demanding period and remained in the position until January 1993. These days he has been appointed the vice-minister of Internal Affairs of the Serbian Republic.²⁸

In an interview with *Kozarski Vjesnik* on April 9, 1993, Drljaca stated:

In the collecting centers of Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje more than 6,000 informative conversations²⁹ were held. Of these people, 1,503 Muslim and Croats were transferred to the Manjaca camp.³⁰

Drljaca did not explain what happened with the other 4,497. Speaking to a journalist about prisoners in the Manjaca camp, he said with regret, "Instead of them getting their just punishment, we were forced to release them by the international powers."³¹

The secret and civil police, both controlled by Drljaca and the Ministry of the Interior, "would interrogate, torture and kill camp inmates and be in charge of the psychological part of the operation," according to the U.N. Commission of Experts. "The most brutal functions of the sluzba bezbjednosti (state security) personnel could alternatively be carried out with the paramilitary units,"³² among them the Red Berets, a paramilitary unit possibly under the direct command of Radovan Karadzic.³³ A visit to Omarska by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki (then Helsinki Watch) representatives in August 1992 confirmed that access to the camps was granted by local police authorities, not by the military, although there was considerable collaboration between the two.³⁴

²⁸ As quoted in the *Final report of U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section III.

²⁹ The term "informative conversation" refers to interrogation.

³⁰ *Final Report of U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex 5, Part 2, Section XIII, Subsection A.

³¹ Michael Thurman, "The War Reporters' War," *Die Zeit* (Hamburg), September 2, 1994.

³² *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex 5, Part 2, Section V, Subsection C.

³³ According to a prominent Bosniak doctor expelled from Banja Luka in 1995, persons who previously served with Arkan's forces, National Security Forces of Serbia, were, in the fall of 1995, serving as body guards of Radovan Karadzic. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview, Kutina, Croatia, November 10, 1995.

³⁴ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, *War Crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina*, August 1992, p. 66.

As Drljaca told *Kozarski Vjesnik*, "They (the police forces, including the secret services) carried out my orders and the orders of the CSB ("Centar Sluzbene Bezbjednosti," or Public Security Center) Banja Luka and the Minister of Interior . . . the cooperation was excellent with the Army of Republika Srpska and with the officers of that army. The cooperation was manifested in the joint cleansing of the terrain of traitors, joint work at the checkpoints, a joint intervention group against disturbances of public order and in fighting terrorist groups."³⁵

After local Serbs took control of the Prijedor municipality in the spring of 1992, according to the U.N. Commission, Drljaca informed all non-Serbian police officers that they would have to abide by "Serbian law", display "Serbian emblems", and sign a declaration of consent to abide by the regulations set by their Bosnian Serb counterparts. Few signed, and no non-Serbs remained in the police force for more than the first ten to fifteen days. Soon they were among those specifically targeted for persecution. One former Omarska detainee claims that on one occasion, twenty non-Serbian policemen from Prijedor were executed in the camp.

It has been alleged that Drljaca was one of those responsible for deciding who would be taken to the Omarska camp. A survivor of the Omarska and Manjaca camps and former acquaintance of Drljaca's told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki on November 16, 1996 that he saw Drljaca a number of times in the Omarska camp in 1992. His daughter, seeking his release, had called Drljaca, who checked a list while they were on the phone and confirmed that her father was on the list for Omarska. "Sorry," he said, "there's nothing I can do for him."³⁶

Peter Maas of *The Washington Post* further described Drljaca's role:

The tour of Omarska and Trnopolje was conducted by Simo Drljaca, who controls the camps and is the police chief of Prijedor, the nearest town. Drljaca flatly denied the charges of mistreatment, torture, and executions. "Interrogation is being done the same way as it is done in America and England," he said. Asked about the skeletal state of many at Omarska, he said that they were not underfed. "They are not skeletons," he boasted.³⁷

When Chuck Sudetic of the *New York Times* asked Drljaca why the prisoners were so thin, Drljaca replied that the Muslims were naturally skinny because they did not eat pork and fasted each year during Ramadan. "That's the way the Muslim nation is," he said. "Have you read the Koran?" Drljaca insisted that none of the prisoners had been physically mistreated and that reports of killings were untrue, and that any men who had died in the camp had died of war wounds. He also told Sudetic that all the investigators were lawyers.³⁸

In August 1992, Sudetic reported: "The most powerful warlord in the Prijedor area is the local police chief, Simo Drljaca, who runs the militia and has reportedly had serious clashes with local army officers." In an apparent effort to distance himself from the atrocities being committed in the concentration camps, Karadzic told the Times that Drljaca was responsible for the inhumane conditions in the camps under his control, which included Omarska and Keraterm."³⁹

³⁵ Interview held on April 9, 1993 in Prijedor, quoted in *Final Report of U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex 5, Part 2, Section IX.

³⁶ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, interview with survivor and daughter, U.S., November 16, 1996.

³⁷ Peter Maas, "Away from Guards, Inmates Whisper of Abuse," *The Washington Post*, August 11, 1992.

³⁸ Chuck Sudetic, "Inside Serbs Bosnian Camp: Prisoners, Silent and Gaunt," *The New York Times*, August 8, 1992

³⁹ Chuck Sudetic, "Serbs' Gains in Bosnia Create Chaotic Patchwork," *The New York Times*, August 21, 1992.

Sudetic reported: "Undercutting denials by Serbian leaders that there is no official policy behind the forced expulsion of Muslims and Croats, Mr. Drljaca speaks frankly about how to 'cleanse' the undesirables. 'With their mosques, you must not just break the minarets,' he said, 'You've got to shake up the foundations because that means they cannot build another. Do that, and they'll want to go. They'll just leave by themselves.'"⁴⁰

In 1992, Drljaca had insisted to journalist Roy Gutman⁴¹ of *Newsday* that no one was killed at Omarska, and that only two prisoners had died between May 25 and mid-August, both of "natural causes." Another forty-nine "disappeared," including the former lord mayor of Prijedor, Muhamed Cehajic, and were presumed dead, Drljaca told Gutman.⁴² But Simo Drljaca later told Gutman that "in legal terminology, we use that term 'disappeared.' Maybe some who 'disappeared' died in 'disappearing.'"⁴³

In the Bosnian Serb version of events, detainees were interrogated for four days and then deported – voluntarily. Drljaca told *Newsday* that the 800 detainees who "organized the whole thing" (the alleged "conspiracy to overthrow the Serbs"), among them rich Bosniaks who allegedly financed the Bosniak SDA political party, were taken to Manjaca "to await criminal trial." Taken with them were 600 people who reportedly commanded units of Bosniak and Bosnian Croat resistance. The remaining 1,900 persons [of the approximately 3000 people Drljaca admitted to arresting and taking to Omarska] were found "innocent" and taken immediately to Trnopolje, which officials, including Drljaca, referred to as "a transit camp," but was actually a deportation center.⁴⁴

In fact, relatively few interrogations were conducted before transfers to the various camps, and only a handful of detainees had ever carried arms, according to Gutman's extensive and detailed reporting.⁴⁵

A survivor of Keraterm and Trnopolje said in November 1992:

On July 17, 1992, at 5:30 a.m., Simo Drljaca, chief of police, ordered my second arrest. Three civilian policemen and a driver took me in a police car first to the police station and then to the town camp 'Keraterm'.... 'Keraterm' was a plant built to produce tiles and thermic products. It was never opened, and its plant floors and depots were turned into a notorious camp enclosed by wire fence, well guarded, with machine-gun nests and a huge dredger which overlooked prisoners like a ghost. Between 850 to 1000 people would be brought to the camp daily, depending on the extent of 'cleansing' in the town and its surroundings....I spent 53 days in 'Keraterm' and in the prison hospital. I watched people being beaten up and murdered...⁴⁶

Another survivor reports that:

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Ed Vulliamy of *The Guardian* and Roy Gutman of *Newsday* were among the first to uncover and gain access to the concentration camps in the Prijedor area in 1992. Vulliamy accompanied non-Serbs as they were being "ethnically cleansed" from the territory, posing as a deaf mute. The two conducted extensive interviews over many months with Bosnian Serb officials, representatives of international organizations including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and with survivors of the camps. Roy Gutman was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his work, and Vulliamy has also been honored. Both Gutman's and Vulliamy's findings have been utilized in war crimes investigations by the ICTY.

⁴² Roy Gutman, *A Witness to Genocide*, New York, Macmillan Publishing Company, 1993, p. 94.

⁴³ *Final Report of U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex 5, Part 2, Section XIII, Subsection F.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ See Roy Gutman, especially pages 90-101.

⁴⁶ Testimony collected by an international humanitarian organization, Zagreb, Croatia, July 1992.

Around June 20th, the ethnic cleansing of the villages of Motric and Carevac was carried out. Serbs simply took away the people who were at their homes or worked in the field. They killed some of them, mainly young men, placed others on the buses and transferred some of them to "Keraterm", while the rest of them were allegedly taken to Omarska. In "Keraterm" some twenty guards readily waited for them with special beating implements like baseball bats, chains, battery cables, and extremely flexible metal hoses with a metal ball on the end. They would take them in groups of ten and they did not watch where they hit them. Especially brutal was **Dusan Knezevic**, called **Duca**, who pierced some people's thighs with a bayonet...[One night] they started shooting with automatic guns...we realized what had happened in the morning. 'Autotransport' [sic] FAP 1620 trailer truck came in the morning. A certain Pero whom I knew from earlier drove it. The guards took some people from our sleeping-room and ordered [them] to load bodies on the truck. There were ninety-eight dead and sixty-four wounded...the following night, July 25-26th, we again heard machine-gun fire in the same room...I counted. Exactly twenty-one shots.⁴⁷

Drljaca finally escorted Peter Maas and some other journalists to Keraterm, where he refused to allow them to see the building where prisoners had actually been held, and then to Omarska and Trnopolje, where the journalists met starving men who spoke with them in hushed tones about the terror of the camps.

An IFOR source recently told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that Drljaca "ran the camp at Omarska...was appointed directly by Karadzic...[and is] up for the Hague Tribunal." The source added that Drljaca owns the 'Aeroklub' restaurant and a perfume shop in Prijedor.⁴⁸

Simo Drljaca and the Prijedor "Mafia"

According to two IFOR sources assigned to the Prijedor area with access to intelligence information, and IPTF sources, Drljaca also heads a well-organized crime ring. The police reportedly "take a cut" on all major financial transactions in the town, and some local businesses are required to pay Drljaca "protection money." Local Serbs and non-Serbs alike fear Drljaca and his men.

IFOR confirmed that Drljaca controls the local Property Commission and the local Commission on Displaced Persons and Refugees, and therefore controls housing in the Prijedor municipality. "If you know Simo, you can get a house," one IFOR officer told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki. "If you don't, you can pay him. Everyone in Prijedor knows this."⁴⁹ This source also stated that Drljaca was involved in the destruction of over ninety Bosniak houses in the village of Hambarine, outside Prijedor, in October 1996.

The Boston Globe confirmed through Western sources in Prijedor who had talked to local residents about Drljaca that "In addition to controlling officials from the mayor on down, Drljaca is alleged by residents to have demanded kickbacks for apartments and police protection of businesses. Locally, his name is 'Mr. Ten Percent' for the rate he demands from area businesses and restaurants. . .Bosnian Serbs who don't toe the party line allege they had to pay the police to avoid being evicted from their apartments" and have been called in to the police station, where they were threatened by Drljaca in "informative talks" (interrogations) after speaking with Western officials.⁵⁰

Ranko Mijic: Acting Chief of Police

⁴⁷ Interview conducted by Jadranka Cigelj, Zagreb, Croatia, January 8, 1993.

⁴⁸ Human Rights Watch interview with confidential IFOR source, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 1996.

⁴⁹ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, interview with IFOR source, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 5, 1996

⁵⁰ Elizabeth Neuffer, "Bosnia's war criminals enjoy peacetime power," *The Boston Globe*, October 29, 1996.

Mijic served as deputy chief of police until the 1996 removal of Simo Drljaca as police chief of Prijedor, at which time he became acting police chief. When IPTF Prijedor asked Mijic recently about the persons indicted for war crimes on the police force, Mijic said he did not know them and said that the local police need permission from the minister of the interior to provide such information.⁵¹ However, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki viewed two documents in Prijedor which had been signed by two of the indicted persons. The first, dated July 11, 1996, was signed by Nedjeljko Timarac. The second document, dated October 22, 1996, was signed by Miroslav Kvočka.⁵² Mijic took control of the Prijedor police in September 1996. It is therefore evident that at least one of these two indictees was still serving on the police force until October 22, 1996, and had thus been under Mijic's authority for at least one month. According to IPTF, Mijic has been extremely uncooperative with regard to providing IPTF with the patrol schedule.

According to Nusret Sivac, a survivor of Trnopolje, Ranko Mijic was chief interrogator for all the camps in the Prijedor area. He was responsible for the death lists and issued death sentences in Keraterm and Omarska. According to Sivac, Mijic is "the biggest war criminal after Drljaca." Before the war, he was head of the Division of Criminology for the police department.⁵³

Zivko Jovic: Acting Deputy Chief of Police

Zivko Jovic was formerly head of the Criminal Investigations Division of the Prijedor police department, and according to an IPTF source, owns the "Calypso" coffee shop behind the IPTF police station. According to a local source, Jovic was a military policeman during the war and was responsible for war crimes.⁵⁴ An independent testimony from a survivor of Keraterm and Trnopolje names Zivko Jovic as one of those responsible for the atrocities committed in those camps.⁵⁵ According to Nusret Sivac, another survivor of the concentration camps, "Jovic Zivko was an interrogator/inspector in Keraterm camp."⁵⁶

Grozdan Mutic: Head of State Security

Mutic was assigned to the post of chief of state security for the Prijedor municipality in 1993, and according to an IFOR source, receives his directives from Dragan Kijac, minister of the interior, not from Simo Drljaca. State security officers have intelligence and internal investigations duties. His brother, Rade Mutic, is an extremist who is the director of the local television station and is rabidly anti-Bosniak, according to international sources in Prijedor. His other brother, Mile Mutic, was the editor of the local newspaper *Kozarski Vjesnik*, and along with Rade, used the written and spoken media to propagate anti-Bosniak propaganda and to fuel ethnic hatred and violence throughout the war.

Milomir Stakic: Mayor of Prijedor

⁵¹ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with international source, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 6, 1996.

⁵² Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with confidential source, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 1996.

⁵³ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with Nusret Sivac, December 26, 1996.

⁵⁴ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with local source, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 19, 1996.

⁵⁵ See page 16.

⁵⁶ Nusret Sivac, *Kolika Je U Prijedoru Carsija: Zapisi Za Nezabrav*, Bonik (Publishers), Bosanska Novinsko-Izdavacka Kuca, Sarajevo, 1995.

Milomir Stakic, working as a member of the "Crisis Committee," was directly involved in setting up the infamous camps around Prijedor, according to the U.N. Commission of Experts. Ed Vulliamy reported in *The Guardian* in February 1996: "Dr. [Milan] Kovacevic's boss in 1992 was the 'president', or mayor, of Prijedor, Milomir Stakic....And he was introduced to us as the man endowed with the authority to grant, or refuse, access to Omarska."⁵⁷

In an interview in August 1992, Mayor Stakic provided the following statement:

We have tried to get the other side to live in peace with us. Our problems are with the extremists, not the population. We are trying to get Muslims not to leave the area, but to stay and live with us, but they want to go to Croatia and Germany, or back to Bosnia [sic], while the extremists bring weapons into the area, kill the Serbian people and commit appalling atrocities. There are no camps--there are only transit centers where people are taken for their own protection. Others are people who want to leave and we are assisting them.⁵⁸

Stakic resigned from his post in 1993, but was reinstated as mayor on direct orders from Karadzic in February 1996.⁵⁹ He is under investigation by the ICTY, and an indictment for war crimes is expected by local observers in Prijedor and a source close to the ICTY, but it is by no means certain he will be indicted any time soon.

Stakic, a medical doctor and currently director of the community health center in Prijedor, is according to IFOR sources close to Drljaca and serves as the *de facto* head of the local SDS. He is allegedly involved with Drljaca in local mafia activities and has knowledge of the "disappearance" of Father Tomislav Matanovic.⁶⁰

International monitors in Bosnia and Hercegovina report that Mayor Stakic has repeatedly failed to comply with provisions of the Dayton agreement. According to IFOR, Mayor Stakic has been involved in organizing mob attacks and in provoking violent incidents through announcements on the radio. For example, on June 25, 1996, Mayor Stakic issued an inflammatory statement on Radio Prijedor, warning of fanatical Muslims entering Prijedor and calling on listeners to defend the town.⁶¹ The group identified as "radical Muslims" was in fact an international women's peace group (See section, "Obstruction of Freedom of Movement by Prijedor Authorities," for details of incident). After the "defense," Radio Prijedor announced that "a group of Muslim extremists tried to penetrate by force...which demonstrates a provocation by the international community and a violation of Srpska's [Republika Srpska's] sovereignty."⁶²

In October 1996, ninety-six Bosniak houses and two mosques were blown up in the village of Hambarine, near Prijedor. The evidence suggests that the authorities were involved in this destruction (see details in section titled "Destruction of Property to Prevent Repatriation"). Stakic told an IFOR officer that he had opposed the bombings and wanted to leave his job--that he did not plan to run for re-election. According to UNHCR reports, however, prior to the destruction of housing in Hambarine, UNHCR provided Stakic with a list of the displaced persons who wished to visit their houses in the village. The houses destroyed corresponded to those owned by the persons on this list.

⁵⁷ Ed Vulliamy, "Yugoslavia: Horror Hidden Beneath Ice and Lies," *The Guardian*, February 19, 1996, p. 9.

⁵⁸ Ed Vulliamy, *Seasons in Hell* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), p. 100.

⁵⁹ The replacement of the mayors of Prijedor and Bosanski Novi by Pale authorities was noted in the press in February 1996. It is important that the authorities in Pale, Radovan Karadzic in particular, were reported to have direct control over the mayors of these towns.

⁶⁰ Human Rights Watch interview with IFOR source, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 1996.

⁶¹ IFOR, "Subject: Attempted Visit by Women's Group, 25-27 May 1996" and UNHCR, "UNHCR Guidelines - Status Report: 25 May - 31 May 1996."

⁶² IFOR, "Subject: Attempted Visit by Women's Group, 25-27 May 1996."

Momcilo Radanovic, a.k.a. "Cigo": Deputy Mayor of Prijedor

The *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts* states:

Another paramilitary unit was the so-called "Gypsy Brigade" from Omarska. The leader of the group was Momcilo Radanovic nicknamed "Cigo" [diminutive form of "Cigan", i.e. "Gypsy"]. He was a taxi driver who fought in the war in Croatia. He is now said to be the Vice President of Opstina Prijedor. During the attack by infantry and paramilitary units on the Kozarac area, the "Gypsy Brigade" apparently was one of the most cruel, committing massacres in the villages Alici, Softici, Brdjani, and Jakupovci. He and his group are also ill-reputed for other alleged heinous acts against non-Serbs, for example, in the camps Omarska and Keraterm.⁶³

According to IFOR sources, Radanovic, who served as mayor of Prijedor from late 1995 to February 1996, is an "uneducated taxi driver" who is "owed money by a lot of important people in Prijedor." Author and Omarska camp survivor Nusret Sivac, told *The Boston Globe*, "The biggest crimes in Kozarac were committed. . . under the command of Momcilo (Cigo) Radanovic."⁶⁴

Sivac, who has written a book about his experiences, states therein:

Milan Andjic, approximately 60 years old from Omarska, earlier a building materials merchant, and just before the war owner of the village inn "Trias" in Omarska, organized and financed a Chetnik⁶⁵ unit which numbered 200 Cetniks, mainly from Omarska, who were killing and raping around Slavonia [Croatia] and Bosnia. Their commander was Momcilo Radanovic 'Cigo,' an ex-taxi driver. Milan Andjic was selling the loot--mainly electronic and electrical appliances, agricultural machinery, trucks, cars, livestock--in the shops he owned. He specialized in the extortion of valuable things from the rich inhabitants of Prijedor, the private entrepreneurs, promising them freedom. He is guilty for the death of many well-known and highly esteemed residents of Prijedor and Kozarac. His Cetnik unit...committed many crimes during the ethnic cleansing of the Prijedor region.⁶⁶

⁶³ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section VI, Subsection B.

