



United Nations  
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International  
Criminal Tribunal  
for the former  
Yugoslavia

Tribunal Pénal  
International pour  
l'ex-Yougoslavie

## Diplomatic Briefing, 25 February 2016

### Remarks of John Hocking

#### Assistant Secretary-General, Registrar

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, I thank you, as well as President Agius, for the opportunity to brief you today on the work of the ICTY Registry.

The ICTY is closing. With only four ongoing trials and two appeals remaining, the Tribunal is set to clear its judicial docket by the end of next year. The Registry is there to ensure that the ICTY is fully equipped to successfully meet this goal.

Far from only processing filings, as the word Registry may commonly evoke, the Registry of an international criminal tribunal is the engine of its operations. It generates the judicial, legal, administrative and external support which the Judges, the Parties, the witnesses and the accused require.

For example, during this last biennium, we, the Registry, will continue to grant all our accused access to highly qualified defence lawyers. We will provide the remaining detainees in our custody with the same medical care and standards, which have been consistently applauded by independent experts and regularly inspected by the International Committee of the Red Cross. We will bring the last witnesses to testify and support them throughout their journey, so that their experience does not bring harm or additional suffering. We will assist the increasing number of domestic courts that prosecute crimes arising from the Balkan wars. The Registry vigorously performs complex and varied operations, such as these, on a daily basis, behind the scenes, so that justice is administered expeditiously and fairly.

A functioning Registry is a key component for efficient international courts. But, without the cooperation of the Member States, international courts would not function at all. Without the Host State, the many States represented in this room, and many more, suspects of the most shocking international crimes would not have been arrested - and the ICTY would not have attained the once unimaginable reality of zero fugitives. Without your cooperation, much of the evidence and witness testimonies essential for fair trials would have eluded us. And without your cooperation, none of our sentences would have been enforced. Your steadfast support has enabled us, today, to see the imminent completion of an endeavor that has brought justice to one of the most gruesome chapters of our times. The success of the ICTY is your success.

Your commitment has been unwavering, your support in our last budget process was no exception. At the end of last year, the General Assembly approved our final budget (US\$85m). With these resources, we will complete our mandate. As ever committed to fiscal restraint, and responsive to the Secretary-General's call to "do more with less", we decreased the budget appropriated for the previous two years by more than half, (US\$94m). This reduction is the direct result of the ICTY's progressive completion of its cases.

The more judgments the ICTY delivered, the more it diminished in size. The ICTY stands today at nearly half the size it was two years ago. Today, we operate with around 400 staff members. On 31

December 2017 - the last day of the Tribunal - every single one of us, once numbering around 1,300 staff, will be leaving. This will conclude our downsizing process that has been praised by the United Nations auditors as best practice in change management for its fairness and transparency. A process that has heard not a single challenge before the United Nations internal Dispute Tribunal.

Despite our declining numbers, the ICTY continues to exceed the Secretary-General's gender goals, with nearly 60% of our staff being women at the Professional level and above. Similarly, the Tribunal continues to benefit from a broad geographical representation, its workforce hailing from 66 States.

Over the next few months, as the ICTY will complete its judicial work, it will concurrently prepare its own closure by undertaking liquidation activities. With the reduction in our numbers, we have already vacated two buildings, and consolidated into one. We have been transferring assets, archives and functions to the successor institution of the ICTY and its sister Tribunal for Rwanda: the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals, of which I am proud to serve as Registrar.

Beyond the immortal legacy of the ICTY jurisprudence, the Registry will leave behind a different kind of legacy: a corpus of best practices covering all aspects of the running of an international court, an enriched linguistic heritage of the BCS language, and academic studies on the relationship between testimony and reconciliation.

Perhaps most importantly, the Registry will sustain and strengthen the reach of the "never again" legacy of the ICTY, which is still so relevant in the world today. We will continue to welcome to the Tribunal visitors from around the world, improve access to our records and spare no efforts in our outreach to the Balkans. Thanks to the generous financial contribution of the European Union and their pledge to continue to support our outreach activities in 2017, it will be possible for us to further spread the reach of our message of justice, especially to those who suffered most from the atrocities committed in the Balkans.

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, the Registry will continue, over the next 18 months, to fuel the successful completion of the ICTY's mandate and leave behind a powerful legacy, that you, the Member States, have been a vital part of and can be proud of.

Thank you.