

International Justice

International Justice > Tribunals > Former Yugoslavia Lula Ahrens  
15-09-2008

**Bosnian army commander sentenced to three years in prison**

**Former Bosnian army leader Rasim Delic was sentenced to three years in prison by the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) on Tuesday. The prosecution had demanded a 15-year prison sentence. He had been indicted on four counts for war crimes against Croats and Serbs during the 1992-95 Bosnian war and was acquitted on three of those counts. Delic was only found guilty of allowing the cruel treatment of captive Bosnian Serb soldiers by the El Mujahed Detachment of the Bosnian army (EMD) under his command.**

**Arab fighters**

Delic was held responsible for crimes committed in the village of Livade and the the Kamenica Camp in 1995. In the camp, twelve captive soldiers of the Bosnian Serb Army (VRS) were subjected to severe beatings and electric shocks, among other serious maltreatments. They were also forced to kiss the severed heads of fellow prisoners.

Delic, who is among the most senior Muslims to appear before the tribunal, has already been in custody for 488 days. He surrendered voluntarily to the ICTY on 28 February 2005. Delic pleaded not guilty to all charges, insisting there were several levels in the chain-of-command separating him from the foreign fighters. The trial began on 9 July 2007.

**Charges**

Delic had been charged with responsibility for the murder of 24 Bosno-Croatian soldiers in June 1993 by Mujahedin belonging to his Bosnian Muslim army, the disappearance and presumed death of 60 soldiers from the Bosnian Serb Forces in September 1995, cruel treatment of captured soldiers and rape. All charges were based on the allegation that he did not take sufficient measures to prevent these crimes or have the perpetrators punished. In is still unclear where he will serve his sentence.

**Acquitted**

On 8 June 1993, Dalic was appointed Chief of Staff of the Bosnian army. That very same day, according to the indictment, 24 Bosno Croatian soldiers were arrested by forces of the Bosnian army and then shot dead by a group of around ten Mujehedin belonging to the Bosnian Muslim army. Rasim Delic had allegedly been informed about the mass murder but failed to punish the perpetrators. The court found that no superior-subordinate relationship had existed between Delic and these Arab fighters at the time.

He was also acquitted of charges of the murder of one elderly Serb man and 52 Bosnian Serb soldiers and maltreatment of ten others by the EMD in September 1995. According to the Trial Chamber, it is unclear whether Delic should have known that these crimes were being committed. It found one of the "salient questions" in this case was whether the EMD had been "under the effective control" of Delic.

**Bosnian Muslims**

The few Bosnian Muslims who have stood trial before the ICTY have so far been acquitted or received a relatively low prison sentence. Trials like these are therefore politically touchy, particularly in Serbia and Croatia. Delic was the sixth Bosnian Muslim to stand trial in The Hague. Most of the accused are Serbs. The man Delic succeeded in 1993 - former Bosnian Army Commander Sefer Halilovic - was acquitted by the Hague court three years ago.

In June 2006, former senior commander of Bosnian Muslim forces Naser Oric was sentenced to two years in prison after being convicted for crimes committed by his subordinates. But last June, the ruling was overturned by the appeals chamber. Oric was found not guilty on all charges of his indictment. Two Bosnian officers, Enver Hadzihasanovic and Amir Kuruba, have received a 3,5- and 2-year prison sentence respectively.

Many Muslims in Bosnia regard members of the Bosnian army as heroes who are only indicted by the ICTY for political reasons. According to them, the Yugoslavia Tribunal uses these cases to show it does not solely prosecute Serbs for war crimes committed during the war in Yugoslavia.

Tags: ABiH, Bosnian war, EMD, ICTY, Rasim Delic, war crimes

[Send this page to a friend](#)

**Related articles:**

- [ICTY jails witness for contempt of court](#)
- [Former Serbian leader provisionally released](#)
- [Hague court dismisses Srebrenica case](#)
- [UN prosecutor Brammertz to visit Serbia tomorrow](#)
- [Carla del Ponte's former spokeswoman charged with revealing Milosevic secrets](#)

**More**

[Former Yugoslavia](#)

**External Links:**

[HJP: Former Bosnian Army commander gets three years](#)

**Give your reaction**

Name

E-mail

Hide my email address  
 Show my email address

URL

City

Country

Comments

Please type in the letters/numbers in the image below in order to prevent spam.

*d j y a u m v*

Send a copy of this message to my email address

Copyright Radio Netherlands Worldwide 2008 Disclaimer