⁶⁴ Elizabeth Neuffer, "Bosnia's war criminals enjoy peacetime power," *The Boston Globe*, October 29, 1996.

⁶⁵ During the Second World War, the Cetniks called for the restoration of the Serbian monarchy and the creation of a Greater Serbia. They fought pro-Nazi Ustase forces, Tito's communist partisans and at times with and against the Axis powers. They were especially brutal in Bosnia and Hercegovina, where they carried out large-scale massacres against the Muslim and to some extent Croat populations. Muslims, Croats and some Serbs opposed to their policies commonly refer to Bosnian Serb military and Serbian paramilitary forces, during the Bosnian war, as "Cetniks." Some Serbian combatants vehemently rejected the label "Cetnik," claiming they were merely defenders of their people and their land and that they are not extremists. Others, such as paramilitary units loyal to the Serbian Radical Party, commonly referred to themselves as Cetniks.

⁶⁶ Nusret Sivac, *Kolika Je U Prijedoru Carsija...*, Bonik, Bosanska Novinsko-Izdavacka Kuca, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, 1995.

Sivac also states that in Kozarac, “Cigo” and his men “were slaughtering and killing all that moved, whatever they found, and they were especially bloodthirsty in Jakupovici, Kamicani, and Brdjani. They were killing women and children, one by one.”⁶⁷

According to an IPTF source, Radanovic is alleged to be highly involved in the local mafia, and was present, according to a witness, at the initial arrest of Father Tomislav Matanovic.

Srdjo Srdic: President of the “Serbian Red Cross” Prijedor

The *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts* states: “Srdic, a dentist by profession, was a representative of the SDS in the Assembly of BiH (Bosnia and Hercegovina), later in the self-proclaimed Serbian Republic of Bosnia and Hercegovina, and is a close associate of Radovan Karadzic.” Further, as a member of the “Crisis Committee,” and as mayor, Srdic was said to be responsible for much of the propaganda against non-Serbs and was “allegedly personally responsible for plunder and physical and psychological terror. As President of the Red Cross in 1992, he made the false pretense that the Red Cross was helping prisoners in the concentration camps. He has also been accused of having organized ‘ethnic cleansing’ by using Red Cross vehicles.”⁶⁸

Sivac, the author and camp survivor, writes of Srdic that he was “one of Karadzic’s closest associates and flatterers”:

A man for all political systems – a political chameleon. War profiteer. Used to sell weapons, blackmail and rob. Earlier, he was the secretary of the OO SK (organization committee of the Communist party) in the Medical Centre of Prijedor, where he was employed. He became a big nationalist. He is the organizer, leader, and ideologist of the taking over of power in Prijedor and the establishment of the so-called Serbian Municipality of Prijedor. As the President of the Municipal Committee of the Red Cross of Prijedor, he became well-known as the organizer of the mass evictions of Bosniaks and Croats of the Prijedor region. In order to show what a good Serb he is, Srdjo set fire to his son’s house and cafe because he was married to a Muslim woman.”⁶⁹

Srdic was the head of the “Crisis Committee” at the time of the “disappearance” of Father Tomislav Matanovic.

The Role of the Local Red Cross in “Ethnic Cleansing”

The local Red Cross in Prijedor served largely as a smoke-screen for abuses occurring in the concentration camps. Investigations by the U.N. Commission of Experts revealed that the local Red Cross was especially involved in the Trnopolje camp: “A staff member of the Red Cross in Prijedor. . . worked at the secretariat in Trnopolje where he was responsible for food supplies coming to the camp. Allegedly keeping food away from the internees, he caused terror and hunger, which was one of the reasons why prisoners in the camp succumbed [died].”⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ *Final Report of U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex 5, Part 2, Section V, Subsection B.

⁶⁹ Nusret Sivac, *Kolika Je U Prijedoru Carsija: Zapisi Za Nezabrav*, Bonik (Publishers), Bosanska Novinsko-Izdavacka Kuca, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, 1995. (Translation)

⁷⁰ *Final report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section VIII, Subsection B.

Journalist Ed Vulliamy also reported: "The local Red Cross had indeed visited Omarska, and given it a clean bill of health. Dr. Dusko Ivic [a local Red Cross staff member] said later, "Oh, yes, I have certainly visited Omarska, and my professional assessment of the health of the people there is very good, apart from some diarrhea."⁷¹ Similarly, journalist Roy Gutman, who visited Manjaca and Banja Luka but was denied access to Prijedor in July 1992, reported that, "Military authorities and the local Red Cross acknowledged the existence of a camp at Omarska but rebuffed requests to visit it. . . A local Red Cross official said he knew of 'no civilians' in Omarska."⁷²

There have been serious allegations involving Red Cross transports. The *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts* states, "One member of the Krizni Stab Srpske Opstine Prijedor, who was engaged in the local Red Cross (his name is not disclosed for confidentiality or prosecutory reasons), allegedly had people pay DM 50 per person to be transported in Red Cross vehicles toward Travnik. Non-Serbs in four such buses were allegedly among those liquidated at the Vlasic mountain."⁷³ Further, witnesses identified a soldier working with an "intervention unit" as a member of the [so-called] Serbian Red Cross working in Trnopolje camp, "who had once boasted he had blown up a Muslim with a bomb."⁷⁴

There was misuse of the Red Cross emblem by Bosnian Serb soldiers, in violation of the Geneva Conventions.

A survivor of Omarska and Trnopolje said in July 1992:

They caught us in such a manner that they used the Red Cross emblem and shouted into a megaphone: "Surrender, the Red Cross is waiting for you, you will be protected." There were twenty-one buses on the road and in front of them they separated women and children. We had to keep our heads lowered in the bus. Some buses drove straight through the woods and into Trnopolje, the others went to Ciglane (the Brickyards). They would take people to Ciglane by night. Then machine-gun fire would be heard and that person never returned.⁷⁵

The local Red Cross played a major role during a wave of forced expulsions in October 1995. As a seventy-four-year-old woman from Prijedor interviewed by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in November 1995 explained:

We were collected in front of the Red Cross, which is next to the football [soccer] field. I don't know how many buses there were, maybe five or six. People from the [local] Red Cross read names from the list as Muslims streamed in from everywhere.

A U.N. human rights fact-finding mission conducted from October 24-28, 1995 concluded: "More than six thousand Muslim residents of northwestern Bosnia were forced to travel to Bosnian government-held territory in mid-October on as little notice as five minutes. . . The expulsion was carried out by both local civilian authorities (*including the local Red Cross*) and Bosnian Serb military police and soldiers."⁷⁶

⁷¹ Vulliamy, *Seasons in Hell*, p. 104.

⁷² Gutman, *A Witness to Genocide*, p. 35.

⁷³ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section XII, Subsection D.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ Testimony collected by an international humanitarian organization, Zagreb, Croatia, July 1992.

⁷⁶ Report of human rights fact-finding mission conducted by six persons representing UNPF-HQ, UNPROFOR, and the U.N. Centre for Human Rights, "Human Rights Abuses in Northwestern Bosnia: Report on Forced Expulsions from 5 -12 October 1995." *Emphasis added.*

The U.N. Commission of Experts reported: "There are reports of non-Serbs having approached the local Serbian Red Cross in Prijedor to ask for the whereabouts of relatives who had 'disappeared,' were detained or deported, and who then were forcibly taken by Serbian Red Cross personnel into one of their buses and transported to Logor [camp] Trnopolje to be incarcerated without any reason given."⁷⁷

A Bosniak man expelled from Prijedor in the fall of 1995 told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki: "The Serbs took surveys of our property for a long time. We were not allowed to sell our own possessions. They made lists of possessions and put it in the Serb Red Cross and told us not to sell anything--that they had a record [and would know if anything was sold]."⁷⁸

IFOR and IPTF confirmed to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in April 1996 and in January 1997 that local residents had made serious allegations that they were not receiving aid from the local Red Cross due to corruption by Red Cross officials.⁷⁹ An international monitor has also confirmed reports that the local Red Cross refuses to give humanitarian assistance to non-Serbs.

Milan "Mico" Kovacevic: Director of Prijedor Hospital

Milan "Mico" Kovacevic, an original member of the "Crisis Committee," now serves as director of the Prijedor Hospital. In his book *Seasons in Hell*, Ed Vulliamy stated:

Milan Kovacevic, the big, impervious and haunted deputy mayor of the now Serbian-controlled town of Prijedor...[is] the man responsible for the delivery of Muslim prisoners to the Omarska concentration camp... "We must understand," he says, "that wherever there are Serbs, there is Serbia, and that Serbs cannot be 'free from persecution' until Kalabic's and Moljevic's⁸⁰ frontiers are secure from all the enemies of the Serbian *narod* [people or nation]". . .Kovacevic was born in a Croatian concentration camp during the Second World War. Outside the window of his office, Muslim women are queuing at the police station for news of their menfolk, whom they have not seen since they were taken away to Kovacevic's camps two months ago.⁸¹

⁷⁷ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Part 2, Section V, Subsection C.

⁷⁸ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview, Zenica, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 21, 1995.

⁷⁹ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with IFOR officer, Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, April 3, 1996, and with an IPTF monitor, January 1997.

⁸⁰ Stefan Moljevic and Nikola Kalabic, founders of the modern 'Greater Serbia' project, in 1941.

⁸¹ Vulliamy, *Seasons in Hell*, pp. 8-9.

Later, Kovacevic tells Vulliamy, "What you will find here are not concentration camps, but transit centres. We are a people born out of concentration camps, determined to protect our nation from genocide again." He then said, "I understand your priorities, but I do not have the authority to allow you to go to Omarska." This, after Vulliamy had been informed by **Colonel Vladimir Arsic**⁸² and Major Milutinovic of the local Bosnian Serb command that the camp was run by civilian authorities.⁸³

Roy Gutman, journalist for *Newsday*, also interviewed Kovacevic on October 18, 1992. "Milan Kovacevic, the city manager in Prijedor, said Omarska was an investigative facility, set up 'to see who did what during the war, to find the guilty ones and to establish the innocent so that they didn't bear the consequences.' He said the camp was closed when the investigation was completed." Gutman's book contains a photo of Kovacevic in a U.S. Marines t-shirt, sitting with Drljaca at the time.⁸⁴

In the aforementioned February 1996 article for *The Guardian*, Ed Vulliamy speaks of Kovacevic:

The man responsible for the day-to-day administration of Camp Omarska was Dr. Milan Kovacevic, and anaesthetist by profession. He was a bear of a man with a pale moustache and he told us there was nothing the world could teach the Serbs about concentration camps, since he had been born in one....After our discovery of Omarska, when the media circus descended on Prijedor and the camp was hurriedly closed, Dr. Kovacevic was assigned the task of explaining to the world's cameras what a "collection centre" was.... Dr. Kovacevic, it turns out, is now director of Prijedor Hospital. He remains a proud nationalist. 'The facts showed it necessary to destroy Bosnia. I wanted to make this Serb land. Without Muslims, yes. We cannot live together. I still hold that view.'⁸⁵

According to a reliable local source, the majority of aid to the Prijedor Hospital is siphoned off by Kovacevic and Mayor Stakic (See section, "Aid to the Prijedor Hospital").

Pero Colic: (Former) Commander Fifth Kozara Brigade and the Forty-Third Brigade, Prijedor

Pero Colic, recently promoted to general and named by Biljana Plavsic, President of the Republika Srpska, to replace Ratko Mladic as commander of the Bosnian Serb Army, was previously commander of the Fifth Kozara Brigade, stationed in Prijedor. The brigade came under the command of Maj. Gen. Momir Talic, 1st Krajina Corps (formerly the Fifth Corps), based in Banja Luka. The Fifth Kozara Brigade is a paramilitary formation in the Banja Luka Corps of the Serbian Army. On 24-25 July 1992, the Fifth Kozara Brigade, the Sixth Krajina Brigade, and local Serb paramilitaries attacked the Bosnian Croat villages of Stara Rijeka, Brisevo, Rajas, and Carakovo in the Ljubija region. Seventy-three Bosnian Croat civilians were killed during the attack by over 3,000 Serbs.⁸⁶

⁸² *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Part 2, Section IX, states: "The military destruction of the non-Serbian habitations in Opstina [municipality] took place when the area was under the command of Col. Vladimir Arsic and Maj. Radmilo Zeljaja [both members of the "Crisis Committee"] in close cooperation with military superiors, at least in the regional capital Banja Luka."

Ed Vulliamy, in a February 19, 1996 article in *The Guardian*, "Yugoslavia: Horror Hidden Beneath Ice and Lies," states: "Our visit to Omarska in 1992 was preceded by a torturous briefing at Prijedor civic centre by those who had established and administered the camp. The military commander, Colonel Vladimir Arsic, explained that Omarska was run by the police on behalf of the civil authorities - the president of the local authority and his deputy - who were duly introduced. These men, after much argument, took us to the mine."

⁸³ Ibid, p. 100.

⁸⁴ Gutman, pp. 94, 116.

⁸⁵ Vulliamy, "Yugoslavia: Horror Hidden....," p. 9.

⁸⁶ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex III.A, Part 3, Section C.

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interviewed one witness who linked Colic directly with the practice of forced labor in 1995, and three witnesses who mentioned Colic's unit, the Fifth Kozara or Kozaracka Brigade, as having been involved in forced labor. One of the witnesses, a young Bosnian Croat man, told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki about being taken to a forced labor camp, and described the cooperation between paramilitary forces from Serbia, believed to be under the command of Zeljko "Arkan" Raznatovic and local military forces:

The next morning [September 26, 1995] *Arkanovci* [Arkan's soldiers] [italics added] surrounded the whole area where we were in order to prevent people able to fight from leaving, including everyone because they knew we could not resist them. They wore black uniforms with black berets, red ribbons on their caps and had short hair. Serbs [who were] among us recognized them [as Arkan's men] also. . . Their accents were Serbian, from Serbia. They collected all draft-age males and put them on a bus. They went around and said "You, you, you," pointing at the men. They asked me where I was from and asked who I had with me, and I told them I had small children. They took us [men] on the bus, and the women and children stood crying--they [the soldiers] didn't allow them near us. . . They took us to the Hotel Europe near Omarska on the way to Banja Luka. . . Then we went to the Fifth Kozarska Brigade and were turned over to Commander Colic. The commander took information about people before he took them into his brigade. Then our turn came to show our papers. I had my previous Bosnia and Hercegovina identity card [which showed he was a Bosnian Croat], and he asked me what I was doing there--he said that we were all supposed to have been killed. Then my brother, I, and Petar Sehic were taken on foot in an unknown direction and put into a 7 by 8-meter cellar in an unfinished house near Manjaca. There we stayed until sunset. Around 7:00 p.m. another ten to twelve Muslims and Croats came. I recognized some, [but] we were afraid so we didn't speak. We stayed until the morning; then the army came again and discussed what to do with us. We were digging trenches near Tomina--we were sent in small groups. . . I was praying just to stay alive. . . We stayed [in forced labor] until the 3rd of January.⁸⁷

Eventually, the man escaped. During his time in forced labor, his wife and children were held in a school in Lamovita, a village outside Prijedor, for exchange. The family was eventually reunited, after seven months of separation. Two family members taken in September, however, were still missing at the end of 1996.⁸⁸

After rounding up Bosniak males during "ethnic cleansing" activities in the town of Sanski Most and surrounding villages on September 17, 1995, local Bosnian Serbs and paramilitaries gathered a group of men at the marketplace in Sanski Most. A Bosniak painter from Sehovici, told his story:

⁸⁷ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview, Sanski Most, Bosnia and Hercegovina, April 6, 1996. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki had interviewed this man's relatives in Sanski Most in November 1995, shortly after he and other family members were taken. The testimony collected at that time corroborated this man's story. A brother of the man told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that on or about September 29, while he was being held in forced labor to raise pigs for the Bosnian Serb Army, soldiers came to his village (Poljak, just outside Sanski Most) and took his wife and children away. "The Fifth Kozaracka Brigade took them, because they were the troops placed in this area -- they were the last Serb forces--they are mostly from around Prijedor. I came to the house and the house was empty. I am alone." At the time, the man did not know that his wife and children, like his brother's family, were being held in the school in Lamovita. They were released along with other family members in the exchange referred to in his brother's testimony.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

We were standing on the marketplace [having been rounded up from their houses] when one truck arrived. They put us all on the truck--they took us nine km. away to Tomina [a village in Sanski Most municipality]. There were just sixty of us--from [the village of] Sehovici. . . They unloaded twenty-five people, the others stayed on the truck. Those twenty-five stayed to work in forced labor, and the other thirty-five were transported to the village of Kljevci. I went with the group to Kljevci--along with my wife's father and my son. They took us out and gave us some water from a jerry can. It was raining a lot. They took us two by two, and I wanted my son to be with me, but they wouldn't allow it. They put us on the front line to dig trenches. The man who was with me was killed. . . I asked one soldier to mix old people with young people, but he wouldn't accept this idea. The soldiers were with the Kozaracka Brigade, Prijedor Brigade, and Dvor na Una [brigade]. We were working all the time--day and night. . . The 25th of September. . . was the time I saw my son for the last time. My son was in forced labor--he was just in a shirt--it was cold, and we were lying on the ground to sleep.⁸⁹

The Bosniak male was separated from his son when he was injured and was later taken to the "Sanakeram" factory, a makeshift detention camp, in Sanski Most, where a number of men were summarily executed. He was then transferred to another detention center, "Autoprevoz" in Prijedor. He was finally exchanged, but when he arrived back in Sanski Most, now under the control of the Bosnian government army, his son was missing.

Colic also participated in the operations of the Forty-Third Motorized Brigade, which fought in Hambarine (recently "re-destroyed" by the Bosnian Serbs) and in Kurevo and Kozarac, where many atrocities were committed. The Sixth Battalion of the Forty-Third Motorized Brigade was known as the "Ljubija" or "Bilbija" battalion, after its village base and battalion commander respectively. This battalion reportedly played an important role in the "ethnic cleansing" of Kurevo.⁹⁰ There were links the brigade reportedly shared with two other units: one from Prijedor and one from Dvor na Una.

Following the "disappearance" of Father Tomislav Matanovic, sources told persons seeking his whereabouts that Father Tomislav was being held in "private detention" by Colic. In a conversation with representatives of a U.S. Congressional delegation in September 1996, the current commander of the 43rd Brigade, Col. Radovan Smitran, denied any knowledge of the case of Father Tomislav Matanovic, but confirmed that then-Colonel Colic had been responsible for the command of many of the men in the Forty-Third Brigade, garrisoned in Prijedor, during 1995. In a later conversation, Colic denied to the delegation having any information about Matanovic and claimed that his unit was based for three years in the Brcko corridor, far away from Prijedor. According to the delegation's report, "this is directly contradicted by nearly all local observers who confirmed that the brigade was the military ethnic cleansing unit which served entirely around the Banja Luka-Prijedor region, forcing non-Serbs to leave their homes."⁹¹

Milenko Vukic: Infrastructure (Electricity)

Vukic is director of the electric company "Elektrokrajina" in Prijedor, and is reportedly able to solve problems with electricity if bribed. According to IFOR sources, Vukic is a member of the local "mafia", and is making a great deal of money from electric bills. According to the U.N. Commission of Experts, Vukic used his position as director of the electricity company to cut electricity to Bosniak villages in the Prijedor area before they were attacked by the Bosnian Serbs.

Marko Pavic: Infrastructure (Post Office, Telephone and Telegraph)

⁸⁹ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview, Sanski Most, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 27, 1995.

