

132/98

AI INDEX: EUR 70/45/98

EMBARGOED UNTIL 0001 GMT FRIDAY 10 JULY 1998

Arrest Karadñif and Mladif now –Make Kosovo’s human rights violators stop and think

Every day that SFOR fails to actively search for and arrest suspects like Radovan Karadñif and General Ratko Mladif marks another defeat for justice and sends the wrong message to human rights violators in Kosovo province, Amnesty International said today, on the eve of the third anniversary of the capture of Srebrenica.

“In a place like Kosovo, a message that you cannot get away with murder –backed up by meaningful actions –may just make potential perpetrators think twice before they take their next brutal step,” Amnesty International said.

The near-total lack of accountability for human rights violations in Kosovo province during the past decade has undoubtedly been one of the major causes of the current conflict there. According to Amnesty International, accountability for war crimes in neighbouring Bosnia-Herzegovina could make all the difference in preventing such crimes in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

“Arresting Karadñif and Mladif now could help to save lives in Kosovo tomorrow,” Amnesty International said.

Karadñif and Mladif have been indicted twice by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague for genocide, crimes against humanity, and violations of the laws of war. One indictment relates to the events which followed the capture of the former United Nations “safe area” of Srebrenica by Bosnian Serb forces on 11 July 1995.

More than 6000 “missing” persons from Srebrenica remain unaccounted for, many of them almost certainly deliberately killed and buried in mass graves still to be excavated.

The arrest of indicted war crimes suspects in other parts of the former Yugoslavia today would make a powerful statement to **all** parties involved in the conflict in Kosovo that there can be no rest for those who violate the most basic principles of human rights and humanitarian law.

“For the men, women and children of Srebrenica, Saturday will be a day to remember and mourn,” Amnesty International said. “Shouldn’t we also be making sure that this anniversary is one that the likes of Karadñif and Mladif will never forget? For the sake of the people of Srebrenica; for the sake of the people of Kosovo -arrest now!”

ENDS.../

*****F

or further information, to arrange an interview, or to requests copies of Amnesty International’s recent and upcoming reports on the situation in Kosovo province, please phone Soraya Bermejo, Press Officer on +44 171 413 5562 Amnesty International now has an ISDN line for studio-quality radio interviews from their offices in London, please phone for further details.

