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Final Hague war crimes suspect arrested

As Goran Hadzić, the only remaining suspect wanted by the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia, was arrested today in Serbia on charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes in eastern Slavonia, Croatia, Sian Jones, Amnesty International's Serbia researcher, said:

“This long overdue arrest will bring justice at last to the victims of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Croatia.”

Goran Hadzić, President of the self-declared Croatian Serb Republic of Krajina, is charged with the responsibility for the murder, imprisonment and forced labour of Croatian and other non-Serb civilians. He was indicted in 2004 and had been on the run ever since.

The arrest of Goran Hadzić comes two months after the arrest of the former Bosnian Serb general Ratko Mladić.

“The Security Council must ensure that the Tribunal has the time and resources to conduct the trial of both Goran Hadzić and Ratko Mladić in accordance with the highest standards of international justice.”

“This arrest underscores the continuing and urgent need for authorities in the countries of former Yugoslavia to investigate and, where there is sufficient admissible evidence, to prosecute those suspected of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. There are tens of thousands of such suspects where national authorities have failed to open any investigation.”

“They must show political will and perseverance, while the international community should monitor the progress of domestic courts in bringing the perpetrators to justice for the horrific crimes committed by all sides to the conflicts and provide financial and other assistance where needed.”