⁹⁰ *Final report, U.N. Commission of Experts, Annex V, Part 2, Section V. Subsection C.*

⁹¹ *Report of [Staffdel] Garon to Croatia and Bosnia, September 12-17, 1996, Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, 104th Congress.*

Marko Pavic has been a strong leader within the SDS, and at one time served as mayor of Prijedor. Previously, he worked for the police and federal security service, which had close ties to the JNA.⁹² At the time of the Serb takeover of Prijedor, he played a critical role as director of the PTT. According to the U.N. Commission of Experts, "Reportedly, Serbian *de facto* control of the post was used to facilitate financial transactions needed during this period. Apparently, under the leadership of Marko Pavic the post office was used, among other things, to channel and launder money during the advent of the Serb takeover, and in the time following the power change."⁹³

During the war, the telephone lines to Kozarac and other towns were cut off before attacks so that the residents could not contact the outside. The heads of the Croatian Democratic Union, or HDZ (Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica), the main Bosnian Croat political party, were taken directly from their offices at the PTT building in Prijedor to a camp, according to a source in Prijedor. The same person, however, claims that Pavic at one point tried to prevent the removal of Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats from the PTT.⁹⁴

MEDIA

Article I of Annex 7 of the Dayton Agreement requires "the prevention and prompt suppression of any written or verbal incitement through media or otherwise, of ethnic or religious hostility or hatred." UNHCR has concluded, however: "Media in all areas continues to provoke ethnic antagonisms, and this is not suppressed by the authorities."⁹⁵ This is certainly true in the Prijedor municipality. In August, OSCE Ambassador Robert Frowick issued a statement noting that "In a number of communities, government officials have attempted to thwart the development of democratic conditions by discouraging or prohibiting freedom of expression and of the press." Frowick then named the municipalities where "the problems appear to be the most egregious, and the recalcitrance of local officials most unyielding." Prijedor made the list of five towns named in the Republika Srpska, though it is certainly not the only town where abuses of freedom of expression are severe. The OSCE reported recently that the Editor-in-Chief of the Bjeljina weekly *Xtra* magazine resigned after being summoned to Pale for questioning by Minister Kijac regarding the owner of the magazine. The Editor's wife also had been questioned by local police in Bjeljina about the owner on two other occasions. According to the OSCE, this latest harassment follows earlier reported economic difficulties which may be related to the struggle between the magazine owner and SDS officials.

Radio Prijedor

Following the takeover of the town, **Zoran Baros** became editor-in-chief of Radio Prijedor, and he remains in that position today. (Baros was removed from his position for a period after allowing Bosniaks to use the radio to attempt to locate missing family members during the takeover. He was replaced by Mile Mutic, editor of the local newspaper *Kozarski Vijesnik*. Later, however, Baros was reinstalled.) During the war, the Bosnian Serbs used Radio Prijedor to make demands that Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats living in ethnically mixed areas mark their housing by hanging out a white flag, and to identify themselves by wearing white arm bands when they moved outside as a sign of submission.⁹⁶

⁹² Jugoslovenska Narodna Armija, or Yugoslav People's Army.

⁹³ *Final report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section II, Subsection F.

⁹⁴ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with confidential source, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 19, 1996.

⁹⁵ UNHCR Report on Implementation of Annex 7, August 1996.

⁹⁶ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section V, Subsection B.

Since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, Radio Prijedor has continued to be used as a tool of propaganda and incitement, under the authority of the Republika Srpska authorities in Pale. On April 21, 1995, for example, the head of Serb Radio-Television chaired a meeting of all Republika Srpska media. The chief of Prijedor radio reported to OSCE that at the meeting there was discussion of an “unofficial recommendation” requiring that authorities in Pale approve all references to international organizations prior to broadcast.⁹⁷

According to the London-based Institute for War and Peace Reporting, which has conducted an extensive review of the media throughout Bosnia and Hercegovina, “The backbone of the information system in Republika Srpska is Serbian Radio-Television (SRT, but also known colloquially--and confusingly--as SRNA). It was created during the war by the merger of the radio and TV stations in Banja Luka and Pale, using a frequency and transmitters seized for the purpose. Today, these form an integrated programme and production system. Radio stations in Bijeljina and Prijedor also operate within the SRT framework, as do local TV studios in Bijeljina, Prijedor, Bosanski Novi, Trebinje and Doboj.” While SRT’s systems were damaged by NATO bombing in 1995, they have largely been reestablished, the Institute reports.⁹⁸

***Kozarski Vjesnik* (Kozara Herald, Newspaper)**

Rezak Hukanovic, a survivor of Omarska camp, wrote about **Mile** and **Rade Mutic** and their colleagues in his book, *The Tenth Circle of Hell*. Mile Mutic, journalist and member of the “Crisis Committee” and brother of Rade Mutic, was the editor of the *Kozarski Vjesnik* in 1992, when the campaign of “ethnic cleansing” began. “The local paper in Prijedor, the Kozara Herald, became no less Serb than the rest of the media. Every Friday the newsstands sold fresh lies. The Herald Editor and now the boss of the paper, Mile Mutic, along with Zivko Ecim and Rade Mutic, his brothers in religious and ideological arms, produced lies in three shifts; even worse, these local scribblers hijacked the once-respected term ‘journalism’.”⁹⁹

Hukanovic says of Mile Mutic:

Mile Mutic...broadcast threats to the non-Serb population, calling on them to surrender their weapons, even if they had been acquired legally. No one but Serbs could bear arms: this became his battle cry....Mutic must be considered one of the founding fathers of the deformation of the history of this city and of its people, the people of the Kozara mountains. The only new history that he could envision for his people was the result of the slaughter of other peoples, their total annihilation.....¹⁰⁰

The current editor-in-chief of *Kozarski Vjesnik*, **Slobodan Kuruzovic**, was an original member of the “Crisis Committee” (possibly the chair) and chief commander of Trnopolje concentration camp, according to the U.N. Commission of Experts.

⁹⁷ OSCE Human Rights Report dated May 16, 1996.

⁹⁸ Institute for War and Peace Reporting, “What War Hath Wrought: The Media in Bosnia and Hercegovina,” June 5, 1996.

⁹⁹ Rezak Hukanovic, *The Tenth Circle in Hell: A Memoir of Life in the Death Camps of Bosnia* (New York: Basic Books), 1996.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

A survivor of Omarska noted that Kuruzovic, despite his involvement in managing the camp, was not observed by him to mistreat the prisoners. "When [he] reached Trnopolje on August 13, he discovered that the camp director was Slobodan Kuruzovic, his former elementary school principal from Prijedor. During daylight hours when [Kuruzovic] was there, he took an interest in the prisoners and treated many with kindness, [he] said. The terror began at night, after he left."¹⁰¹ As commander of Trnopolje, however, Kuruzovic was responsible for abuses committed at the camp, regardless of whether he was physically present at the time of their commission.

According to another survivor of Omarska and Trnopolje, however, "Interrogations were carried out every night. They put a gun barrel into my mouth and thus I lost seven teeth. Many did not return after the interrogation. Interrogators were educated Serbs. I know three of them. Two of them were **Mladen Mitrovic...and Slobodan Kuruzovic**, a local teacher."¹⁰²

A fifteen-year-old survivor of a massacre in the village of Biscani, who was in Trnopolje, reported: "Upon our arrival in Trnopolje on August 1, 1992, we were searched. The area was surrounded by barbed wire. We spent the first night in the school and the following morning we were taken to be interrogated by Major Slobodan Kuruzovic."¹⁰³

According to the *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Maj. Arsic, the highest-ranking member of the "Serbian Army," was said by some to have planned the attack [on Kozarac]; others named, Maj. Kuruzovic.¹⁰⁴ According to an official U.S. State Department report on war crimes in the former Yugoslavia, an ex-detainee of Trnopolje camp interviewed on October 5, 1992 by a U.S. foreign service officer identified the commander of Trnopolje camp as Maj. Slobodan Kuruzovic.¹⁰⁵

Television Prijedor

Rade Mutic, a local journalist, runs the Prijedor television station. According to an IFOR source, Mutic is "very radical," and previously "wrote really hateful articles about Muslims."

Interestingly, Rade Mutic, in an interview with *The New York Times* in January 1996, when asked about the deportations, mass killings and destruction of Bosniak and Bosnian Croat villages in the area, said, "It was like a magic circle. You either got out of here or were drawn into it. Once inside it was impossible to remain detached. You were caught up in the whole mess."¹⁰⁶

THE PRIJEDOR AUTHORITIES AND VIOLATIONS OF THE DAYTON PEACE AGREEMENT

Non-Compliance with the Dayton Peace Agreement: The Prijedor Police

¹⁰¹ Gutman, p. 89.

¹⁰² Testimony collected by an international humanitarian organization, Zagreb, Croatia, July 1992.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex III.A, Part 4.

¹⁰⁵ U.S. Department of State, *Second Report on War Crimes in the Former Yugoslavia*, "Supplemental United States Submission of Information to the United Nations Security Council In Accordance with Paragraph 5 of Resolution 771 (1992) and Paragraph 1 of Resolution 780 (1992)," released on October 22, 1992.

¹⁰⁶ Chris Hedges, "After the Peace, the War Against Memory," *The New York Times*, January 13, 1996.

The International Police Task Force (IPTF) has documented and reported a pattern of serious non-cooperation and non-compliance by Prijedor police chief Simo Drljaca and the police under his command. An IPTF monitor in Prijedor told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in June 1996, "The local police in Prijedor are the biggest problem [we face]. There is very little cooperation. We have to fight for every inch. We asked them to provide us with the structure and strength of the local police force, but we waited one month to get a copy only of the structure of the police department! Until one month ago, we did not even have joint patrols with the local police . . . The power of the police chief in Prijedor is comprehensive . . . even over Novi Grad [Prijedor municipality, formerly Bosanski Novi]. . ." ¹⁰⁷ As late as January 1997, for example, the local police in Omarska had still refused to provide IPTF with a roster of police officers for the Omarska station.

The Prijedor police have frequently denied IPTF officers access to detention facilities and even to police stations. For example, on April 29, 1996, an IPTF liaison officer was refused access to the local police station because, according to the local police officer on guard, he "did not have permission from his ministry" to let the IPTF monitor in. Similarly, on May 27, 1996, the IPTF liaison officer was refused entry to the Prijedor station. He was denied access to view the lock-up unit on three occasions. Between June 10 and 12 1995, IPTF was denied access to both the traffic police station and Prijedor Station #2 by policemen who refused to give their names and who did not wear badges. The denial of access to such facilities was a violation of the Dayton agreement that seriously impeded IPTF efforts to monitor human rights abuses committed by police. ¹⁰⁸

According to IPTF sources, Simo Drljaca committed the following acts of blatant non-compliance during March-May 1996 alone:

- March 26, 1996: Though Drljaca had promised cooperation with IPTF, his officers refused to let IPTF officers enter a police station because Drljaca "had not given them orders to do so."
- April 1, 1996: Drljaca told IPTF that permission for IPTF officers to enter the stations could only be granted by the liaison officer. He agreed to remove illegal checkpoints, but one was discovered at the Otoka Bridge near Prijedor by IPTF officers on April 29. Illegal checkpoints continued to be a problem throughout the year.
- April 16, 1996: IFOR occupied the local police substation in Ostra Luka [town between Prijedor and Sanski Most, in Republika Srpska] due to police restrictions on civilians' freedom of movement. The station was reopened the following day, but Drljaca gave an order to his officers that they should fight IFOR if there was another attempt to close the station.
- April 19, 1996: After promising better cooperation in April, Drljaca refused attempts by IPTF to mediate a tense situation at Ostra Luka, caused by people gathering at the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) to prevent the crossing of Bosniaks into Prijedor for a visit.
- April 23, 1996: Drljaca refused to ensure the safety and security of refugees from Germany (Bosniak refugees accompanied by the NGO Society for Threatened Peoples), who attempted to visit their homes. According to

¹⁰⁷ Interview with IPTF monitor in Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, June 12, 1996.

¹⁰⁸ *General Framework Agreement*, Annex XI, International Police Task Force, Article 4, "Specific Responsibilities of the Parties," 3., "The Parties shall not impede the movement of IPTF personnel or in any way hinder, obstruct, or delay them in the performance of their responsibilities. They shall allow IPTF personnel immediate and complete access to any sites, person, activities, preceding, record, or other item or event in Bosnia and Hercegovina as requested by the IPTF in carrying out its responsibilities under this Agreement. This shall include the right to monitor, observe, and inspect any site or facility at which it believes that police, law enforcement, detention, or judicial activities are taking place."

international monitors, the mayor and police used the local radio to organize a Bosnian Serb crowd, assisted by the police, to prevent the refugees' visit.

- May 6, 1996: Drljaca provided false information relating to the structure of the local police to IPTF. An IPTF source reported to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in June 1996: "There are some reports of officers mistreating visitors [from the Federation side]." IPTF informed Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that the police in Prijedor were using a letter from the Republika Srpska Ministry of Justice regarding visits to detention centers as a basis to deny access to IPTF. The letter was supposedly meant to facilitate the work of IPTF in visiting detainees, but the Republika Srpska authorities have interpreted it in such a way as to permit only named IPTF officers to have access to detainees, contrary to the Dayton agreement.

Compliance by the local police with IPTF and IFOR requirements relating to weapons has also been a serious problem. IPTF has observed local police carrying long-barreled weapons during normal duties, which is prohibited by the Dayton agreement unless special permission has been applied for and granted. Local police have attempted to carry AK47s on patrol with IPTF monitors, and IPTF was forced on at least one occasion to cancel a patrol because the police refused to leave the station without the AK47s.¹⁰⁹

Mobs organized by police and assisted by police officers have blocked entrance to the region on numerous occasions (see section below on Freedom of Movement).

Due to non-cooperation on the part of the Prijedor police, IPTF Prijedor was unable to become involved in the supervision, training, or assistance of local law enforcement authorities, as mandated. IPTF Commissioner Peter FitzGerald announced in May that he would take up the issue of the obstructive behavior of the Prijedor police chief and police force with RS Minister of the Interior Dragan Kijac due primarily to continued interference with freedom of movement in the Prijedor area, but subsequently there was little improvement in Drljaca's willingness to cooperate. Recently, there has been an apparent change in attitude by the Pale authorities, and the local police seem more receptive to IPTF advice. An IPTF monitor conceded, however, that the changes were largely superficial.

OSCE has received numerous reports that the police under Drljaca have harassed and intimidated persons from opposition parties, non-Serbs, and persons who are in an inter-ethnic marriage or are offspring of intermarriages.

In November, even after Drljaca's removal, international monitors in Prijedor told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki: "The police in Prijedor are stronger than the army," and others reported that the police have many weapons at their disposal, although they don't generally carry them.

Drljaca Ousted, Turns Up Again

Despite reports to IPTF headquarters in Sarajevo by IPTF Prijedor about the behavior of the chief of police, Simo Drljaca, no effort was made to remove him from his post until Drljaca had a confrontation with IFOR soldiers two days after the September 14 election. Two IFOR soldiers noticed that Drljaca had in his possession a Heckler und Koch MP 5 (a German-made long-barreled automatic weapon, which the police are not permitted to carry without IFOR or IPTF authorization). When the soldiers attempted to confiscate the weapon, Drljaca shot twice over their heads. One of the IFOR soldiers returned fire over Drljaca's head, at which time ten local police with AK 47s appeared on the scene. IFOR, outgunned, backed down. Later, IFOR met with Drljaca and demanded that he turn over all the weapons involved in the incident. Drljaca refused, insisting that the MP 5 was authorized by Dragan Kijac, Republika Srpska minister of the interior. When that didn't work, he then tried to argue that the weapon was in fact a pistol, which IFOR determined to be an obviously false assertion. Drljaca still refused to turn over the weapon. In the meantime, Drljaca applied to the Prijedor IPTF commander for permission to use the weapon but was denied.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Joint Civilian Command report, Office of the High Representative, Bosnia and Hercegovina, May 1996.

¹¹⁰ IFOR incident follow-up document shared unofficially with Human Rights Watch/ Helsinki.

IFOR demanded that Kijac remove Drljaca, and, as of late September, IPTF sources told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that Drljaca "had been removed" from office. However, in early November, Drljaca was spotted driving around Prijedor in a police car and sitting in the police station, apparently conducting business as usual, according to IPTF. A journalist for *The Boston Globe* confirmed that Drljaca was still reachable through his secretary at the police station.

On October 17, IPTF saw Drljaca conducting a meeting with at least five other police officials at the Public Security Center in Prijedor. On October 29, Drljaca was seen driving around in an unmarked police car, which was later guarded by three uniformed police officers. On November 1, IPTF was notified by IFOR that Drljaca had been appointed assistant to Dragan Kijac, minister of the interior. The opinion of IFOR and IPTF officers interviewed by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in late November and again in January 1997 was that Drljaca clearly continued to remain in a position of authority in Prijedor, especially over the police force.

Persons Indicted for War Crimes Serve as Police Officers in Prijedor and Omarska

In late October 1996, *the Boston Globe* reporter Elizabeth Neuffer's discovery that four persons indicted by the ICTY were working as police officers in the Prijedor area vividly demonstrates the lack of accountability which exists for police in Republika Srpska. In addition, the follow-up to this revelation presents a disturbing portrait of the international community's role in the search for justice. One of the four, Zeljko Meakic, charged with war crimes, crimes against humanity (including rape), and genocide for his role as commander at the infamous Omarska camp, which came under the jurisdiction of the Prijedor authorities, was found working as deputy police chief in the very village where the camp was located. Omarska camp shift commander Mladen "Krkan" Radic, a guard, Nedjeljko Timarac, and Miroslav Kvocka, original commander of Omarska camp, all indicted by the ICTY, were also recently serving as police officers in Prijedor.¹¹¹

IPTF headquarters in Sarajevo, deeply embarrassed by the reports, responded by explaining that while the IPTF commander in Prijedor knew of the presence of the men and had notified his superiors in Banja Luka in July 1996, no action had been taken at that level, and IPTF headquarters was accordingly unaware of the situation. An IPTF source in Sarajevo explained to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki on November 13 that the reason the information was not passed up the chain of command to Sarajevo was because "regions only inform us about the major issues." When Human Rights Watch/Helsinki suggested that this was perhaps a major issue, the source said there had previously been no explicit instructions to inform headquarters about persons indicted for war crimes working for the police, but that the regional commanders had now been instructed by Commissioner Peter FitzGerald to provide such information to IPTF headquarters.

IPTF's investigation of the matter consisted of sending a senior IPTF officer to Prijedor, where he was told by the Republika Srpska authorities that the four were no longer employed by the police department. Additional information, the officer was told, could be obtained from Minister of the Interior Dragan Kijac, but Kijac was not available.

It took more than two weeks for IPTF to receive an answer from Kijac. On November 19, 1996, Alexander Ivanko, spokesman for IPTF, made the following statement during a press conference in Sarajevo:

¹¹¹ See Elizabeth Neuffer, *The Boston Globe*: "Bosnia's war criminals enjoy peacetime power," October 29, 1996; "Officials want Serbs to remove indicted war criminals," October 30, 1996; "Buried Truth: War Crimes in Bosnia," November 1, 1996. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki 39 January 1997, Vol. 9, No. 1 (D)

We have finally received an answer from Dragan Kijac with regard to the Prijedor four. According to Minister Kijac, as of the first of November, the Prijedor four or no other person against whom criminal charges are brought are employed by the Ministry of the Interior. In his letter to Kijac, Commissioner FitzGerald requested that the Prijedor four should be arrested as soon [as possible,] as they are indicted by ICTY. Minister Kijac has refused to do so, alleging that no information has been provided to him with regard to any wrongdoing on the part of the Prijedor four. Seeing that there's a serious communications breakdown in Republika Srpska, and probably Minister Kijac should start talking more often to his colleagues because the Tribunal has forwarded all relevant information, with regard to all people living in Republika Srpska, indicted by the Tribunal and that information should be available in Republika Srpska to Minister Kijac.¹¹²

On November 29, in another IFOR press briefing, Ivanko stated that Kijac had told IPTF that he did not consider the ICTY's warrants as evidence that there are war criminals in his force, and had refused to provide lists of police officers to IPTF.

In a meeting with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights John Shattuck in early November, RS President Biljana Plavsic promised that the four would be dismissed but refused to turn the men over to the ICTY in the Hague. In response, Shattuck threatened "negative political and economic consequences."¹¹³ These negative repercussions have so far not materialized.

IFOR, for its part, publicly denied having known that the four men were working as police officers, but three IFOR sources confirmed to Open Media Research Institute (OMRI) reporters that in the case of Prijedor, British IFOR intelligence had known about the "Prijedor four" -- and others -- since March.¹¹⁴

During the above-mentioned press conference on November 19, IFOR spokesman Maj. Simon Haselock was confronted by a reporter who asked why IFOR's own poster of persons indicted for war crimes had a notation next to the name of Mladen Radic which said "employed by the SJB" [police]. The notation had been made in August. Haselock hedged on the question, again denying that IFOR had any contact with the four or knew they were working for the police.¹¹⁵

As this report goes to press, there has still been no action by IFOR--despite assurances from IPTF that IFOR would intervene if the individuals were not removed. IFOR has appeared reticent to become any further engaged in the issue. IPTF issued an ultimatum on October 31 or November 1 to the Republika Srpska authorities in Pale (specifically to Dragan Kijac, Minister of the Interior) that the four be dismissed, detained, and remanded for trial or IPTF would recommend that IFOR take action. Unfortunately, this threat carried little weight given IFOR's repeated refusal to apprehend persons indicted for war crimes even when encountered. Previous action by IFOR and IPTF to remove police officials in Teslic and Prijedor actually resulted in the promotion of the individuals to higher-level positions.

