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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Monday, Nov. 10, 2008

Bosnian fugitive captured, to be extradited

A 56-year-old Bosnian national, who fled his country following a murder conviction, was recently captured, and a United States Judge last week ruled that he will be extradited to Bosnia.

Zdravko Veletić appeared before U.S. Magistrate Franklin Noel Nov. 4 in Minneapolis. Magistrate Noel ruled Nov. 6 that Veletić be extradited. Veletić was arrested by the U.S. Marshals Service (USMS) at his Lino Lakes residence on Oct. 31.

According to a U.S. Attorney's Office affidavit, Veletić was convicted on one count of murder on Dec. 15, 1997, in Bosnia. Veletić and his family left their Sarajevo home at the outbreak of the war in 1992 and went to Kalinovik. On June 14, 1992, Veletić got into a verbal altercation with the victim, Mijo Bozalo. After Bozalo cursed Veletić's mother, Veletić drew a pistol, shot and killed Bozalo.

Veletić fled before trial and was tried in absentia. The Bosnian Court found that Veletić aimed at Bozalo. The affidavit states that in the 11 years since his conviction, Veletić does not appear to have made any effort to return to Bosnia to serve his sentence.

This case is the result of an investigation by the USMS, the U.S. Justice Department-Office of International Affairs and the U.S. State Department. Assistant U.S. Attorney John F. Docherty represented the U.S. in this matter.