



WAR CRIMES PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE MAINTAINS EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH SERBIA'S CITIZENS

The latest opinion poll conducted by the agency Ipsos Strategic Pulse in cooperation with the OSCE Mission to Serbia and the Belgrade Human Rights Centre has shown that 65% of Serbia's citizens are acquainted with the activities of the Serbian War Crimes Prosecutor's Office, whereas 56% of them have expressed a positive opinion of its work.

The results of the research, which have been presented at the Belgrade Media Centre, have revealed that 66% of those polled believe that the Serbian judicial system is capable of handling war crimes trials, which is a 10% increase compared with results obtained in 2006. Furthermore, almost a half of citizens (46%) think that war crimes trials should be continued before national courts after the close-down of the Hague Tribunal. In the opinion of 57% of people, war crimes trials before national courts promote the public awareness of the truth, whereas 33% view them as a positive effort towards reconciliation.

A large number of people (66%) believe that war crimes prosecutions call for close cooperation among the new states created following the SFRY disintegration, which, according to the estimation of the Prosecutor's senior adviser and spokesperson Bruno Vekarić, lends additional support to the principle advocated by the War Crimes Prosecutor's Office: the necessity of regional cooperation in increasing the effectiveness and quality of war crimes trials. In the opinion of 30% - twice a higher percentage than in 2006 - the public receives a sufficient amount of information about war crimes trials before national courts. More than a half of those polled (52%) believe that national prosecutors are impartial in relation to the ethnic backgrounds of war criminals, while a third (33%) holds that the War Crimes Prosecutor has enough courage to open all cases.

While a large percentage of citizens are aware of the fact that the ICTY has indicted Ratko Mladić for genocide, crimes in Srebrenica and war crimes in BH (66%), as many as 64% do not think that he should be arrested and referred to the Hague Tribunal.