¹¹² Alexander Ivanko, U.N. Spokesperson, Holiday Inn Daily Press Conference, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 19, 1996.

¹¹³ As reported by Patrick Moore of OMRI, "Bosnian Serbs to Fire Accused War Criminals From Police Force," BosNet, November 5, 1996.

¹¹⁴ Jan Urban, "Monitor, but Don't Touch," OMRI Special Report: Pursuing Balkan Peace, Vol. 1, No. 44, November 5, 1996.

¹¹⁵ IFOR Press Briefing, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 19, 1996.

During the month of November, reporters obtained confirmation from the Republika Srpska police that two other persons indicted for war crimes, Predrag and Nenad Banovic, were working as police reservists.¹¹⁶ It was also reported that Dragan Kondic, indicted by the ICTY for crimes committed at Keraterm camp, had connections with a special police unit in Ljubija.¹¹⁷ The U.S.-based Coalition for International Justice, in a press release on November 26, 1996, added that according to its sources, "Nenad and Predrag Banovic, indicted for crimes against humanity in Omarska, can frequently be found at the 'Express' restaurant in Prijedor. Dragan Kondic, indicted for crimes against humanity, hangs out almost every night at 'The Pink', a bar in Prijedor."¹¹⁸

Additional reports have emerged that two other persons indicted by the ICTY, Radomir Kovac and Dragan Zelenovic, are working in the Republika Srpska police at a police station in Foca [southeast Bosnia.]¹¹⁹

IPTF spokesman Ivanko, at the November 19 press conference, stated that while he had heard these reports, he could not confirm them, and then made the statement: "We have to take Minister Kijac at his word, and he says nobody who has been indicted is working as a policeman in his letter to Peter FitzGerald, so for the time being we'll take him at his word."¹²⁰ At the IFOR press briefing on November 29, Ivanko remarked that Plavsic had promised that no people indicted by the Hague would remain on the RS police force. Then he said, "But the situation seems to continue, so we will have to continue pressing Minister Kijac to get rid of anybody who's indicted by the Hague." Asked whether this would include persons serving in the reserve police force, he responded, "In our opinion it is a violation of Dayton and these people should not only be removed, but should be surrendered to the Hague." Ivanko also remarked, "We have tried to keep track of the four people working in the Prijedor area, allegedly in the police force. And we've asked for their patrol schedules to try and figure out are they still on the police force or not. And, the Prijedor police chief has been extremely uncooperative, with regard to providing us with the patrol schedule."

The Ministry of the Interior and the police forces in Prijedor, led by recently-ousted chief of police and powerful "mafia" figure Simo Drljaca, have made a mockery of the efforts of the International Police Task Force to monitor the police forces in Republika Srpska and rid the police of criminals on the force.

Restructuring the Police Force

According to the Dayton agreement, IPTF is responsible for screening, vetting, and restructuring the local police throughout Bosnia and Hercegovina. This process of restructuring the police force in the Muslim-Croat Federation began months ago, but the Republika Srpska authorities have still refused to sign a restructuring agreement. A Human Rights Watch/Helsinki representative who visited Prijedor in September 1996 learned from IPTF sources there that, as one monitor put it, they hadn't received "a shred of paper" regarding how the restructuring process might work.

On November 28, IPTF Commissioner Peter FitzGerald met with Interior Minister Kijac to discuss restructuring, and, according to IPTF spokesman Ivanko, "in principle Mr. Kijac did agree to the restructuring of the Republika Srpska police force."¹²¹

¹¹⁶ IFOR Press Briefing, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 29, 1996, statement by unidentified journalists that they had just returned from Prijedor, where they had obtained the information from the RS police.

¹¹⁷ Coalition for International Justice press release, "Coalition Locates Information on Whereabouts of 36 Indicted War Criminals in the Former Yugoslavia," November 26, 1996.

¹¹⁸ Coalition for International Justice Press Release dated November 26, 1996, "Coalition Locates Information on Whereabouts of 36 Indicted War Criminals in the Former Yugoslavia," Washington, D.C.

¹¹⁹ Both men were indicted for crimes committed in Foca.

¹²⁰ IFOR Press Briefing, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 16, 1996.

¹²¹ IFOR press briefing, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 29, 1996.

However, on December 10, IPTF observed Radovan Karadzic driving with a Republika Srpska police escort. Commissioner FitzGerald met with Dragan Kijac the next day to register dismay at the use of Republika Srpska police to escort an indicted war criminal. According to IPTF spokesman Alex Ivanko, "The Commissioner reiterated that it was the Minister's obligation under Dayton to arrest and transfer indicted war criminals to the Hague. The Commissioner also demanded the surrender of the unauthorized weapons carried by the escort. Minister Kijac responded by saying he does not understand the urgency of the matter and does not know anything about it. The Minister did promise to conduct an investigation and report back to the Commissioner, but reemphasized that the RS [Republika Srpska] authorities will not arrest indicted war criminals, including Radovan Karadzic."¹²²

Following this incident, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki called for the removal of Dragan Kijac as Minister of the Interior.¹²³

On January 8, 1997, Commissioner FitzGerald met again with Minister Kijac to discuss the restructuring of the Republika Srpska police force. According to Alex Ivanko, IPTF spokesman:

"Sadly, very little progress was made during these discussions. The only thing that Minister Kijac agreed to was to submit the plan by 31st January on the restructuring of his force. The Commissioner authorized me to say that he is extremely concerned that Minister Kijac continues to refuse to provide the UN IPTF with a list of all the names of Republika Srpska policemen working in the force. This refusal is justified by Minister Kijac, by the fact that in the Republika Srpska, the names of policemen are considered a state secret, believe it or not. Such a veil of secrecy, in the opinion of the Commissioner, is extremely unhealthy and certainly is not in line with democratic principles of policing. The Commissioner asked me to, once again, point out that Minister Kijac is obliged under Dayton to provide all the names of his policemen to the UN IPTF. Further meetings will be set up by the United Nations to try to break this gridlock." Ivanko continued, "Currently, Republika Srpska has about 20,000 policemen. We believe the max they should have is 8,500-9,500. . . We are doing pretty well with the Federation. . . But we are really running into a lot of problems with the RS police force. The only good news is that they are at least now willing to submit a plan on how they see the restructuring of the police force. But the main psychological problem is, Minister Kijac sees his police force as an extension of the military. And that is what we are trying to explain to him--that the police force is a civil body, not a military one. . . We need the names of the policemen that want to vet into the new police Federation, the new RS police. We can't vet if we don't have their names. . . the RS continues to refuse to provide a list." Ivanko added, "We do have generally good relationships with the Serb police in most of the areas, I'd say, *except probably in Prijedor* [emphasis added]."¹²⁴

Police Weapons

The confrontation between Drljaca and IFOR raised serious questions about the arms held by the police. IPTF has reported that the local police in Prijedor have been seen carrying long-barreled guns during normal duties. Further, they sought permission from IPTF to carry AK 47s on joint patrol with IPTF monitors, but were denied. On one occasion, a joint patrol was canceled when the local police refused to leave the weapons in the police station.¹²⁵

¹²² IFOR Landcent transcript of press briefing, December 12, 1996.

¹²³ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki press release, "Human Rights Watch/Helsinki Calls For the Removal of Republika Srpska Minister of the Interior Dragan Kijac," December 13, 1996.

¹²⁴ SFOR Landcent, Transcript of SFOR Press Conference, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, January 9, 1997.

¹²⁵ Joint Civilian Commission, Office of the High Representative, NW Briefing Paper, "Prijedor Issues," end of May 1996, released to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki by a confidential international source.

On October 11, Bosnian Serb police armed with unauthorized automatic weapons surrounded and aimed their guns at IFOR troops near the village of Jusici [in Northeast Bosnia and Hercegovina, near Zvornik, in the Zone of Separation.] The IFOR soldiers had attempted to intervene in the arrest of three Bosniak men by Republika Srpska police in the village. The Bosnian Serb police backed down upon being confronted. Three other Bosniak residents were also arrested in a separate incident that day.¹²⁶

To their credit, IFOR and IPTF have recently confiscated numerous weapons from police stations in a number of municipalities. During the week of November 24, for example, IFOR confiscated from the Laktasi civilian police station near Banja Luka 210 rifles, 125 boxes of small arms ammunition, and forty-five pistols, which according to an IFOR spokesman "obviously is more akin to a weapons cantonment site than your normal everyday police station. There was also a confiscation of weapons from the police station in Banja Luka, including two anti-tank missiles, fourteen light machine guns, some rifles and twenty hand grenades."¹²⁷ At the IFOR press briefing of November 28, Maj. Brett Boudreau stated: "A veritable potpourri of military equipment was confiscated yesterday from police stations, including anti-tank weapons, explosives, and shotguns in Livno; rocket launchers, hand grenades, and a heavy machine gun in Drvar;¹²⁸ and a machine gun from the RS civilian police station in Bosanska Dubica, which is north of Prijedor."

On January 8, 1997, SFOR soldiers, along with the IPTF, according to information provided during an SFOR press briefing on January 10, "conducted an inspection of a Serb civilian police station in Petrovo Selo. A large number of illegal weapons were confiscated. They included: one M-79 90mm anti-tank weapon, five M-57 44mm anti-tank weapons, one light machine gun, six rifles, and six sub-machine guns."¹²⁹

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki commends IFOR/SFOR for its continuing effort to locate and confiscate weapons held by the police in both entities; nonetheless, based upon information from IPTF monitors in the field, we believe that the weapons confiscated so far represent only the tip of the iceberg. An IPTF source told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki: "Everyone knows that there are tons of weapons caches around RS because before the war there were military and paramilitary groups mobilized, each of which knew about certain weapons caches ready to be mobilized for war in an instant. Certainly not all those weapons caches have been discovered, because the amount of weapons confiscated by IFOR so far is nowhere near the amount of weaponry which existed before."¹³⁰

On December 10, 1996, IPTF spotted Karadzic traveling in Pale in a four-vehicle convoy, including a 'special police unit' carrying long-barreled AK-47 rifles, which are banned under the Dayton agreement.

¹²⁶ As reported in *Balkan Watch*, a weekly review of current events distributed by the Balkan Institute, Washington, D.C.

¹²⁷ IFOR Transcript of Press Briefing held on November 27, 1996 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina.

¹²⁸ Livno and Drvar are towns in the Federation entity.

¹²⁹ SFOR Transcript of Press Briefing held on January 10, 1997 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina.

¹³⁰ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with IPTF official, Bosnia and Hercegovina, 17 November 1996.

A *New York Times* article quoting several international sources confirmed that the police on all sides appeared to be well-armed, but pointed out that due to the recent weapons inspections by IFOR and IPTF, the police may now be hiding their weapons. According to the article, "Bosnian Serb and Muslim officials have already resorted to paramilitary police units in several places, Western diplomats say." Further, NATO officers claim that Bosniaks, frustrated by the lack of progress in returns to the Republika Srpska, have sent police to "harass the Serbs with firefights and keep this whole issue in front of the world," causing, according to the *Times*, the Bosnian Serbs to respond with their own police forces. NATO officers told the *Times* that the Bosnian Serb authorities "have sent highly trained police officers, called special police, who can be as well equipped as an army infantry unit. "We don't have an estimate on how many Serbian special police there are--the Serbs won't tell us," Alex Ivanko, U.N. spokesman, told the *Times*. "Serb officials consider the special police to be part of the military, not a police force."¹³¹

While police in the Federation have engaged in such tactics as described by the *Times*, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki believes that the Bosnian Serb units already existed prior to the planning of returns, and points out that paramilitary type units were, according to information gathered by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki for a report on Dobojski/Teslic, created specifically to prevent return. While the special police may be viewed as part of the military, the command and control structure appears to operate under the Minister of the Interior's authority, as opposed to under the army. (See next section on special police forces in Ljubija).

The issue of police involvement in military-type activities may become more important during the next year if there is not significant progress in repatriation. During 1996, according to UNHCR figures, only fifty-four persons returned through organized returns to the Republika Srpska from January 1996 until December 3, 1996.¹³²

Ljubija Special Police Force

The village of Ljubija, which comes under the jurisdiction of the Prijedor municipality, is the location of the infamous Ljubija mine, a site where, according to many accounts of local townspeople and international war crimes investigators, executions took place and possibly thousands of victims of Bosnian Serb atrocities are buried.¹³³

In this grim corner of north-western Bosnia, scores of buses arrived throughout the sweltering summer of 1992, and filed through the metal gates of the Ljubija iron-ore mine. Witnesses say each bus was filled with prisoners, under Bosnian Serb guard. They drove to the barren heart of the mine and came out empty. Hanifa Draganovic lived less than a mile away from the mine gates. "The people in the buses - there were mainly men - had their hands tied behind their heads," she said. "There were lots of buses. They went past us for eight days." The buses, the witnesses believe, came from Keraterm, Omarska, and other Serb concentration camps.....¹³⁴

There is currently a Czech SFOR base camp in Ljubija.

A Republika Srpska special police brigade, referred to as an "anti-terrorist unit", consisting of some one hundred to one hundred-fifty "warriors", trains in the military base in Ljubija and sometimes in the mine. They all carry pistols and have long-barreled weapons but must be granted permission by IPTF to carry them in the course of their duties. Up to October 1996, IFOR was following the activities of this unit. In October, IPTF assumed that role, but as of mid-November 1996, IPTF had yet to receive a list of names of persons in this special unit, despite several

¹³¹ Mike O'Connor, *The New York Times*, "Threat to Bosnian Peace: Rival Police," January 12, 1997, p. A8.

¹³² UNHCR, *Information Notes: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, No. 10-11/96, October/November 1996, p. 3.

¹³³ See *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex X for details and cited sources of information. Also see Chris Hedges, "Bosnia: Evidence of Ethnic Cleansing," *The New York Times*, January 12, 1996. There have been other reports as well.

¹³⁴ Julian Borger, "Bosnia: Troops Ready to Comb the Mines of Hell," *The Guardian*, January 15, 1996, p. 8.

requests. The commander of the force submitted a request to IPTF on October 30, 1996 for permission to carry long-barreled weapons for certain officers in the course of their duties, according to an IPTF source, and this permission was granted. It is not clear what these "duties" entail, especially since the term "anti-terrorism" has often been used in propaganda as justification for attacks upon non-Serbs. All special police report to the Ministry of the Interior. This force reports directly to Kijac, bypassing Simo Drljaca. The name of the force commander is **Zlatko Brdar**. It should be noted that new weapons rules established by IPTF, which permit only one long-barreled weapon per ten officers, do not apply to this unit.

Obstruction of Freedom of Movement by Prijedor Authorities

As noted in the introduction, there has been serious non-compliance on the part of the Prijedor authorities with freedom of movement, which is guaranteed by the Dayton agreement. NATO spokesman Maj. Simon Haselock admitted in a press briefing back in May, "Prijedor is a classic example of failure to cooperate...it is quite clear that the people there are not cooperative. They need to be gripped and they need to be persuaded that they must allow it [freedom of movement] to happen."¹³⁵

According to international monitors, the Prijedor authorities have informed them on numerous occasions that Pale instructed them to demand complete reciprocity for freedom of movement--e.g. one bus will be allowed to cross over the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) into Prijedor only if one bus is permitted to enter Sanski Most.¹³⁶

On April 28, 1996, Bosnian Serb police officers led a crowd with sticks and stones to meet a group of displaced non-Serbs at the IEBL in Ostra Luka. In another example, on May 18, 1996, Simo Drljaca refused to guarantee security for vehicles traveling in a previously agreed-upon visit to the Prijedor municipality from Federation territory. He demanded that only one bus travel only a certain route, and when the bus traveled that route, the passengers encountered a crowd of 300 to 400 Serbs armed with sticks. The crowd appeared to be under the control of uniformed police. IFOR was forced to cancel the visit. Prior to the incident, several buses were observed outside the police station in Prijedor loading people and transporting them to the confrontation site.¹³⁷ On May 26, 1996, a bus driver and bus owner were arrested and charged with treason by the Prijedor police for agreeing to transport a group of women belonging to a peace movement. They were released two days later.

Information gathered by the IPTF, U.N. Civil Affairs, UNHCR, and the OSCE reveals that the local authorities have frequently used the radio as a propaganda tool to prevent return of refugees and displaced persons and to obstruct freedom of movement. Both Mayor Stakic and [former] Chief of Police Drljaca have used the radio to encourage the residents of Prijedor to believe that returning refugees pose a threat, and that they must therefore meet returnees with violence in order to "defend" themselves. An IFOR major in Prijedor stated in June that the Prijedor authorities frequently say that "the Bosnian government is still fighting a war, and the Serbs are on the defensive."¹³⁸

A May 28, 1996, memorandum from an international monitor in Prijedor was quite direct about what needed to happen in order to ensure freedom of movement in Prijedor:

¹³⁵ IFOR AFSouth Transcript of press briefing held on 27 May 1996 at the Sarajevo Coalition Press Information Center, Bosnia and Hercegovina.

¹³⁶ It should be noted that the Sanski Most authorities have also been extremely uncooperative in respect for freedom of movement and there have been a number of serious police abuses committed against persons entering the Zone of Separation (ZOS) or crossing the IEBL. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki is deeply concerned about non-compliance on the Federation side of the IEBL and believes that the problem also warrants more attention by international monitors.

¹³⁷ An IFOR CIMIC (Civilian-Military Center) officer told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that IFOR followed the buses after the incident, noting that a number of persons were let off in front of the police station and then Serb refugee participants were driven to Kozarac.

¹³⁸ Interview with IFOR Civilian Affairs Officer, Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, June 1996.

Authorities in Prijedor have no intention of honoring the commitment to freedom of movement which is central to the Dayton process and to free elections. It is therefore strongly recommended that this incident [referring to interference with a convoy of returnees hoping to plant a tree of peace and then leave] be protested at the highest level...and that the removal from office of the authorities in Prijedor responsible for such incidents be required. It is further strongly recommended that freedom of movement be enforced by properly equipping and training IFOR personnel, or adding a riot contingent to IPTF...such personnel should have other options [to lethal force] like tear gas and rubber bullets...The current situation, in which IFOR is practically [unable] to offer protection to would be visitors, only to have its efforts mocked undermines credibility of allied political will and willingness to use force upon which the success of the peace depends.¹³⁹

Crossings of the IEBL between Prijedor and Sanski Most were at a virtual standstill for months due to people's fear about what might happen to them on either side if they crossed. The British IFOR battalion at White Fang base (near Sanski Most) told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in June and again in September that people were meeting at the IEBL but few dared to cross over to either side out of fear. In Prijedor, police previously demanded that Serbs crossing the IEBL apply for permission from the police. Those crossing the IEBL without permission were regularly summoned to the police department for interrogation (called "informational talks" by the police). Although such informal talks appear to have subsided and official permission is no longer required in order to cross the IEBL, fear of arrest, attack, and/or harassment remain the biggest obstacles to freedom of movement.

On April 28, 1996, a group of Bosniaks who wanted to visit Kozarac demonstrated at the IEBL, and there was a disturbance.

On several occasions during May 1996, other groups unsuccessfully tried to cross the IEBL into Prijedor. In one case, a group requested assistance from UNHCR to visit Ljubija fifteen days in advance. The Prijedor authorities agreed to allow one bus to travel from Prijedor to Sanski Most and one from Sanski Most to the Prijedor area, but only on the condition that it would go only to Kozarac and not Ljubija, and that the people would not get off the bus. The group from Sanski Most agreed to these conditions. However, when the bus crossed into Republika Srpska territory, a Serb mob was waiting. As a result, the Prijedor authorities announced that the situation had changed and denied the group passage.

