



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
TO THE OSCE, UN AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
VIENNA**

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***STATEMENT BY H.E. AMBASSADOR NEVEN MADEY,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA TO THE
OSCE, UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA,
AT THE 864TH MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL***

2 June 2011

Mr. Chairperson,

Croatia fully supports the statement delivered by the distinguished Ambassador of Hungary on behalf of the European Union regarding the arrest of Ratko Mladić. Some specific interests have prompted us to deliver our statement in national capacity.

The arrest of the fugitive Ratko Mladić, the former general and commander of the 9th Corps of the JNA in Croatia and the commander of Armed Forces of Republika Srpska, has been widely reported and commented upon. Mladić is indicted for the worst atrocities committed on the European soil after the Second World War. The elapse of time in no way reduces the worst war crimes which he and the troops under his command have mercilessly committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in Sarajevo and Srebrenica (which is the crime of genocide) but also at the very beginning of the War in Croatia. Many civilian victims, unfortunately less known or remembered, in Škabrnja, Zadar, Kijevo, Vrlika, Sinj and others have been the target of crimes and mass killings.

The arrest of Ratko Mladić was commented by the President of the Republic Josipović and Prime Minister Kosor, who both have expressed the view that this is an important development for international justice, expecting that the International Criminal Court in The Hague will decide in a fair manner on his guilt and pass the sentence. In Croatia's view this arrest is also very significant for the Republic of Serbia and for its international position and aspirations which have our full support. Croatia welcomes this action as a sign of the determination of the Serbian authorities to fulfill its international obligations and to address the issue of responsibilities for war crimes. It is of exceptional importance for the relations in the region of South East Europe and those between Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and with Croatia, which were the victim of the aggressor's policy of Slobodan Milošević.

These high Croatian officials have also declared that this is the time that we all have to remember the victims for which Ratko Mladić is indicted. These unfortunate thousands of people, old and young, men and women, many still nameless or unaccounted for, are not "story of the day", but they are the ones who call for justice

and for the exposure of devious project which have brought such a tragedy and suffering in the territory of former Yugoslavia. Justice is needed and truth is essential for all, and particularly for younger generations.

Croatia considers that the indictment against Mladić should also include terrible crimes committed in Croatia in places referred to above. This would certainly serve the justice. We also expect that the last remaining fugitive Goran Hadžić, who is indicted by the ICTY for grave atrocities in Croatia, will also be arrested soon and transferred to The Hague for trial.