



HRSP NEWSLETTER

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

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MINNESOTA MAN CHARGED WITH IMMIGRATION FRAUD FOR FAILING TO DISCLOSE CRIMES COMMITTED IN BOSNIA AND MILITARY SERVICE DURING THE BOSNIAN CONFLICT

Zdenko Jakiša, 45, of Forest Lake, Minnesota, was arrested May 7 on immigration fraud charges for failing to disclose multiple crimes committed in Bosnia-Herzegovina and his military service during the armed conflict there in the 1990s. Acting Assistant Attorney General David A. O'Neil of the Justice Department's Criminal Division, United States Attorney Andrew M. Luger of the District of Minnesota, Special Agent in Charge J. Michael Netherland of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) St. Paul and Acting Special Agent in Charge Jane Rhodes-Wolfe of the FBI's Minneapolis Field Office made the announcement.

Jakiša made an initial appearance on May 7 in U.S. District Court in St. Paul and is scheduled for a detention hearing on May 12. According to the indictment unsealed on May 7, Jakiša, a former member of the armed forces of the Croatian Defense Council in Bosnia-Herzegovina, committed immigration fraud by providing false and fraudulent information about his military service during the Bosnian conflict, his criminal record in Bosnia-Herzegovina and his commission of crimes of moral turpitude.

Records from Bosnia and Bosnian witnesses indicate that Jakisa committed numerous crimes in Bosnia-Herzegovina, which he did not disclose during his refugee or green card applications. Such crimes include the murder of an elderly Bosnian Serb woman and the kidnapping, robbery and assault of a Bosnian Muslim man in September 1993.

The case is being investigated jointly by HSI St. Paul and the FBI's Minneapolis Field Office. ICE's Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center provided the lead in this investigation. The Criminal Division's Office of International Affairs and their counterparts at the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina provided valuable assistance.

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

Members of the public who have information about former human rights violators in the United States are urged to contact U.S. law enforcement through the Human Rights and Special Prosecutions Section toll-free at 1-800-813-5863, the HSI tip line at 1-866-DHS-2-ICE, or to complete its online tip form at www.ice.gov/exec/forms/hsi-tips/tips.asp. To learn more about the assistance available to victims in these cases, the public should contact HSI's confidential victim-witness toll-free number at 1-866-872-4973. Tips may be provided anonymously.

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

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