On April 19, NATO troops fired warning shots after hundreds of Bosnian Serbs blocked a group of Bosniaks from visiting the village of Otoka in northwest Bosnia. According to a Reuters report, "Serb policemen, led by the hard line police chief from nearby Prijedor, Simo Drljaca, also participated in the action, which appeared well-organized."¹⁴⁰

IFOR confirmed to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that following the arrival of a group of civilians led by a local leader of Arkan's Party of Serb Unity, Drljaca arrived on the scene with "short-haired men in track suits--special police." According to IFOR, there were armed men in the Bosniak group attempting to cross, which complicated the situation. After the incident, buses took the police back to the police station and a group of refugees to Kozarac.

¹³⁹ Memorandum from OSCE Sanski Most to OSCE Bihac dated May 28, 1996, provided to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki by a confidential source.

¹⁴⁰ Reuters article, as quoted in *This Week in Bosnia and Herzegovina*, April 21, 1996, Bosnia Action Coalition.

Also in May, two elderly men wishing to cross the IEBL to the Federation side reported to the Prijedor police their intentions to cross over, as they had been informed they must do. They were held in the station overnight and then released with the threat that if they returned from the Federation side they would be killed. They also reported that another man was being held in the jail who had been there for several days and had been interrogated and beaten.¹⁴¹

On May 25, 1996, after a bus carrying a women's peace group was denied access to Prijedor, IFOR officers and one OSCE field officer were stopped at a checkpoint in Tukovi, and one officer attempted to call Drljaca for permission to enter Prijedor, explaining that the bus contained only international passport holders, no media, and no Bosniaks. He was told that Drljaca was unavailable.

Meanwhile, Prijedor police closed cafes, bars and recreation areas, reported on the radio that fanatic Bosniaks were trying to invade the town, and appealed to residents to defend themselves against the "Muslim invaders". When the bus attempted to enter Prijedor by another route, it was soon surrounded by a mob of civilians waving handguns, feebly "restrained" by local police. Two passengers were injured when the men began hitting the bus with stones and clubs, and the bus was forced to turn back. Major Hervé Gourmelon of IFOR contended that Mayor Stakic and the police organized the town residents to block the women's group. This incident was the fifth in which Bosnian Serbs armed with sticks and stones had prevented persons from visiting the area.¹⁴²

Hard line authorities on both sides have insisted that any movement between the two towns be strictly reciprocal in nature, only permitting movements of one bus each way with a parallel number of passengers. The Prijedor authorities have insisted that any buses which come from Federation territory come and go in one day, and that passengers remain on the buses. These regulations prohibit any meaningful or sizeable visitations from occurring.

IPTF officials in Prijedor are often asked by displaced persons whether it is safe for them to travel across the IEBL. According to one IPTF monitor, IPTF responds to such inquiries by stating that freedom of movement exists but not without risks. "Then either they try, or they don't," said the official. "Some try but have then been detained or beaten. People have tried to come to Kozarac [there were 25,000 Bosniaks before the war in Kozarac, but none remain and most Bosniak houses have been destroyed] by buses to visit from Sanski Most. They want to see their houses and visit the graveyards. Each time someone tries to organize something like this, though, there will be problems on this side [Prijedor]. The locals in Ostra Luka [on the Republika Srpska side of IEBL between Sanski Most and Prijedor] are always aware of people coming over from Sanski Most somehow, and they are always waiting in groups of approximately 500-700 people with stones and sticks, and there is always a fight."¹⁴³

For a long time, the Prijedor police had an illegal checkpoint near Ostra Luka, where people were according to an IFOR officer "ambushed" as they crossed the IEBL.

In early July, two Bosniaks crossed over the IEBL from Sanski Most and entered Prijedor, where they were arrested and detained for several days. During the detention, one of the men was beaten. Their car also disappeared during this time.

Since the signing of the Dayton agreement, most individual crossings usually took place at night, when individuals would cross to visit relatives or friends, returning before sunrise. Often would drive to the IEBL and leave their car, crossing on foot the rest of the way. IPTF Prijedor estimated in July 1996 that each week there were approximately three persons arrested and detained on either the Sanski Most side or the Prijedor side simply as a result of having crossed the IEBL. Following the elections, there have been fewer incidents reported. Human Rights

¹⁴¹ OSCE Human Rights Report.

¹⁴² AP wire story, "Bosnia Serbs Again Block Entry by Muslims," May 27, 1996. UNHCR confirmed that their interpreters heard Mayor Stakic on the radio inciting others to join the crowds preventing the visit.

¹⁴³ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with IPTF monitor, IPTF Station Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, June 12, 1996.
Human Rights Watch/Helsinki 47 January 1997, Vol. 9, No. 1 (D)

Watch/Helsinki believes, as do many internationals currently in Bosnia, that this is because the local population is under tight control and does not challenge the unwritten rules. There are few non-Serbs remaining, and most people seem to believe that it is futile to resist the *status quo*.

IPTF Prijedor monitors all investigations of cases which are brought to their attention where persons are arrested while crossing the IEBL between Sanski Most and Prijedor and reported that the authorities in Sanski Most are usually forthcoming with information regarding these arrests. There have been a number of cases of beatings by police on the Sanski Most side, however, as well as illegal detentions, as in the case of Milorad Marceta. On October 16, 1996, UNHCR initiated a minibus service between the towns of Prijedor and Sanski Most. The bus service operated successfully until October 22, when Milorad Marceta, a Bosnian Serb traveling into Sanski Most, was arrested by Federation police on suspicion of war crimes. His arrest provoked an angry mob to protest in Prijedor, holding IPTF monitors and UNHCR staff hostage for a short period of time. The IPTF commander in Prijedor appealed to the crowd and to the family of the man arrested, and violence was thus avoided. A court hearing in Sanski Most on November 26 resulted in a 60-day extension in Marceta's detention. Upon hearing the news, Mr. Marceta's son in Prijedor assaulted the UNHCR bus arriving from Sanski Most, damaging the wind shield. He was taken into custody by the local police, under the supervision of IPTF. The arrest and continued detention of Marceta, accused by the Federation police of war crimes, is in direct violation of the agreement signed by both entities, which prohibits arrests on suspicion of war crimes prior to consultation with the ICTY. The agreement is often referred to as the Rome "rules of the road."¹⁴⁴ IPTF has stated that no concrete evidence of his involvement in any crime has been provided by the Federation authorities, and that IPTF will check further into the reasons for his continued detention. IPTF also stated that a medical certificate issued in 1975 states that Marceta is physically disabled.¹⁴⁵

The UNHCR had suspended bus service as a result of the Marceta incident, but insisted on restarting the bus line soon thereafter, against the united urging of many of the Prijedor based international organizations.¹⁴⁶ The bus resumed operation on November 18, 1996, but carried only one passenger in its first two days of operation. According to OSCE, "People's unwillingness to use the bus to cross the IEBL may be a reflection of increased tensions in the area, evidenced by a November 23 demonstration against a rumored Serb d.p. [displaced person] visit to Sanski Most."¹⁴⁷ The bus stopped service at the end of December due to holiday and weather conditions, and is due to resume service on January 14, 1997, weather permitting.

In Prijedor, the IPTF has often been denied information and access to police stations. Behind a facade of compliance, the Prijedor police, under Drljaca's orders, have provided inconsistent information and are frequently obstinate towards the IPTF. Therefore, information about individuals who crossed over from Sanski Most to Prijedor, and who were arbitrarily detained in the process, has been denied to IPTF.

According to the British IFOR troops stationed at the White Fang crossing between Prijedor and Sanski Most, there were no group crossings and almost no individual car crossings during the months of June and July, most likely as a result of the April and May incidents. Since that time crossings have reportedly increased.

¹⁴⁴ At the Rome Summit on February 17-18, 1996, an agreed-upon procedure for arresting suspected war criminals was established. Persons may be arrested and detained for war crimes only pursuant to a previously issued order, warrant, or indictment that has been reviewed or deemed consistent with international legal standards by the ICTY. The Rome conference was called in order to get the Parties to the Agreement to recommit to the Accords. The Contact Group, NATO commanders, and the Parties were in attendance. The Parties also agreed to provide unrestricted access to places, including mass graves, relevant to such crimes, and to persons with relevant information.

¹⁴⁵ Transcript of IFOR Press Briefing held on 27 November 1996 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina.

¹⁴⁶ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interviews in Banja Luka and Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 1996.

¹⁴⁷ Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Democratization and Human Rights Report: November 19-December 2, 1996.

Annex 7, Article I of the Dayton agreement, states: "The parties confirm that they will accept the return of such persons who have left their territory, including those who have been accorded temporary protection by third countries." UNHCR has commented that, "Senior officials in the Republika Srpska publicly state that there cannot be return and there will be no return [of] Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats to their territory." UNHCR has referred to the Republika Srpska's "anti-minority return policy."¹⁴⁸

Elections

According to an inter-agency document issued by the Office of the High Representative, OSCE had received assurances from the authorities in Prijedor in early August that voters would be permitted to cross the IEBL in safety. Drljaca told the IPTF on August 8, however, that he could "only guarantee security for 1,000 cross-IEBL voters." On August 16, Drljaca told IPTF, U.N. Civil Affairs, and OSCE representatives: "We do not have anything against Muslims, but we do not want them to come vote here" and demanded special polling stations (or just one station at the White Fang checkpoint between Sanski Most and Prijedor) established for the 10,000 Bosniak voters he estimated would cross. "Any other solution," he warned, "will result in a major incident." He then said, "if Muslims are allowed to vote in all of the eighty-six polling stations in Prijedor there will be no elections." When OSCE questioned Drljaca on this point, he replied, "Do you want war?"¹⁴⁹ Similar threats were made by a number of other officials in the Republika Srpska, indicating an overall policy of obstructing cross-IEBL voting by the Republika Srpska authorities.

The Office of the High Representative reported in an inter-agency memo that, "on August 27 UNHCR reported that the Drljaca and Mayor Stakic told international officials that only buses traveling on specific routes would be allowed to cross the IEBL (no individual vehicles allowed) and that *local* police reserved the right to search individuals traveling on these buses for firearms and explosives. The CoP [Chief of Police Drljaca] also said that special polling stations will be designated for "foreign voters" and would not be allowed to visit homes or graveyards. He also implied that Bosniak voters would be prohibited from traveling on non-designated routes or from using non-designated polling stations."¹⁵⁰

In the end, Drljaca's demands were met. Only three polling stations were designated for cross-IEBL voters, who traveled by bus from Sanski Most. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki observed the election at one polling station (in Ostra Luka), where problems with the final voter registration lists resulted in the inability of a number of Bosniaks to vote.¹⁵¹

While OSCE had developed a remedy (the day before the election) with the local election authorities in Prijedor whereby voters could apply for permission to vote based upon appearance of their names on the Provisional Voter's List, there was no way for cross-IEBL voters in the Prijedor opstina to apply to vote as they had no transportation into the town (the buses were not permitted beyond a certain point) and it was too dangerous and too far to proceed by foot into Prijedor. The Bosniaks interviewed by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki stated they were afraid to proceed further without escort, but no escort was available. Policemen had been placed every hundred meters or so along the roads, and their presence was intimidating. OSCE elections supervisors, however, insisted to the Human Rights Watch/Helsinki representative and to an OSCE human rights officer present that the Bosniaks could take

¹⁴⁸ UNHCR Report on Implementation of Annex 7, August 1996.

¹⁴⁹ Inter-Agency document issued by the Office of the High Representative, August 1996.

¹⁵⁰ Memo distributed to agencies participating in election planning by the Office of the High Representative. Local police from the origination side only were to conduct weapons checks according to an agreement reached with OSCE and IFOR, not the destination side police.

¹⁵¹ Names which appeared on the Provisional Voter's List had not been transferred to the final voter's list, due apparently to a computer glitch. This resulted in problems in a number of polling stations, where voters could not vote despite having registered because their names did not appear on the lists. OSCE, the day before the election, attempted to address this problem by arranging for voters to apply to local election commissions on election day for a certificate which would permit them to vote, based upon their names appearing on the Provisional Voter's List. According to one election monitor, even those voters who followed this procedure were not always permitted to vote upon presenting the certificate at the polling place.

advantage of the remedy, despite evidence to the contrary. In the meantime, the local poll representatives stopped the voting numerous times, challenging the right of Bosniaks to vote.

The OSCE Head of Office for Prijedor told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki on September 15 that the Prijedor police stated consistently that no movement outside the designated routes would be permitted. The day before the elections, following lengthy negotiations, the police agreed that people could at their own risk travel on designated routes. The OSCE representative confirmed that the problem regarding Bosniak voters whose names did not appear on the official voters' list had never been resolved.¹⁵²

Despite the assumptions by many that election day represented an opportunity for persons to exercise their right to vote in their places of origin, this was not the case. Bosniaks crossing the IEBL were in fact prohibited from entering their home towns at all.

“Disappearances”

IPTF investigations of the “disappearance” on September 19, 1995 of the Roman Catholic parish priest for Prijedor, Father Tomislav Matanovic, have revealed that the local Prijedor police authorities were directly involved in his “disappearance”. According to an official IPTF monitor’s report provided to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki by a third party, Father Tomislav was originally arrested at 10:00 p.m. on August 24, 1995 and was taken to the Prijedor police station #2. At 2:00 a.m. on the 25th he was taken to his parents’ home in Prijedor, where all three were placed under house arrest. That night his house and the parish hall were looted and destroyed. He remained under house arrest with his parents, with two local policemen standing guard outside at all times, until September 19, 1995. During the twenty-six day period Matanovic and his parents were under house arrest, they were sometimes permitted to receive visitors. Father Matanovic reported to visitors that he was afraid for his safety and that of his parents, especially since some persons had come to the house demanding money, jewelry and other things of value, despite the presence of the police outside. A witness reported to IPTF that in mid-September a policeman named Lakic came to the house and harassed the family, wanting money and valuables. Two days later, a truck and a number of private cars, driven by uniformed policemen, came to the house, and looted various items from the house. Guards present at the house, according to the IPTF’s source, included policemen named Savic, Cado, Rakovic, and Milan Rodic. One of these guards told the witness later that his superior officer had told him to go home the night Father Tomislav “disappeared” “because the ICRC was coming to collect the family.” The guard, who had the key to the house, reportedly gave it to his superior.

The current commander of the Prijedor police station #2, **Ranko Jakovljevic**, according to IPTF a trusted ally of Simo Drljaca, was the commander of the station during the arrest and detention of Father Tomislav.

Father Tomislav asked the other priests who came to visit him to ask for Simo Drljaca and Srdjo Srdic’s help, as he knew both men, but neither man responded to requests for assistance. Later, when one of the priests who had visited previously tried to visit again, he was initially denied entry by the police guards, who relented at the behest of Father Tomislav. On September 19, two cars arrived at 2:00 a.m. at the house, and removed Father Tomislav and his parents, Bozena and Josip. They haven’t been seen or heard from since.

¹⁵² Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview, Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, September 15, 1996.

Despite all the evidence to the contrary, former police chief Simo Drljaca claims he knows nothing about Matanovic's fate. In June, Drljaca told an ECMM (European Community Monitoring Mission) monitor that on the day Matanovic was arrested, Prijedor had only eighteen police officers and they couldn't have arrested him because there were so few police available. He mentioned that Arkan was in the area around the time, and implied that it was possible that Arkan's men might have taken the Matanovic family to Serbia. Drljaca denied to ECMM that the local police knew anything about the "disappearance."¹⁵³

Drljaca told various international monitors that Matanovic had been released to the Red Cross on October 10, 1995 and was probably "in Croatia somewhere." He also claimed that Matanovic had boarded a Red Cross bus toward Teslic (in central Bosnia), and even provided the license number of the bus to IPTF. He did not repeat this story to a U.S. Congressional delegation sent by the Chair of the House Committee on International Relations, Benjamin Gilman, to look into the matter in September 1996.

Local Red Cross officials have denied that they ever had any contact with the Matanovic family, although it is clear that these Red Cross sources are not reliable given their alleged involvement in "ethnic cleansing" activities. Srdjo Srdic, an original member of the Crisis Committee, was acting mayor of Prijedor and President of the local Red Cross at the time of Matanovic's "disappearance." Nonetheless, it is considered highly unlikely that Matanovic left on a Red Cross convoy and made it to safety, as it is believed he would have contacted the Catholic church immediately.

Mayor Stakic told an IFOR Major making inquiries into the "disappearance" that he "recognized the name" of Prijedor's parish priest, Tomislav Matanovic, and that Matanovic "might have been on a Red Cross list for Croatia and might have left in September 1995." This statement was obviously misleading; Stakic knew Matanovic well because Prijedor is a small town and there was only one parish in the town.

Witnesses present at the time of the initial arrest of Matanovic by the Prijedor police claim that Momcilo Radanovic, (a.k.a. "Cigo") the current Deputy Mayor of Prijedor, was also present. Matanovic's name appeared on an exchange list issued by the Bosnian Serb authorities in December 1995,¹⁵⁴ and has appeared on one or two lists since then, according to Croatian prisoner exchange authorities.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵³ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with ECMM monitor, Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, 11 June 1996.

¹⁵⁴ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has a copy of this official, signed exchange list.

¹⁵⁵ The name Tomislav Matanovic appears in a *Vitez* newspaper article dated 31 March 1996, which states, "According to the confirmed lists the Croat side will release 68 soldiers, and Serbs will give information on [a certain prisoner] and release the following 34 Croat soldiers and civilians:....priest Tomislav Matanovic with parents...." Mr. Dragan Bulajic was the Bosnian Serb representative who confirmed the exchange. The exchange, which was to take place in Kupres, did not result in the release of Father Matanovic for unknown reasons.

An international source close to the case confirmed that Matanovic's name appeared on an exchange list for October 1995.¹⁵⁶ The ICRC visited the family during the period they were under house arrest. In a letter to a concerned person on January 17, 1996, the ICRC noted that "The authorities which are repeatedly addressed concerning their "disappearance" have so far not provided ICRC with any satisfactory information."¹⁵⁷

The Serb authorities themselves have admitted, however, that Matanovic's name appeared on their exchange lists. Radovan Glogovac, the "Exchange Commissioner" in Banja Luka, told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in April 1996 that "I went to the Ministry of Defense in Prijedor and they showed me a list that he [Matanovic] was exchanged in Tesanj. He is right now in Muslim territory in Central Bosnia. Glogovac said, "I located the place where Matanovic was held and I informed the police, and Karadzic personally intervened as did the Minister of Religion, Davidovic." He then contradicted himself by saying, "As soon as we find out where he is, he will be exchanged. I'm sorry about Father Matanovic, but the problem is that no attention has been given to the missing Serbs." Human Rights Watch/Helsinki believes that Glogovac and Minister Davidovic may have information about Matanovic and should be pressed by the international community to reveal his whereabouts.

At least one private party offered to exchange Matanovic for their relative, a Bosnian Serb soldier they believed held by Bosnian Croats. Serb informants have claimed that he was held in "private detention," probably under the authority of **Pero Colic**, former commander of the 5th Kozara brigade based in Prijedor (now designated as the replacement for Ratko Mladic as leader of the Republika Srpska Army). Colic and his liaison officer Miroslav Grsic have denied any knowledge of the case. Grsic told an ECMM monitor in June that it was only a rumor that Matanovic had ever appeared on an exchange list, although Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has in its possession a copy of an official RS exchange list, dated December 16, 1995.

A letter written to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher by Chairman Benjamin Gilman of the House Committee on International Relations following the delegation visit to Prijedor and Banja Luka states the following: "...the military and civilian police of the "Republika Srpska" in and around the town of Prijedor appear to be actively conspiring to cover up the "disappearance" of Father Matanovic. After assembling the results of various investigations into the Matanovic case, it is clear that the former police chief of Prijedor, Simo Drljaca, and the former commander of the Fifth Kozara brigade, Col. Pero Colic, are not being forthright about their lack of knowledge about the Matanovic case." The delegation's formal report of the investigation states that "Numerous witnesses directly contradicted Drljaca's statements. It is clear from these witnesses that 1) the Prijedor police arrested the Matanovic family, 2) Matanovic was held in Prijedor police station # 2 for some period of time, and 3) the Prijedor police know more about Matanovic's later movements than they admit. Drljaca and all local observers agreed on one thing: little happens in Prijedor without Drljaca's direction or knowledge."¹⁵⁸

An IPTF source claimed that he had received confidential information on July 22, 1996 from a "very well-placed source" that Father Tomislav was being detained in a camp in the Kozara hills run by Milan Martic, leader of the Krajina Serbs from Croatia.¹⁵⁹ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has received information from other sources that such a camp exists, but has not been able to confirm its existence.

