



HRSP NEWSLETTER

U.S. Department of Justice, Criminal Division, Human Rights and Special Prosecutions Section

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VERMONT MAN CHARGED WITH OBTAINING U.S. CITIZENSHIP BY FAILING TO DISCLOSE VIOLENT CRIMES COMMITTED DURING THE BOSNIAN CONFLICT

Edin Sakoc, 54, of Burlington, Vt., was arrested on July 26 on charges that he obtained his naturalized citizenship through fraud by failing to disclose his prior acts of persecution and crimes committed during the Bosnian conflict.

According to the indictment, Sakoc committed naturalization fraud by providing false and fraudulent information about his commission of crimes and his participation in the persecution of Bosnian Serbs during the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Specifically, the indictment alleges, in July 1992, Sakoc kidnapped and raped a Bosnian Serb woman and aided and abetted the murder of her elderly mother and aunt. Sakoc also allegedly aided and abetted the burning of the victims' family home. According to the indictment, Sakoc allegedly failed to disclose his participation in these activities during his immigration and naturalization process.

Sakoc was charged in a two-count indictment filed July 25 in the U.S. District Court in the District of Vermont. The charges carry a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison as well as automatic revocation of his U.S. citizenship and a fine of up to \$250,000.

The case is being investigated jointly by the Burlington Office of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Homeland Security Investigations and the FBI's Albany Division. ICE's Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center assisted in this investigation. Valuable assistance was provided by the Criminal Division's Office of International Affairs and their counterparts at the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The case is being prosecuted by Senior Trial Attorney Matthew C. Singer of the Criminal Division's Human Rights and Special Prosecutions Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Eugenia Cowles of the District of Vermont.

People with information about former human rights violators in the United States are urged to contact U.S. law enforcement: Human Rights and Special Prosecutions, 1-800-813-5863; Immigration and Customs Enforcement, tip line at 1-866-DHS-2-ICE, tip form at www.ice.gov/exec/forms/hsi-tips/tips.asp.

The charges in the indictment are accusations; the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.