



IN THE COURTROOMS

Appeals Chamber acquits Momčilo Perišić

On 28 February, the ICTY Appeals Chamber reversed Momčilo Perišić's convictions for crimes against humanity and violations of the laws or customs of war and ordered his immediate release.

During the period relevant to the indictment against him, Perišić served as the chief of the General Staff of the Yugoslav Army (VJ), a position that made him the VJ's most senior officer.

On 6 September 2011, Trial Chamber I found Perišić guilty of aiding and abetting war crimes and crimes against humanity committed between August 1993 and November 1995 in Sarajevo and Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Trial Chamber also found Perišić guilty as a superior for failing to punish crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in the Croatian town of Zagreb on 2 and 3 May 1995. Perišić was sentenced to 27 years of imprisonment.

The Appeals found that the Trial Chamber committed an error of law when it held that 'specific direction' is not an element of the aiding and abetting mode of liability. The Chamber further found that the evidence on record did not prove beyond a reasonable

doubt that Perišić specifically directed assistance towards crimes committed by the Army of the Republika Srpska (VRS) in Sarajevo and Srebrenica.

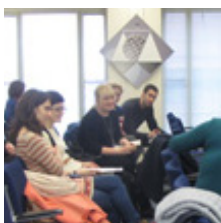
The Appeals Chamber further found that the Trial Chamber committed an error of law by failing to address evidence relevant to Perišić's effective control over members of the Serbian Army of the Krajina (SVK) who committed crimes during the shelling of Zagreb. The Appeals Chamber found the evidence had not proved beyond a reasonable doubt that Perišić possessed effective control over the SVK soldiers at the time of Zagreb's shelling. In particular, the Chamber noted evidence that Perišić instructed that the shelling of Zagreb cease, but that this instruction was not followed.

In the light of these findings, the Appeals Chamber reversed all of Perišić's convictions, and ordered that he be released as soon as possible.



The [full text of the judgement](#) can be found on the ICTY website.

OUTREACH



Tribunal hosts study visit of young people from the former Yugoslavia

A group of young people from across the former Yugoslavia recently spent a week visiting the ICTY. The visit was organised by the Tribunal's Outreach Programme in cooperation with the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) from Belgrade, Serbia.

Over the course of the week, the eight young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Kosovo met with officials from the Chambers, the Office of the Prosecutor and the Registry to discuss topics including the history and practice of investigations, working with victims and witnesses, the development of cases from the indictment to the appeals stage, and the importance of media coverage of ICTY trials.

Speaking about the visit, head of ICTY Communications Nerma Jelačić said: "Young people play an increasingly important role in the process of dealing with the past across the former Yugoslavia. This is why our Outreach Programme has over the past few years continuously sought out new ways to engage this important group in our activities."

The participants were selected in recognition of their achievements in promoting the importance of the rule of law and for ideas they proposed for sharing their experiences of their visit to the Tribunal with their peers if selected. Their proposals include organising seminars and debates where their personal experience of their visit to the Tribunal will serve as a stimulus for discussions on war crimes, dealing with the past and transitional justice.

"YIHR strongly believes that the issues of war crime trials and the legacy of the ICTY are of utmost importance for the former Yugoslavia. It is normal practice that many people in the region, including young people, comment on ICTY judgements without reading them and express views without knowing vital details. We hope this visit will provide young people with the opportunity to learn more about the ICTY, talk directly to practitioners and exchange experience with colleagues from other countries, and then use this knowledge in their future work," said Maja Mičić, Director of Youth Initiative for Human Rights.