There are many other unresolved cases of "disappearances" from the period of 1992-1995. Many persons were taken from the concentration camps or from their homes in 1992 and are thought to be dead. The Matanovic case is

¹⁵⁶ IPTF field office report to IPTF Commissioner Peter FitzGerald dated 9 September 1996, a copy of which was provided to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki by a third party.

¹⁵⁷ Letter to Mrs. Doris Pack, European Parliament from the ICRC, dated 17 January 1996.

¹⁵⁸ *Report of Staffdel Garon to Croatia and Bosnia*, September 12-17, 1996, Committee on International Relations, U.S. House of Representatives, 104th Congress.

¹⁵⁹ IPTF field report to Commissioner FitzGerald, September 1996.

somewhat different from these other cases in that there is clear information that he was kept alive for a period of time (while under house arrest) and then appeared on an exchange list. Further, there is thought to be reliable information on who was responsible for his "disappearance."

To date, efforts by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, IPTF, ECMM, a special Congressional delegation from the House Committee on International Relations, and others to locate Matanovic in Prijedor have failed. Since their "disappearance," neither Matanovic nor his parents have communicated with anyone and are feared dead, although no definitive information has surfaced about their deaths. In late December 1996, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki was informed of a rumor that Father Matanovic's father Josip had recently been beaten to death. The Bosnian Serb authorities also reportedly established a commission of inquiry relating to the Matanovic case. It is the opinion of Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that the Bosnian Serb authorities are already quite aware about what happened to the family, and have withheld information from the international community.

Unfortunately, there have been recent cases of "disappearances" as well, according to IFOR sources. An IFOR source told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in early November that two men had come separately to the IFOR CIMIC (Civilian-Military) Center in Prijedor to tell IFOR that they expected to be killed soon by (previous) Chief of Police Simo Drljaca and to reveal what they knew about his organized crime activities, including his involvement in forcing people to pay protection money. Both men said they wanted to speak with someone so that the truth would be known if they were killed. One man confirmed to IFOR information about Drljaca's participation in "ethnic cleansing." Both men, according to IFOR, have since disappeared.

Detention

There have been persistent rumors throughout 1995 and into 1996 that the former concentration camps of Omarska, Manjaca, and Keraterm were again being used to house prisoners. After extensive investigation, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has been unable to confirm such rumors.

In October 1995, Omarska was used to house Bosnian Serb displaced persons and during their stay *The Guardian* reported that males from the camp were pressganged by Arkan's forces for military service. Some displaced persons reported being beaten and robbed by Arkan's men.¹⁶⁰

According to an IPTF source no internationals have had access to the tile factory Keraterm, used previously as a detention center, for approximately the past five months. According to IPTF, one Croat man came to them in May of this year, claiming that he had been arrested in Prijedor by the military police, taken to Keraterm, and held there for one week. He reportedly paid one of the guards to release him. Following his report of the incident to IPTF, UNHCR and IPTF escorted the man out of Bosnia.¹⁶¹

Harassment of Journalists and Monitors

¹⁶⁰ Julian Borger, "Bosnia: Serbs Crowd Infamous Prison Camp," *The Guardian*, October 17, 1995, p.11.

¹⁶¹ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with IPTF, Banja Luka, Bosnia and Hercegovina, 15 November 1996.

The police in Prijedor have on a number of occasions harassed, searched, or detained international journalists for filming or being in Republika Srpska territory without "permission" from the authorities. On May 21, according to the OSCE, a group of journalists and a youth group from Sweden and Finland were stopped by Republika Srpska police approximately fifteen kilometers outside Omarska on their way to Croatia. The police searched their vehicles and belongings, interrogated them intensively, and confiscated their film, sending them on to Croatia by a different route.¹⁶²

The same week, the Republika Srpska police in Prijedor stopped two British IFOR soldiers from photographing the local police station and made them destroy their film. The next week, a Belgian TV crew was detained by Prijedor police for failing to obtain "permission" to film in Republika Srpska territory from the authorities.¹⁶³

An OSCE representative was threatened by the president of the Commission of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Prijedor, Mr. Skacic, for "interfering with the internal affairs of the Republika Srpska" after looking into evictions of persons based on their ethnic background in the town of Bosanska Kostanjica (which comes under the jurisdiction of the Prijedor municipality) and was told that her safety could not be guaranteed if she persisted in visiting the area.¹⁶⁴ When the OSCE met the mayor of Prijedor, Mr. Stakic, to discuss the evictions, Stakic told them that he had no competency in the case and that the appropriate authority was the Commissioner for Refugees and Displaced Persons. When OSCE representatives visited the commissioner, they were promised a copy of the registration book pertaining to evictions, but later, the commissioner refused to give them the information, saying that the OSCE must contact Pale. OSCE later learned that the commission's main office is actually in Banja Luka.

Evictions and Harassment of Persons Based Upon Their Ethnic or Political Affiliation

A U.N. Civil Affairs report dated mid-November 1996 stated that "the greatest pressure on Muslims regarding evictions have been [sic] in Banja Luka, Gradiska/Dubrave, Dubica and Prijedor."¹⁶⁵ During the first three months following the signing of the Dayton agreement, there were seventeen evictions in Prijedor, mostly of non-Serbs. There were also seventeen confrontations when people returned to their houses and found them occupied, some of which resulted in evictions as well.

According to OSCE and IPTF monitors interviewed by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, the local Commission on Displaced Persons and Refugees in Prijedor is the authority behind the evictions, which are supposedly legal according to the Republika Srpska law on abandoned property, which was passed in April 1996. Prior to being evicted, the evictee receives a notice saying they are to be evicted, in a 'legal' manner according to this new law.

In April, an IFOR civil affairs liaison officer told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, "Expelled people often go to the police and the police say it is not a police problem and tell the people to go to the court. It is hard to find out how many people are being evicted because people generally do not make reports."¹⁶⁶

Many persons who have been targeted due to their ethnic or political affiliation have reported to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that following visits from the ICRC or other internationals they have been called to the local police for "informative talks," where they are questioned about their discussions with internationals. Human Rights

¹⁶² OSCE/Banja Luka Human Rights Weekly Report, May 31, 1996. Also noted in a UNMIBH (U.N. Mission in Bosnia and Hercegovina) Civil Affairs report, "Human Rights Overview, 20 May - 7 June 1996."

¹⁶³ UNMIBH Civil Affairs report, "Human Rights Overview, 20 May - 7 June 1996." The so-called "International Press Center" in Pale, where foreign press is required, according to Republika Srpska policy, to get accreditation, is run by the daughter of Radovan Karadzic, Sonja Karadzic.

¹⁶⁴ Referred to in UNMIBH Civil Affairs report, "Human Rights Overview, 20 May - 2 June 1996."

¹⁶⁵ U.N. Civil Affairs report shared unofficially with Human Rights Watch/Helsinki.

¹⁶⁶ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with IFOR officer, Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, April 3, 1996

Watch/Helsinki was told in April that Bosniaks and Bosnian Croats who attempted to cross the IEBL without permission from the authorities were temporarily arrested, and that it was forbidden for them to cross through the Ostra Luka checkpoint. Those who tried had their documents confiscated. It was also confirmed that some non-Serbs still remained in forced labor (referred to as “working obligation” by the local authorities). One man told a Human Rights Watch/Helsinki representative “Muslims have no human rights here, ninety-nine percent of the Muslim population is unemployed, and there is no freedom of movement.” “We are really scared,” added a relative, “the night is long and something can always happen.”

An OSCE human rights monitor for Prijedor reported to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in June that there had been many cases of evictions in the Prijedor area in previous weeks. At least seven cases of forced evictions were reported in Bosanska Kostajnica in May-June (Bosanska Kostajnica comes under the authority of the Commission of Refugees and Displaced Persons in Prijedor). These evictions and others have been primarily conducted by the Commission for Displaced Persons and Refugees according to a discriminatory application of the Republika Srpska Abandoned Property law, articles 39 and 40, which annul all contracts made after April 1992.¹⁶⁷ When asked what was being done to counter these evictions, one international monitor said, “We can’t do anything about the evictions if they are being conducted under the law.”¹⁶⁸

On June 11, IPTF Prijedor received information from IPTF sub-station Bosanska Gradiska that there had been 107 reported cases of evictions since the Dayton agreement. IPTF was concerned that additional cases had gone unreported.

In June, the OSCE in Prijedor informed Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that, unfortunately, the OSCE had to concentrate its efforts on upcoming elections, leaving little time to handle individual eviction cases. An OSCE official did say, however, that she had observed a “pattern of evictions” in the Prijedor area. When OSCE tried to follow up on evictions cases on July 26, 1996, Commission member Bosko Mandic refused to see them, saying that for OSCE, he was “not in.”¹⁶⁹

In June, there were four cases of evictions in process, one of which was ultimately reversed due to IPTF’s intervention.

A report was received by IPTF on November 9 from a Bosniak man that he and his family were forcibly expelled from his house in Dubica, in the Prijedor area, by local police. According to his report, he was arrested, beaten and detained for three days.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Evictions of non-Serbs have been a pattern since the beginning of the war in Bosnian Serb-controlled areas of Bosnia and Hercegovina. At times, evictions of non-Serbs *en-masse* were part of brutal “ethnic cleansing” operations; at other times evictions occurred when Serb refugees from the Krajina area of Croatia or displaced persons from other parts of Bosnia entered the area. Local authorities often either turn a blind eye to these evictions, claiming they are due to “uncontrolled elements,” or encourage the evictions behind the scenes. More recently, as mentioned above, evictions are pseudo-legal, based on a highly discriminatory property law. The long-standing practice and wide distribution of evictions throughout Republika Srpska territory (i.e. in Banja Luka and Doboje municipalities) leads to the conclusion that there is an overall Republika Srpska policy of evictions to create an “ethnically pure” Serb entity.

¹⁶⁸ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki telephone interview with international monitor, January 5, 1997.

¹⁶⁹ Office of the High Representative, “Briefing Paper for the MOIs Meeting: Threats by Officials Relating to the Elections,” September 4, 1996.

¹⁷⁰ Office of the High Representative, Human Rights Coordination Center, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina. Human Rights Report, 12 November 1996.

On November 12, 1996, a Catholic Serb woman in Prijedor complained to IPTF that her daughter was being harassed by her teachers and by the school director because she did not attend Orthodox religious classes. IPTF agreed to raise the matter with school authorities.¹⁷¹

Destruction of Property to Prevent Repatriation

On October 24, 1996, an estimated 400 explosions of anti-tank mines completely destroyed ninety-six Bosniak houses and two mosques in villages near Prijedor, previously damaged during "ethnic cleansing" operations in 1992. The village of Hambarine was the most affected. "Although reconstruction of the war damaged homes had not begun," OSCE reports, "UNHCR had contacted Prijedor authorities about a possible assessment visit by d.p.'s [displaced persons]. Most disturbingly, the homes which were targeted belonged to d.p.'s who had expressed interest in participating in the visits. Prior to the bombings, their names had been forwarded to Prijedor municipal authorities by UNHCR. Also in Prijedor AOR [Area Of Responsibility], twelve Bosniak homes damaged during the war were destroyed during the reporting period. Perpetrators apparently mistook reconstruction of the homes to be signs of Bosniak return."¹⁷² These homes, belonging to Bosniaks, were being repaired by the municipality to house displaced Serbs.

On November 7, *The New York Times* reported that U.N. officials blamed Bosnian Serb officials for the destruction. Kris Janowski, spokesman for UNHCR, told the Times that "This is the worst [incident so far], but it is part of a developing pattern. . . It tells you what sort of local leadership and what sort of obstacles you are up against."¹⁷³

The *Times* went on to say that while the destruction of Bosniak houses was taking place in other areas, "nowhere was the destruction so methodical and proficient" as in the area around Prijedor.¹⁷⁴

According to IPTF and IFOR sources in Prijedor who spoke with Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in November, the military was involved in laying the mines, both because of the professionalism and skills required to lay, and explode by timer, so many mines at once and because only the army was believed to have anti-tank mines in the quantity used. Some houses were blown up with four M84 anti-tank mines, each of them about one square foot in size. Some mines did not explode, and were observed by IFOR to appear brand new. A minimum of 400 mines were exploded. Some windows in Prijedor's taller buildings were broken during the explosions. Some of the houses were rigged together.¹⁷⁵

Following the destruction of the houses, IPTF established a joint patrol with local police at the site to prevent further destruction. In addition, IFOR has implemented an extensive program to monitor the Zone of Separation, supposedly in order to prevent further destruction of property, and investigate the perpetrators of the destruction. However, the results of such an investigation have not to date been made public, and it is unclear whether SFOR plans to continue their efforts in this regard, or whether the plan has been completed.

¹⁷¹ Office of the High Representative, Human Rights Coordination Center, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina. Human Rights Report, 13 November 1996.

¹⁷² OSCE Democratization and Human Rights Report: October 25-November 7, 1996.

¹⁷³ Mike O'Connor, *The New York Times*, "Defiantly, Bosnian Serbs Blow Up Muslim's Homes," 7 November 1996.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki visited the site of the explosions in Hambarine, Bosnia and Hercegovina, on October 26, 1996.

The New York Times's sources agreed with the above analysis. "You can't blow up that many buildings in that part of the country unless you're the police or the army," said a NATO officer. "The people in charge have to have ordered it." According to the article, "foreign diplomats" said they believed that Prijedor police chief Simo Drljaca was behind the destruction--despite his apparent removal from office two months before. "He's still in charge," an international monitor told Mike O'Connor of *The New York Times*. "He is still in the police station. He rides around town in a police car. Now everyone thinks NATO looks stupid and impotent."¹⁷⁶

IFOR in Sarajevo, however, refused to identify those responsible. At an IFOR press conference on October 29, IFOR spokesman Major Haselock stated, "As far as evidence is concerned, there is a possibility of links between a number of organizations. That is purely conjectural evidence. There is no hard, physical evidence to suggest that any particular group, whether it be government officials, military, police, or local gangsters, have actually done this. So, we can surmise, we clearly have said that this was a substantive effort. It would've taken a lot of logistics and effort to organize. But there is no clear link between any particular group yet."¹⁷⁷

IFOR stated in a press conference on November 9 in Sarajevo that "We are not in a position to point a finger at any one group. Our approach [to addressing the destruction of property] has been vigorous and active."¹⁷⁸

To date, although a joint IFOR/IPTF investigation has been conducted with the local police, the result of that investigation has not been made public. Unofficially, both IFOR and IPTF have told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that they believe both Simo Drljaca and the Bosnian Serb Army were involved. An IFOR source told a Human Rights Watch/Helsinki representative that "Simo destroyed the houses right in the backyard of the Czech IFOR commander, right under their noses." (the Czech IFOR base is less than fifteen kilometers away).

On October 27, bulldozers belonging to a company owned by the mayor of the town of Novi Grad (Mayor Vajagic) destroyed 12 houses in the town. The mayor denied responsibility. There were reportedly some arrests following this action, but this could not be confirmed by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki. Novi Grad comes under the jurisdiction of the Prijedor municipality.¹⁷⁹

UNHCR has experienced numerous problems in attempting to arrange visits by displaced persons to Prijedor. For months, the authorities simply refused to meet at all with representatives of displaced persons, citing a lack of instructions from Pale to do so. Recently, the authorities reportedly allowed one UNHCR-organized visit to the area.

Linkages and Loyalties

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Transcript of IFOR press briefing, October 29, 1996.

¹⁷⁸ IFOR Press Briefing, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 9, 1996.

¹⁷⁹ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with IFOR officer, Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, 7 November 1996.

Prijedor officials have often told internationals working in Prijedor that they get their orders from Pale and from the Ministry of the Interior Dragan Kijac. Many believe that Kijac and Simo Drljaca answer to Radovan Karadzic, former leader of the Bosnian Serbs and indicted twice by the ICTY for war crimes. Moreover, there are interesting linkages which have been reported between Momcilo Krajisnik, Kijac, and the military of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the FRY Ministry of the Interior--and thereby the secret police.¹⁸⁰ Alex Ivanko told a Human Rights Watch/Helsinki representative that Dragan Kijac is a member of the fifteen-person Executive Board of the SDS, which was hand-picked this past spring by Karadzic.¹⁸¹

Several sources in Prijedor told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that the former members of the "Crisis Committee" are all reporting to Kijac, who reports to Karadzic. All the sources were convinced that the direction from the top was coming from the civilian and not the military leadership of Republika Srpska.¹⁸²

An IPTF source at IPTF headquarters in Sarajevo told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that IPTF believed Kijac "technically" reported to Biljana Plavsic but probably was under the direction of Radovan Karadzic. OMRI reported in December 1995 that Radovan Karadzic, despite the Dayton agreement's ban on his holding public office, had "nonetheless showed no sign of preparing to abandon power willingly, and reshuffled his cabinet to strengthen the position of his hard-line loyalists. New appointees include [among others] security chief Dragan Kijac as interior minister."¹⁸³

An ECMM (European Community Monitoring Mission) source in Prijedor noted that according to his information, Drljaca acted as head of Karadzic's "security unit" in Prijedor 1992-1993. At that time, Dragan Kijac was "security chief" for the self-designated Republika Srpska.

¹⁸⁰ According to a investigation conducted by Pulitzer-prize winning Newsday journalist Roy Gutman, Kijac participated in an arms smuggling operation between Momcilo Krajisnik and his brother Mirko, which became especially active just before the fall of Srebrenica (see Human Rights Watch/Helsinki report on Srebrenica.) Among the weapons the three brought in to Bosnia and Hercegovina through Serbia were gravity bombs, later used against the civilian population of Sarajevo. See Newsday, "Arms-Running Traced to Yugoslav regime". According to the article, Mirko Krajisnik, working from Kragujevac, site of an arms factory in Serbia, coordinated with his brother and officers in the Yugoslav and Bosnian Serb armies to bring arms into Bosnia and Hercegovina. The Yugoslav secret police, under the tight control of Serbia's President Slobodan Milosevic, played a significant role in the enterprise. The following is an excerpt [reported by Newsday] from an intercepted communication between the brothers: "Listen to what I am going to tell you," Mirko told "Momo" (short for Momcilo) by telephone on June 16, 1995. "There is something that [Serbian Interior Minister] Jovica Stanisic must take over and watch. Our driver cannot make these two deadlines. But he can reach the meeting point by 12 . . . will you please ask him if he will allow them to join the convoy at that border because all of the elements necessary to cross are present now?" Momo replied, "I'll find our man, you know, Kijac," referring to Bosnian Serb interior minister Dragan Kijac. Momo telephoned back fifteen minutes later: I must have the [list of] vehicles and drivers," he said. "You'll just have to say you've been cleared via Kijac, and that's all." Another report, by Jane Perlez of the New York Times (The New York Times, "Hard-Line Nationalist is New Bosnian Serb Leader," August 9 1996), stated that Momcilo Krajisnik "was seen by many Serbs as a calculating political power behind the theatrical Karadzic. . . Through control of key elements of the economy, *his grip on the police force* [italics added] and through arms deals with his brother, Mirko, Krajisnik was critical in keeping the Bosnian Serb war machine afloat, Serb officials in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, said. He was also shrewd enough, they asserted, to leave few traces that would attract the attention of the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague, Netherlands." Laura Silber and Allan Little, in their book *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation*, (USA: TV Books, Inc., 1996, p.69, endnote 3) note that "Another secret policeman, Jovica Stanisic...would rise to the top, becoming one of Milosevic's most trusted allies. In May 1995 Milosevic appointed Stanisic his special envoy" designated for freeing U.N.hostages in Bosnia."

¹⁸¹ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki telephone conversation with Alex Ivanko, November 26, 1996.

¹⁸² Sources include representatives of IFOR, IPTF, U.N. Civil Affairs, and a local inhabitant.

¹⁸³ OMRI, *Week from 18-22 December*, "Karadzic clings to power," 18 December 1995.

Karadzic held a rally in Prijedor to kick off the SDS election campaign back in February.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁴ OMRI Daily Reports. "Karadzic Kicks Off Election Campaign in Prijedor." 8 February 1996.

