

					
Centre for Cultural Decontamination	Belgrade Circle	Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights – YUCOM	Impunity Watch	Women in Black	Helsinki Committee for Human Rights

A group of 6 NGOs applaud the arrest of Radovan Karadžić who is indicted with genocide and the gravest crimes against humanity. The group of 6 NGOs considers the arrest a result of a political decision and hopes that this arrest will lead to a significant change of the relationship towards the recent past, as the most important step to the realization of justice for the victims of crimes committed on our behalf (Srebrenica, Sarajevo, Foča, Omarska...).

The Karadžić arrest once again showed that the authorities in Serbia are ready to respond to their obligations only if pressured from Brussels, Washington or The Hague, or based on the estimate that such a step is necessary for the achieving of the country's political goals and interests. We hope that in the future such steps will be taken as a result of a sincere willingness to act in accordance with the accepted international standards.

At the same time, the arrest of Radovan Karadžić illustrates the necessity of reforms in the security services which obviously act only upon political orders instead of fulfilling their constitutional obligations when it comes to the protection of security of the state and its citizens and becoming subject of democratic civilian control.

We expect that after the arrest of Karadžić, the readiness of the state to take a path of fulfilling international obligations and taking responsibility will be proven by arrests of the two remaining indictees but also by a wide-scale investigation, arrests and criminal prosecution of all those who for years created a network of the Hague indictees' protectors.

We expect that this arrest will represent a turning point which will influence a true change of the value system in the society.

We expect the new Government to face these challenges with responsibility.

Belgrade, July 22nd 2008

Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights – YUCOM
Helsinki Committee for Human Rights
Centre for Cultural Decontamination
Women in Black
Belgrade Circle
Impunity Watch