

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC STATEMENT

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Bulgaria: Promptly proceed with extradition of Agim Ceku to Serbia

Amnesty International today called upon the Bulgarian authorities to extradite promptly Agim Ceku to Serbia, arrested on Tuesday, 23 June 2009, at the Macedonian Bulgarian border in Gushevo, to face trial on war crimes charges.

The former Kosovo Liberation Army commander and a former Kosovo Prime Minister was arrested on Interpol warrant, based on an indictment issued by the Serbian authorities in for his alleged participation in war crimes against Serbian and Roma civilian population in Kosovo during 1999. Both Serbia and Bulgaria are parties to the European Convention on Extradition, which requires that they extradite to each other, subject to certain conditions, persons subject to criminal proceedings in the state requesting extradition. There appear to be no legitimate grounds under the Convention or Bulgarian law in this case which would justify refusal to extradite a person charged with war crimes.

The Bulgarian authorities should extradite Agim Ceku promptly to Serbia where his case should be prosecuted in line with international fair trial standards. UNMIK should not take any steps to obstruct justice by intervening in the Bulgarian extradition proceedings to prevent his extradition, absent any risk of human rights violations.

Background

Agim Ceku has been arrested twice previously on the same warrant, first in October 2003 in Slovenia and later in March 2004 in Hungary. However, he was released by the Slovenian and Hungarian authorities reportedly after an intervention of the former Special Representative of the Secretary General who was the head of the United Nations Interim Administrative Mission in Kosovo.

Amnesty International is deeply concerned with regard to impunity for war crimes committed in Kosovo. Political interference in the court of justice has been raised in Amnesty International's report, [Burying the Past: Ten Years of Impunity for Enforced Disappearances and Abductions in Kosovo](#), AI Index: EUR 70/007/2009, June 2009. The failings of the international panels in Kosovo were analyzed in organization's earlier report, [Kosovo \(Serbia\): The challenge to fix a failed UN justice mission](#), AI Index: EUR 70/001/2008, January 2008.

Amnesty International also published a report, [Bulgaria: End impunity through universal jurisdiction](#), AI Index: EUR 15/001/2009, March 2009, which discusses Bulgarian extradition legislation.

In cases of war crimes and other serious crimes an obligation is placed on states to investigate and prosecute any allegations relating to war crimes.

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