Kijac is, according to inside international monitoring sources being considered by Slobodan Milosevic for a key position in the Yugoslav government--head of the "special security force," a special police machinery linked to the army.¹⁸⁵

According to an IFOR officer, following the peace agreement, the Bosnian Serbs used SDS party structures to change the mayors of various towns, because they wanted to ensure leadership by those who were directly involved during the war years. The source mentioned Momcilo Radanovic (aka "Cigo") and Srdjo Srdic, President of the so-called Serb Red Cross, who is reportedly close to Radovan Karadzic and his wife, Ljiljana Karadzic, the "President" of the self-proclaimed Red Cross of Republika Srpska.¹⁸⁶

The similar nature of recent activities throughout Republika Srpska in the Zone of Separation (ZOS) and organized attacks against returnees and opposition parties seems to indicate a deliberate government policy toward non-Serbs, Bosnian Serb individuals who disagree with the SDS leadership, members of opposition parties, and the independent press.¹⁸⁷ As previously noted, the Dayton agreement requires the prosecution, dismissal, or transfer of officials responsible for violations of the basic rights of individuals belonging to ethnic or minority groups. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), in the "UNHCR Report on Implementation of Annex 7," August 1996, noted: "UNHCR is unaware of any prosecution, transfer, of any such officials involved in violations of basic rights of minority groups. On the contrary, moderate or cooperative officials have been removed from office."

Republika Srpska officials have made it clear that they intend to implement their own policies regardless of the agreement made in Dayton. Interior Minister Kijac, for example, issued a *démarche* to IFOR Ground Force Commander Gen. Michael Walker in September that the attempted return of Bosniaks to the ZOS, "make it imperative for me, in line with my duties, to have to take measures to set up Republika Srpska authority in these areas as well, regardless of the area being in the zone of separation." Kijac accused the Bosniaks of entering "Bosnian Serb villages" through the use of force. Kijac thereby informed IFOR that he intended to treat the ZOS as Republika Srpska territory.¹⁸⁸

This is unacceptable under the Dayton agreement, which states that "All parties understand and agree that they shall be subject to military action by IFOR, including the use of necessary force to ensure compliance for. . . failure to keep all forces [which specifically includes police under the Ministry of the Interior] and unauthorized weapons outside the inter-entity Zone of Separation."¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁵ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with IPTF Headquarters, November 1996.

¹⁸⁶ The self-designated Serbian Red Cross has been directly implicated in stealing large sums of money from non-Serbs during periods when they were desperate to leave Bosnian Serb-controlled areas, charging them outrageous amounts for transportation to the front lines or to the Croatian border. This was tantamount to making people pay for their own "ethnic cleansing". Human Rights Watch/Helsinki and other groups have collected numerous testimonies linking the local Red Cross with such activities. It is believed that potentially millions of DEM in cash were collected. The linkage with Mrs. Karadzic is an important one which has not been fully investigated.

¹⁸⁷ See Human Rights Watch/Helsinki report on organized crime and the actions of Republika Srpska government officials in the towns of Doblj and Teslic, *Bosnia and Hercegovina: The Continuing Influence of Bosnia's Warlords*, December 1996.

¹⁸⁸ Tanjug, Pale, "R.S. Warns IFOR Agreement on Jusici Village Not Met," 26 September 1996.

¹⁸⁹ *General Framework Agreement, Annex 1-A, Agreement on the Military Aspects of the Peace Settlement, Article IV, Redeployment of Forces, 4. General. (b). (1) and (4).*

Kijac also insisted that Bosniaks who return to the Republika Srpska sign a loyalty oath promising to obey the laws of Republika Srpska--many of which are discriminatory-- and that IFOR permit the arrest of Bosniaks who burn the "state" flag. Kijac accused returnees to Jusici, a village in the "Sapna thumb" of northeast Bosnia and Hercegovina, of burning down the Republika Srpska "state" flag.¹⁹⁰ The Republika Srpska flag does not represent the state of Bosnia and Hercegovina, only the entity of Republika Srpska.

The Washington Post in mid-October cited Western officials as saying that, during six hours of talks in Pale where Western diplomats tried to convince newly-elected Momcilo Krajisnik to attend inaugural ceremonies, he left the room three times to drive to Karadzic's house.¹⁹¹

In addition, it is known that Milan Martić, leader of the Krajina Serbs from Croatia, and indicted for war crimes by the ICTY, appeared on television twice in July regarding a reconstruction project in Kozarac, a town located between Prijedor and Banja Luka, and near Omarska. During one of those appearances, an IFOR officer was present.¹⁹² According to an IFOR source, 60 houses have been rebuilt in Kozarac for soldiers associated with Martić. It is rumored that Martić has a base camp in the Kozara mountains near Kozarac.¹⁹³ Martić's paramilitary forces reportedly assisted Serbian and Bosnian Serb troops during the 1992 "ethnic cleansing" operations around Prijedor.¹⁹⁴ According to another IFOR source, the housing reconstruction project in Kozarac was specifically designed to prevent the return of Bosniaks to the town.

An IFOR major in Prijedor informed Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in June that Drljaca has complete power over the police and the military in the entire Prijedor area, and that he is controlled directly by the Pale authorities through funding, frequent summons to Pale in person, and control of information. According to the major, Drljaca's control is so pervasive that even Mayor Stakić refused to meet with the major on certain issues without Drljaca's presence.¹⁹⁵ Drljaca's control is not limited to Prijedor only. In fact, one IPTF monitor stated that "the power of the police chief in Prijedor is comprehensive...even over Novi Grad [Bosanski Novi]. The police chief of Novi Grad did not have enough control to remove the Bosnian Serb police checkpoint which was on the bridge in Otoka...Drljaca had to do it."¹⁹⁶

THE ECONOMICS OF "ETHNIC CLEANSING"

¹⁹⁰ Serbia Today, "Moslems Burned Down Serbian Flag," 11 October 1996.

¹⁹¹ John Pomfret, *The Washington Post*, "Officials Say Ex Serb Chief Still a Force - Renewed Role Could Imperil Peace Process," Friday, October 11, 1996, page A29.

¹⁹² Human Rights Watch/Helsinki press release, "NATO Source Confirms Failure to Arrest Indicted War Criminal Milan Martić," November 8, 1996.

¹⁹³ Kozarac was attacked after most of Prijedor's men had been rounded up and sent to concentration camps, according to author Peter Maas, *Love Thy Neighbor: A Story of War* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996). Maas says that "the cleansing of Kozarac turned into one of the most vicious campaigns of civilian slaughter in the entire war." The Serbs shelled the Bosniaks in the street (having promised them a peaceful surrender if they came out of their basements) and then separated out the elite of the town, most of whom were immediately shot or were taken to a house where their throats were slit. Maas refers to this as "eliticide." At least 2,500 people were killed in a 72-hour period.

¹⁹⁴ *Final Report of U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section V.

¹⁹⁵ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview, Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, June 12, 1996.

¹⁹⁶ Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview, Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, June 12, 1996.

As pointed out in the information on the Crisis Committee, a major motivating factor behind the Serb takeover of the town of Prijedor was to gain control of the financial assets of the community. During the Serb takeover of the town, prominent non-Serb community leaders, businessmen and women, and professionals were killed immediately, or detained in Omarska, where many disappeared and were most likely killed. These directors of companies, municipal officials, and others were replaced by Serbs, and many businesses were expropriated almost overnight. The U.N. Commission of Experts in their 1994 report described the takeover:

Among the prominent citizens of Prijedor who had survived the initial phase of the devastation and were detained in Omarska, are long lists of identified persons. . . Among them (to mention some) were the [duly elected] Mayor. . . directors and members of the Rudnika Ljubija (iron ore mine) management board, directors and managers of Bosnamontaza, Kozaraturist, Celpak, and the biscuit factory Mira Cikota; the director and secretary of the [legitimate] Prijedor Red Cross, the president of Merhamet (the Muslim charity organization) in Prijedor, restaurant owners, business men and entrepreneurs; leaders of sports clubs and football players....the Serbs detained almost the entire non-Serbian elite -- including political and administrative leaders, religious leaders, academics and intellectuals, business leaders, and others.

According to the Commission of Experts, an article in *Kozarski Vijesnik* related a statement made by the then new police chief of Prijedor Bogdan Delic (Drljaca had become second-in-command in the Ministry of the Interior):

“Approximately 50,000 residents of other nationalities had lived in this district, and their assets were unofficially estimated at several billions DM. Some of the assets were destroyed during military operations, but at large they were preserved- although only for a short period of time. By various machinations, the whims of individuals members of the local police, army and civilian authorities, and the governing political party - the largest part of the “preserved assets” disappeared . . . While carrying out their tasks. . . military and civilian police and citizens confiscated large quantities of goods, motor vehicles [4,700 in Kozarac alone] cab units, trucks, agricultural vehicles, and various technical equipment and other devices, and handed them over to the units that the above-mentioned governmental bodies established for this purpose (Keraterm, TZS, Velepromet, and other storehouses). It may be stated with certainty that those storehouses have been emptied in a short time, and that the greater part of the resources have either been transferred to Serbia through private agents, or have been expropriated by private individuals.”¹⁹⁷

The newspaper went on to say that “war profiteers sacked Prijedor. . . on the model of the Sicilian model.”¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁷ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section IX, Subsection D. See also Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, “Bosnia-Herzegovina: The Continuing Influence of Bosnia’s Warlords” *A Human Rights Watch Short Report*, vol. 8, no. 17 (D) for further evidence of similar activities in other parts of Republika Srpska.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

The stripping of resources from the non-Serb population ranged from the sophisticated takeover of the bank and the commandeering of local businesses to the outright robbery of houses and household items to literally stripping women to search them for money and jewelry as they left the area on convoys organized by the Serbs--often by the local Red Cross. According to the U.N. Commission of Experts: "Financial assets belonging to non-Serbs were frozen and later confiscated along with everything else belonging to them, and the financial links with the authorities in BiH [Bosnia and Hercegovina] were severed."¹⁹⁹

Jasmin Kaltak, a survivor of Keraterm camp, was interviewed by Roy Gutman. After telling about how he had been forced by Bosnian Serbs to load the bodies of men, women and young children from villages around Prijedor onto trucks for disposal, Kaltak added that he and his work crew were then ordered to plunder the houses of Muslims, transferring the contents to two warehouses in Prijedor.²⁰⁰

The Commission of Experts described further the actions of the local Serbs:

The Serbs have unilaterally taken over all communal property in Opstina Prijedor whether it still remains in the district or has been brought out of it to other areas. The communal property belonged, as always, to the community at large. . . The Serb authorities have been issuing so-called "exit visas". [To obtain these visas] bribes were needed at every level, and moreover, an entry-visa to be admitted into Croatia. . . individuals were hunted when their time expired."²⁰¹

Interviews conducted by a Human Rights Watch/Helsinki representative with refugees who had fled the region confirmed this information. If all the "fees" (which included fees to the military, the telephone and electric companies, and to the Red Cross, among others) were paid and one did not leave on time, the fees would have to be paid again. Non-Serbs essentially paid to be "ethnically-cleansed," and the cost varied according to who was leaving (draft-age males cost more) and when they were going (during periods when the Bosnian Serbs wanted larger numbers of non-Serbs to leave the territory, the price dropped).

"They kept 730 of us in a large garage," a survivor of Omarska told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki in December 1992, after he had reached safety in Croatia. "It had a cement floor, and it was coated in engine oil. They repeatedly poured cold water on the floor, and we were forced to lie in it. Sometimes a guard would come in and shout, 'Sit down!' Whoever did not sit down quickly enough was shot. They killed all the directors, private businessmen, intellectuals and all who had money. They would take people out at night, and they would never be seen again."

Another survivor, a former employee of the Omarska mine, told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, "First, they put us in Room # 15 [in Omarska]. Muslim policemen and local businessmen were taken out and killed that same night."²⁰²

The U.N. Commission of Experts reported that a Serb guard in the Omarska camp told a friend that "Interned here are reportedly Prijedor elite from before the Serb takeover of government control; the President of the Council [Mayor], Members of the Executive Council, the President of the Court, two judges, doctors, presidents and directors of firms, owners of private factories and businesses."

¹⁹⁹ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section V.A.

²⁰⁰ Roy Gutman, p. 84-87.

²⁰¹ *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts*, Annex V, Part 2, Section X, Subsection D.

²⁰² **Interviewed in Zagreb, Croatia in December 1992 by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki**

According to information gathered from refugees and camp survivors, the following companies were seized by Bosnian Serbs during the takeover of the town and their owners or employees killed or imprisoned:²⁰³

- **TE-EA:** Women's clothing manufacturer, exported to Italy. Owned by Hamdija Balic, a wealthy and prominent Bosniak resident of Kozarac. TE-EA employed approximately one hundred people. Balic lived in the Netherlands for a time and then returned to Bosnia to open the company. He was imprisoned and killed in Omarska concentration camp.
- **Tvornica Zavarenih Sklopova:** This company did not have a formal name, but was known by its description (Factory for Welded Machine Parts). Zlatan Besirevic, the Bosniak director, was a mechanical engineer and director of the company, which exported products to Western markets and appears to have been one of the more profitable businesses in Prijedor. Besirevic was also killed in Omarska. Most of the machinery of the company was stripped and taken to Serbia.
- **Mira Cikota:** A division of the Josip Kras company, headquartered in Zagreb, which produces cookies and candy (Kras was one of the biggest companies in Yugoslavia before the war). Miroslav Turnusek, the director of Mira Cikota, was imprisoned in Omarska, but survived. The Mira Cikota factory was also stripped of machinery, which was sent to Serbia. A number of other employees, however, perished in Omarska camp. Among them were Antonije Komsic (main technician); Uka Muric (mechanical engineer and inventor); Mr. Nasic (first name unknown, economist and member of sales division). Hakija Hodzic, head of the sales division, was detained in both Omarska and Manjaca but survived; Rizah Begverbegovic, deputy director of Mira Cikota, was detained in Omarska but also survived.
- **Ljubija Iron Ore Mine:** This company, as mentioned, included several mines: Ljubija, Omarska, and Tomasica. All or most of the individuals who held higher-level positions in the company were detained in Omarska. The mines were stripped and the machinery and heavy equipment (e.g. bulldozers and trucks) were shipped via military helicopter to Serbia. The following men who worked for the iron ore company were killed in Omarska: Engineers Ibrahim Paunovic, Ilija Zdrobic, and Mehmedalija Sarajlic (assistant to the director); Stjepan Maric, head of the computer division; Smajil Zahirovic, lawyer. The director, **Ostoja Marijanovic** (Serb) was a strategist during the "ethnic cleansing" and carried out crimes in the Prijedor region, according to reports. Human Rights Watch/Helsinki has learned that **Slobodan Balaban**, director of the Tomasica mine and an assistant to Marijanovic, also allegedly planned the takeover of the town and carried out "ethnic cleansing" in the region.
- **Celpak:** An independent source, who used to work at Celpak, a local paper product company, and still has a relative working there, told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki on November 14, 1996 that Simo Drljaca, local "Serbian Red Cross" president Srdjo Srdic, and Dragan Kijac, Minister of the Interior, all have financial interest in the company.²⁰⁴ Many Serb individuals who worked for this cellulose factory ended up participating in the "ethnic cleansing." The factory was connected to a network of factories in Bosnia and Croatia, and produced paper and cellulose, distributing it to publishing houses and stationary supply stores, including the prominent Zagrebacka Papirnica.
- **Flour mills:** Many flour mills in the Prijedor area were privatized early on (before the war) and were taken from their owners when Prijedor was taken over.

²⁰³ This list is by no means exhaustive.

²⁰⁴ According to this confidential source, a former resident of Prijedor, the local authorities are in the process of privatizing the Celpak company.

- **Restaurant and Hotel “Mursel”** (next to electric company): The owner of this restaurant and hotel, Muharem Murselovic, was expelled during the war. The hotel, which had been under construction, was then blown up, and the restaurant expropriated.
- **“Korzo”**: Senadin Ramadanovic owned this ice cream shop next to Stari Grad. He was killed in Omarska.
- **“Ami”**: Amir Izetagic owned this bar. He was brutally killed in the beginning of the war
- **“Asaf”**: Asaf Kapetanovic owned this coffee bar/restaurant. During the war, it was burned down, the restaurant was taken over, and Kapetanovic was killed near Omarska. The restaurant, which was next to the warehouses in the center of town, was later blown up.
- **Shoe Store**: Esad Avdagic owned this shoe store in Prijedor. The store was taken over during the war by a Bosnian Serb policeman named Zoran. Avdagic was expelled, and survived.
- **Car sales and repair shop**: According to former residents of Prijedor, Simo Drljaca reportedly arranged for the murder of owner Hamdija Kurdovic in 1992 in order to take over his business. An international monitor shared similar information with Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, but stated that to his knowledge, the business had been a “Volkswagen dealership.” The former residents also claimed that Drljaca and Slobodan Kuruzovic brought stolen cars and furniture to Prijedor from Croatia during the war, and sold them on the black market.

Simo Drljaca has a number of business interests, and most observers believe that he came about his wealth through illicit activities. Drljaca, according to both IFOR and IPTF sources, owns the “Aeroklub” restaurant, and his wife owns a perfume shop in Prijedor.

Interestingly, in meetings with a U.S. Congressional delegation, Simo Drljaca, Mayor Stakic and Milorad Malud, President of the Prijedor Election Council, “called attention to the Omarska iron ore mine and the Celpak paper mill as critical employers needing access to international markets.²⁰⁵ In other words, the Prijedor authorities are lobbying the U.S. government for funding for the rebuilding of a mine which was a concentration camp, and a paper mill in which these former concentration camp guards have a direct financial interest. As mentioned, mine shafts at Omarska and Ljubija have reportedly been used as mass graves.

In January 1996, Predrag Radic, the then-mayor of Banja Luka, told Reuters that Bosnian Serb leaders were negotiating a deal with the Croatian government to trade iron ore from the Omarska and Ljubija mines for oil. Radic stated that the deal had been delayed because an iron works in the Croatian town of Sisak was not ready for production. The U.N. Tribunal, according to the report, “has plans to look into allegations that thousands of victims of Serb ‘ethnic cleansing’ were buried in the Ljubija mine, some fifty kilometers west of Banja Luka.”²⁰⁶

A local source told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that a lot of equipment from the mine was sent during the war to a copper mine in Bor, Serbia. “The Serbs ruined their own companies, and now they are asking for money for the mines?” he asked, incredulously.

Tangled in the Web: Reconstruction Aid and the Architects of “Ethnic Cleansing”

²⁰⁵ *Report of Staffdel Garon to Croatia and Bosnia, September 12-17, 1996, House Committee of International Relations, U.S. Congress.*

²⁰⁶ *Dan de Luce, Reuters World Service, “Mine sites of alleged Serb atrocities may reopen,” January 26, 1996.*
 Human Rights Watch/Helsinki 65 January 1997, Vol. 9, No. 1 (D)

Since the signing of the Dayton agreement, millions of DM have been invested in Prijedor through the implementation of community reconstruction projects. A confidential source directly involved in the allocation of reconstruction aid volunteered information that due to the continuing influence and control of the town by local authorities under investigation by the ICTY, it has been difficult to ensure that projects meant “to improve the human condition” of ordinary people have not also benefited those accused by numerous witnesses of orchestrating “ethnic cleansing” operations, overseeing concentration camps, and violating the Dayton agreement.

The projects, many of which were funded by the British Overseas Development Agency (ODA), the foreign assistance program of the British government, and implemented by IFOR, have focused on the reconstruction of schools and other community institutions. The impetus for most of the IFOR projects came from British ODA, which sought to improve the British IFOR contingent’s image in the local community. “There was a radical change of ODA’s policy and mandate,” the source told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki. “[British ODA] decided to invest in Prijedor and let the people know what they are doing. . . Each project has a public opening on television. . . The new strategy has proven to be excellent. [IFOR] now has terrific relations with the local authorities as a result of these projects, which show the ‘nice side’ of IFOR.”

These projects are undoubtedly worthwhile endeavors in and of themselves, but according to information received by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, IFOR and other groups have not been able to award contracts to legitimate businesses in Prijedor or distribute aid without interference from members of the “Crisis Committee,” who retain control over the infrastructure and public companies of the town, expropriated many private businesses, and continue to intimidate private business owners. According to IFOR and IPTF sources, this group of individuals is highly organized – “all the way up to Karadzic,” according to one international observer.²⁰⁷

The confidential source, who has direct knowledge of project implementation by IFOR and NGOs, informed Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that IFOR officers on the ground regretted it was necessary to “deal on a daily basis with persons who are believed responsible for war crimes, in order to help the ordinary people.” He also stated that while every attempt was made to prevent local authorities from benefiting from the projects, that it was not always avoidable.

According to the source, Mayor Stakic and former Chief of Police Drljaca wanted IFOR to give *all* reconstruction contracts to public construction companies. “When the CIMIC [Civilian-Military Center] center gave money only to private [companies],” the source explained, “Simo’s guys came [and threatened the private construction workers].” During the election period, the “electoral police” (under control of the political authorities) had demanded payments from local businesses to the SDS. Private company owners then approached IFOR to express fears that if no contracts were awarded to public companies, that private businesses would literally be burned down by Drljaca’s men. They asked IFOR to give some contracts to publicly owned companies in order to protect them. Following the incidents with the “electoral police”, IFOR met with the Mayor, to express concerns about the intimidation. IFOR agreed to give projects to public companies as well as private, but warned the Mayor that if the intimidation did not stop, all IFOR projects would be suspended. “[IFOR now] spreads evenly between public-private-public-private companies. . . all companies give estimates on a particular project,” he stated, and stated that IFOR takes the lowest bidder, depending on how good the company is [what expertise they have].

The source confirmed, however, that nearly “everything is controlled by ‘Simo’ [Drljaca],” and added that Drljaca, along with other members of the “Crisis Committee,” is “behind everything that is going on. . . There’s no way [to implement] projects just with the private companies,” because “everything’s controlled by the [local] mob.” Since IFOR started awarding projects to public companies, the intimidation of private companies appears to have abated.

In at least one case, IFOR engaged a company called “Komgrad,” which it knew to be controlled by Simo Drljaca and Mayor Stakic. While care was taken to ensure that no cash was involved, the source acknowledged that “When a project is given to Komgrad, it is known that Simo and Stakic benefit from it, but it relieves pressure on the

²⁰⁷ See also Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, “The Continuing Influence of Bosnia’s Warlords,” *A Human Rights Watch Short Report*, vol. 8, no.17 (D), Appendix A.

private companies and buys IFOR good relations.” Komgrad, according to the confidential source, “is Stakic’s construction company....[and] Simo’s friends. . .the Mayor sits on the board.” According to the source, private construction companies are not controlled by the SDS and probably are not therefore controlled by Simo Drljaca. But, he added, “They don’t like Simo and are scared of him.” The source declined to divulge the names of other public construction companies, and did not want to give the names of any private companies for fear of retribution against them.

While it was not clear to the source what other specific financial interests were held by the local authorities, the reports of the U.N. Commission of Experts and others clearly indicate that the “Crisis Committee” was instrumental in taking over the finances of the majority of local businesses. A local source told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that a number of private companies are in fact controlled by the SDS, among them “Zitopromet”, “Celpak”, and “Unipromet”.²⁰⁸ As mentioned elsewhere in this report, many private companies were taken over by members of the SDS in 1992 and after, and many directors were killed. Since 1992, other businesses have been taken over; their directors and managers replaced by SDS party members.²⁰⁹ On May 1, workers at a private company in Novi Grad (part of the area under Drljaca’s control) staged a strike in protest of the replacement by the government of the director of the firm because he was a member of an opposition party. An SDS party leader was installed as general manager.²¹⁰ Special police forces arrived and detained five strike organizers and forced the strikers back to work. Drljaca was present at the scene and was reported to be in charge during the incident.²¹¹

Several projects were turned down by IFOR when it seemed that the money might be misused or when certain facts were obscured. For example, one proposal requested funds for an educational project which was actually a fish restaurant. The applicants claimed that the restaurant would serve as a “school for waiters,” a supposition IFOR project managers reportedly thought dubious at best. In another case, involving a textile factory, “Elegant”, the owner “wanted tons of money, but he could not substantiate the costs he was claiming,” according to another source. In another case, a Canadian builder wanted to be involved in a reconstruction project (which did not, in this case, involve British ODA funds) but was turned down when he was observed to be going around with Mayor Stakic’s bodyguard and it became known he was making visits to Pale.

In one project involving the Japanese Red Cross, school supplies were given to local school children in Prijedor. Unbeknownst to the Red Cross representative, Bosniak and Bosnian Croat children were held back while other children were sent to the gymnasium to receive the gifts. Further, there were problems of double distribution of supplies to particular schools because of a lack of coordination. IFOR later tried to remedy the situation by ensuring that non-Serb children also receive supplies.

British ODA funds are restricted to projects which will “improve the human condition.” The limit for individual projects is 42,000 DM (US\$28,000), and strict accounting is required by British ODA, according to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki’s confidential source. IFOR has assigned a “technical supervisor” to oversee the projects.

²⁰⁸ **Human Rights Watch/Helsinki interview with confidential source, Prijedor, Bosnia and Hercegovina, November 19, 1996.**

²⁰⁹ **A recent European Community Monitoring Mission (ECMM) report revealed that opposition party members who operate private businesses are often targeted by government financial auditors, also known as the “financial police.” Further, there is some evidence that the SDS-controlled government uses dubious audits as a pretext for firing politically independent directors of state-owned companies or members of other political parties.**

²¹⁰ **See also Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, “The Continuing Influence of Bosnia’s Warlords” for similar tactics used by the SDS in other areas of Republika Srpska.**

²¹¹ **IPTF report on non-compliance by Simo Drljaca, Chief of Police obtained by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, May 1996. The presence of “special” police forces is especially concerning, given the frequent use of special forces during the war for “ethnic cleansing” and other human rights abuses.**

The source divulged that he was revealing this information to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki because he felt sorry for the residents of Prijedor, who live in fear of the authorities. He specifically mentioned the control of the local housing commission by Drljaca, as previously mentioned.²¹² "Simo gives permission to the [Prijedor] Commission on Property and Commission on Refugees and Displaced Persons [for all they do]," the source explained. "Simo personally selects who gets a house in Prijedor. Simo is the key man in this. If you know him, you get a house. If you don't, you don't get a house. Everyone knows this in Prijedor....Refugees don't have houses. Local leaders who deal with the refugees have problems. . .they came to [IFOR] scared of being killed by Simo." In a number of cases, the sum of 2,000 DM was paid for houses to local officials involved in organized crime.

British ODA Response to Information Gathered by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki contacted the British ODA office in Banja Luka regarding the reports received in the field about ODA projects.

According to Gillian Mclean, the British ODA official responsible for overseeing British ODA projects in Multi-National Division Southwest, British ODA avoids working through municipality officials and conducts investigations of companies in order to diminish the possibility that funds will be misused. Instead, British ODA prefers to work directly with the institutions involved, i.e. hospitals or schools.²¹³

British ODA denied outright that any agreement had been made to give a percentage of projects to public companies. British ODA pointed out that of twenty-four British ODA projects approved in the Prijedor area, only five involved public companies. (According to information gathered by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, however, the agreement was made after a number of projects had already been initiated, and thus would not necessarily be reflected in the total number of projects). It seems that the agreement was made not by British ODA, but by IFOR, although it is unclear why British ODA was not advised of the agreement.

The reason for using public companies does not, according to British ODA, stem from any agreement with the municipality, but rather reflects the fact that because privatization has been limited, public companies generally hold the expertise necessary for particular projects. British ODA stated, "As far as the specific use of Komgrad is concerned, with the exception of the Prijedor garbage dump, all British ODA funds for work carried out by this company were used purely for the purchase of material. In every case, the materials were purchased and delivered to the work site by the military [meaning IFOR] project officers. The municipality then paid Komgrad for labour." It is not clear where the municipality obtained the funds for the labor. British ODA claims, "We have no evidence to support the allegation that the former Chief of Police or Mayor Stakic have a financial interest in Komgrad, but we would be interested in any evidence that you may have." British ODA states that "if, at any stage in the process, any impropriety in the activities of a company comes to light, it is automatically excluded."

Regarding the activities of Drljaca and Stakic, the British ODA representative stated in a December 13 letter to Human Rights Watch, "We are aware of the rumours surrounding the activities of Stakic and Drljaca in 1992, although neither has been indicted as a war criminal. . .rumours abound as to who may be indicted as war criminals in the future, in all three factions. I can assure you that we also want to see war criminals brought to account and it is part of IFOR's mandate to assist in this process wherever possible. However, it is essential that these individuals are formally indicted, because to proceed on the basis of rumour would be neither productive nor equitable. If there is insufficient evidence for these people to be indicted by ICTY, it is inappropriate for us to unilaterally deem them to be war criminals."

Aid to the Prijedor Hospital

²¹² See "Non-Compliance with the Dayton Agreement: The Prijedor Police," p. 31.

²¹³ According to IFOR sources, however, ideas for projects frequently come from the mayors of towns. "The mayors [of the various towns involved] wanted CIMIC to use the public companies," one IFOR source told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki. "They are all controlled by the mob. All the companies are politicized."

Milan "Mico" Kovacevic, original member of the "Crisis Committee," and the President of the Executive Board of the [Bosnian Serb] Assembly in Prijedor during the 1992 takeover, recently accepted a donation of 350,000 DM from UNHCR for the hospital in Prijedor, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki was told in November by an U.N. Civil Affairs officer, who showed Human Rights Watch/Helsinki a news item which stated that the money was for the renovation of part of the hospital for use as a geriatric center.²¹⁴

A confidential source with direct knowledge of hospital affairs told Human Rights Watch/Helsinki that the fuel, clothing, and medication given to the Prijedor hospital by the U.N. or IFOR/SFOR is taken by Kovacevic and Mayor Stakic. According to the source, fuel designated for the hospital is sold in gas stations in Prijedor and the other items are given to the Bosnian Serb Army or are sold on the black market.

Non-Serbs are afraid to use the hospital, because they are fearful they will not receive good treatment and also because treatment for those without medical insurance is prohibitively expensive. Most non-Serbs do not have medical insurance, having been disenfranchised after the takeover.

Milan Kovacevic, according to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki sources, had meetings in 1992 with the military and civilian police and SDS leaders about what to do about the non-Serb staff of the hospital. The heads of the hospital departments reportedly still work very closely with the SDS.²¹⁵

According to Physicians for Human Rights and the U.N. Commission of Experts, during the war, a number of doctors "disappeared" and are believed to have been killed in Omarska, among them the following persons: Osman Mahmuljan, internist; Enes Begic, surgeon; Zeljko Sikora, gynecologist; and Razim Music, neuropsychiatrist (he may have survived, according to a Human Rights Watch/Helsinki source). The director of the hospital during the time of the "disappearances" was **Radojka Elenko**, who still works as an internist at the hospital.

²¹⁴ Source: Television clip, shown to Human Rights Watch/Helsinki by U.N. Civil Affairs.

²¹⁵ See report by Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), "Medicine Under Siege in the Former Yugoslavia: 1991-1995," *War Crimes in the Balkans Series*, May 1996 for additional information. The report confirms the information regarding Enes Begic, Esad [Eso] Sadikovic, Osman Mahmuljin, and Zeljko Sikora [spelled Sikalo in the PHR report] mentions in addition several doctors from the Bihac region reported killed in Omarska camp: Jusuf Pasic; Rufad Suljanovic, and **Mehmed Suljanovic**.

According to a report by Physicians for Human Rights, "By May 1992, most non-Serb with white-collar jobs, including physicians, had been removed from their posts [in Prijedor]. . . When Bosnian Serb forces captured the town of Prijedor, they took special care to detain "all the prominent people of Prijedor," as one former resident of the town told PHR. This included health professionals, such as internist Osman Mahmuljan, gynecologist Zeljko Sikora, and ear-nose-and throat specialist Esad Sadikovic."²¹⁶

According to reports, during the war, the heads of the hospital were working in collaboration with the army and the police. Police and military came into the hospital, made a list of all the staff of the hospital, and used that list to take people away from the hospital. They took some people away from the hospital directly, and others from their homes."²¹⁷

Roy Gutman of *Newsday* reported: "The [non-Serb] mayor was deported to the notorious Omarska camp, while his wife, a physician and medical director of the Prijedor hospital, was told not to report to work. On May 28, 1992, all hospital personnel were stopped on their way to work and divided into groups based on presumed ethnicity. Only Serbs were allowed into the hospital, while non-Serbs were either returned home or deported to concentration camps."²¹⁸

CONCLUSION

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki supports the concept of projects to assist ordinary people and provide jobs for citizens of Republika Srpska and the Prijedor area, but is concerned that well-intentioned assistance programs are serving to financially reward those persons who participated in war crimes and who actively seek to obstruct the Dayton agreement, particularly those provisions relating to human rights and return of refugees and displaced persons. While economic assistance is important in the rebuilding of a civil society in Bosnia and Hercegovina, it is unconscionable that public funds should financially reward, to any extent, those suspected of committing atrocities or those involved in other criminal activities.

Among the projects funded by British ODA are some very worthwhile projects, but because so many local businesses were taken over by the illicit (not legally elected) authorities in Prijedor, the infusion of large sums of money into Prijedor is not only unsound business practice, but is also unethical.

²¹⁶ PHR, "Medicine Under Siege in the Former Yugoslavia," p. 37-38.

²¹⁷ Interview with confidential source, November 1996.

²¹⁸ Roy Gutman, "Death Camp Lists: In Town After Town, Bosnia's Elite Disappeared," *Newsday*, November 8, 1992; quoted in PHR, "Medicine Under Siege in the Former Yugoslavia," May 1996.

While it is important to presume innocence in a legal sense, neither indictment nor conviction are required in order to exercise good judgment in distribution of reconstruction aid. There is no requirement that donors give money to anyone. Donors and international organizations involved in the rebuilding of Bosnia and Hercegovina have an obligation to consider the events of the war in their dealings with the authorities. Further, while it is true that rumors abound in Bosnia and Hercegovina, the allegations made against Drljaca, Stakic and others in the Prijedor area are based on considerable evidence, including the substantial preliminary work done by the United Nations Commission of Experts, the testimonies of many victims and witnesses, and numerous news accounts from journalists who had direct contact with these individuals. It may take a considerable amount of time for the ICTY to complete its investigations and indict individuals believed responsible for war crimes. It is also likely that many war criminals will never be brought to justice. There is no requirement in the meantime that aid agencies do business with persons under suspicion of war crimes. Instead, the international community should be pressuring the entity governments to enforce the law when these officials are engaged in organized crime or corruption, and should work toward the removal of persons who have clearly obstructed the implementation of the Dayton agreement or have admitted to participation (as have Stakic and Drljaca) in the creation and management of concentration camps. By insisting on viewing those who illicitly came to power in Prijedor through a distorted lens of objectivity, the international community is essentially engaging in revisionism and is diminishing the gravity of their crimes.²¹⁹

The fact that money contributed in good faith by donors to assist ordinary people is to any degree lining the pockets of persons like Stakic and Drljaca, who engaged in or advocated "ethnic cleansing", murder, torture and rape; who forced thousands into concentration camps where they were treated with brutality and/or murdered, who stole millions from the local non-Serb population, and who have been actively obstructing the Dayton agreement, leads to questions about the failure of the international community to address the real problem. In this situation, as in the wartime conditions that preceded it, neglect of underlying human rights abuses only encourages ongoing intimidation and undermines the prospects for justice in the future.

²¹⁹ **International monitoring organizations frequently do not identify obstructionist or abusive authorities by name in reports or in discussions with the press, even when the responsibility for problems is clear. Information about serious violations of the Dayton agreement is sometimes withheld from the press or human rights group, or not addressed for fear of disturbing relationships with the local authorities, according to information gathered throughout Bosnia and Hercegovina by Human Rights Watch/Helsinki from OSCE, U.N. Civil Affairs, IPTF, and other international monitors.**

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report is based on a fact-finding mission conducted in Bosnia and Hercegovina from October to November 1996 by a staff member who must remain anonymous. It was co-written by Diane Paul. The report was edited by Holly Cartner, Joanna Weschler, Lotte Leicht, Ivan Lupis, Dinah PoKempner, Cynthia Brown, and Holly Burkhalter. Production assistance was provided by Emily Shaw. Special thanks to Aida Vejzagic for research assistance, Karmen Jelencic, Nusret Sivac, Jadranka Cigelj, and especially Anita Roddick.

We would also like to acknowledge, with gratitude, many individuals — both from the international community as well as the local population — whose help and information towards this report were invaluable, yet who cannot be named. The individuals who contributed information to this report, especially the ones working under the political and bureaucratic constraints of many of the international organizations operating in the area, are primarily concerned with addressing the most crucial aspect of a post-Dayton Bosnia: the state of human rights. They should be commended for their bravery in bringing forth information otherwise withheld from the public.

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki

Human Rights Watch is a nongovernmental organization established in 1978 to monitor and promote the observance of internationally recognized human rights in Africa, the Americas, Asia, the Middle East and among the signatories of the Helsinki accords. It is supported by contributions from private individuals and foundations worldwide. It accepts no government funds, directly or indirectly. The staff includes Kenneth Roth, executive director; Michele Alexander, development director; Cynthia Brown, program director; Holly J. Burkhalter, advocacy director; Barbara Guglielmo, finance and administration director; Robert Kimzey, publications director; Jeri Laber, special advisor; Lotte Leicht, Brussels office director; Susan Osnos, communications director; Dinah PoKempner, acting general counsel; Jemera Rone, counsel; and Joanna Weschler, United Nations representative. Robert L. Bernstein is the chair of the board and Adrian W. DeWind is vice chair. Its Helsinki division was established in 1978 to monitor and promote domestic and international compliance with the human rights provisions of the 1975 Helsinki Accords. It is affiliated with the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights, which is based in Vienna, Austria. Holly Cartner is the executive director. Jonathan Fanton is the chair of the advisory committee and Alice Henkin is vice chair.

Website Address: <http://www.hrw.org>

Gopher Address: <gopher://gopher.humanrights.org:5000/11/int/hrw>

Listserv address: To subscribe to the list, send an e-mail message to majordomo@igc.apc.org with "subscribe hrw-news" in the body of the message (leave the subject line blank).

APPENDIX A: Structure of the "Crisis Committee" of Prijedor Municipality: 1992²²⁰

Civilian Members

Name	Position
Milomir Stakic	Mayor
Milan Kovacevic*	President of Executive Committee
Simo Miskovic	President of the Serbian Democratic Party (SDS)
Srdjo Srdic	President of the "Serb Red Cross"
[B]Ranko Curcija**	President of local Serbian Radical Party (party of Serbian-based paramilitary leader Vojislav Seselj)
Savan Rujo	Teacher of "people's defense."
Miodrag Grubljesic	Owner of private transport company
Unknown	Mine officials from Rudnika Ljubija, Omarska, and Tomasica

*Alleged to have been responsible for overseeing the "transit centers," (his term) including Omarska. Now Director of Prijedor Hospital.

**May now be serving as Chief of Police in Kostajnica.

Military Members

Name	Position
Col. Vladimir Arsic ²²¹	Bosnian Serb Army Military Commander
Major Radmilo Zeljaja	Bosnian Serb Army Military Commander
Major Slobodan Kuruzovic*	District Commander (possibly Chairman of Crisis Committee)

*Now Editor in Chief of the *Kozarski Vjesnik*.

Police Members

Name	Position
Simo Drljaca	Chief of Secret Police and Public Security (Civilian police) ²²²
Zivko Knezevic	Retired police commander
Vaso Skondric	Retired policeman

Key Persons in Commercial /Service Activities in Prijedor Opstina During the War

Name	Position
Dir. Ostoja Marjanovic	Rudnik Ljubija (mine company)
Dir. Dragan Kaurin	Celpak (paper mill)
Dir. Risto Banovic	Prijedor Hospital
Dir. Marko Pavic*	PTT (post office, telephone and telegraph)
Dir. Miljenko Vukic*	EL (electricity)
Dir. Milan Nisevic	Privredura Banka (bank)
Mile Mutic, Editor	<i>Kozarski Vjesnik</i> (Kozara Tribune, newspaper), and Radio Prijedor

* Still holding these posts.

²²⁰ Information obtained in part from the *Final Report of the U.N. Commission of Experts, Annex V.*

²²¹ See Footnote #93

²²² The civilian police were subordinate to the Secret Police.

APPENDIX B: Letter from Republika Srpska President Biljana Plavsic to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan