



International Tribunal for the
Prosecution of Persons
Responsible for Serious Violations
of International Humanitarian Law
Committed in the Territory of the
former Yugoslavia since 1991

Case No.: IT-05-87-T

Date: 7 December 2007

Original: English

IN THE TRIAL CHAMBER

Before: Judge Iain Bonomy, Presiding
Judge Ali Nawaz Chowhan
Judge Tsvetana Kamenova
Judge Janet Nosworthy, Reserve Judge

Registrar: Mr. Hans Holthuis

Decision of: 7 December 2007

PROSECUTOR

v.

**MILAN MILUTINOVIĆ
NIKOLA ŠAINOVIĆ
DRAGOLJUB OJDANIĆ
NEBOJŠA PAVKOVIĆ
VLADIMIR LAZAREVIĆ
SRETEN LUKIĆ**

PUBLIC WITH CONFIDENTIAL ANNEX

DECISION ON LAZAREVIĆ MOTION FOR TEMPORARY PROVISIONAL RELEASE

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Mr. Tomislav Višnjić and Mr. Norman Sepenuk for Mr. Dragoljub Ojdanić
Mr. John Ackerman and Mr. Aleksandar Aleksić for Mr. Nebojša Pavković
Mr. Mihajlo Bakrač and Mr. Đuro Čepić for Mr. Vladimir Lazarević
Mr. Branko Lukić and Mr. Dragan Ivetić for Mr. Sreten Lukić

THIS TRIAL CHAMBER of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991 (“Tribunal”) is seised of a “Vladimir Lazarevic Motion for Temporary Provisional Release During Court Recess or Temporary Provisional Release on the Grounds of Compassion,” filed confidentially by the Defence of Accused Vladimir Lazarević (“Accused”) on 4 December 2007 (“Motion”), and hereby renders its decision thereon.

Brief procedural background

1. On 5 December 2006, the Chamber denied the six Accused’s joint application for provisional release over the winter recess.¹ The Appeals Chamber affirmed this decision.² On 22 May 2007, the Chamber denied the application of the Accused for provisional release over the summer recess, holding, *inter alia*, that he had not demonstrated how the circumstances that led to the denial of his application in December 2006 had changed so as to materially affect the approach taken by the Chamber at that time. The Chamber left open the possibility that the Accused could apply for temporary provisional release on compassionate or humanitarian grounds.³

2. Following this denial, the Accused applied on 29 May 2007 for temporary provisional release arguing that his wife’s health condition was worsening and prevented her from travelling to The Hague to visit him.⁴ On 18 June 2007, the Chamber granted this motion.⁵

Submissions

3. In the Motion, the Accused requests provisional release for the four-week court recess and sets forth various arguments in support thereof.⁶ In the alternative, the Accused requests temporary provisional release for seven days so that he can visit his ailing wife and describes her current state of health.⁷ The Trial Chamber is in receipt of guarantees from the Republic of Serbia confirming that it will respect all orders made by the Chamber in respect of the provisional release of the

¹ Decision on Joint Defence Motion for Provisional Release During Winter Recess, 5 December 2007.

² *Prosecutor v. Milutinović et al.*, Case No. IT-05-87-AR65.2, Decision on Interlocutory Appeal of Denial of Provisional Release During Winter Recess, 14 December 2007.

³ Decision on Lazarević Motion for Provisional Release, 22 May 2007, paras. 13, 15.

⁴ Confidential Vladimir Lazarević’s Motion Requesting Provisional Release on the Grounds of Compassion with Confidential Annex, 29 May 2007.

⁵ Decision on Lazarević Motion for Temporary Provisional Release, 18 June 2007 (public with confidential annex).

⁶ Motion, paras. 1–2, 5–7.

⁷ Motion, paras. 1–2, 8–12.

Accused.⁸ For the purposes of the present decision, the Chamber assumes that The Netherlands, in its capacity as host country, would have no objection to the Accused's provisional release.

4. On 7 December 2007, the Prosecution responded to the Motion, expressing its opposition to the provisional release of the Accused on the same grounds it advanced in connection with the last winter recess and summer recesses. Moreover, the Prosecution submits that granting provisional release at this advanced stage of the proceedings is not in the interests of justice and could disrupt the trial and prevent it from being brought to a fair and expeditious conclusion. According to the Prosecution, "[t]he rights of the Accused to (provisional) freedom and the particular humanitarian considerations for this Accused and his family member's health should be carefully balanced against the legitimate interest of the international community in the proper administration of justice which can only be achieved by completing this trial."⁹

5. In respect of the alternate request for temporary provisional release, the Prosecution takes the position that this is a matter best left to the discretion of the Chamber. Should the Motion be granted in this respect, the Prosecution requests the Chamber to order that the Accused return to the United Nations Detention Unit no later than five days prior to the resumption of the trial.¹⁰

Discussion

6. The Chamber has carefully considered all the submissions of the parties in relation to this matter and has taken all relevant factors bearing upon the issue of provisional release into account.

7. In deciding a request for provisional release, a Trial Chamber must determine whether the applicant has satisfied the burden of showing that, if released provisionally, he or she will (a) return for the continuation of the trial and (b) not pose a danger to any victim, witness, or other person. Where an accused applies for provisional release following the denial of a previous application, "it is incumbent on that accused to satisfy the Trial Chamber that there has been a change in circumstances that materially affects the approach taken in earlier provisional release decisions regarding the same accused."¹¹

8. The Accused points to a number of factors in support of his request for relief: the fact that he is the only Accused thus far who has taken the stand, his voluntary surrender to the Tribunal, his

⁸ Motion, Annex A

⁹ Confidential Prosecution Response to Vladimir Lazarević's Motion for Provisional Release During the Upcoming Court Recess, 7 December 2007 ("Response"), paras. 2–3.

¹⁰ Response, paras. 4–5.

¹¹ *Prosecutor v. Popović et al.*, Case No. IT-05-88-AR65.3, Decision on Interlocutory Appeal of Trial Chamber's Decision Denying Ljubomir Borovčanin Provisional Release, 1 March 2007 ("*Popović* Decision"), para. 12.

respect for previous orders for provisional release, his good attendance record at the trial, the guarantees from the Republic of Serbia (“Serbia”), and the Prosecution’s lack of opposition to his request for provisional release in March 2005.¹² The Chamber, however, considers that the Accused has not demonstrated how any of these factors lead to the conclusion that the circumstances that led to the denial of his application in December 2006 have changed so as to materially affect the approach taken by the Chamber at that time.

9. The Chamber now turns to the Accused’s alternative request, *i.e.*, for temporary provisional release on compassionate or humanitarian grounds. While it is now settled law that Rule 65 of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Tribunal governs provisional release generally,¹³ motions for temporary provisional release on compassionate or humanitarian grounds are governed by a distinct set of principles. Rule 65(B), which governs provisional release during trial, makes no mention of compassionate or humanitarian grounds. However, the jurisprudence of the Tribunal has recognised that Chambers enjoy a measure of discretion when considering motions pursuant to Rule 65, and that, notwithstanding a finding that an accused does not meet the formal requirements for provisional release pursuant to Rule 65, compassionate or humanitarian concerns may nevertheless permit a more limited provisional release.¹⁴

10. [See confidential annex.]

11. Although the Chamber granted the Accused permission to travel to Serbia in June and July 2007 for reasons substantially similar to those advanced in the present Motion,¹⁵ it cannot discern a compelling reason to do so again. Moreover, the Accused was on provisional release during the pre-trial phase of the proceedings and was released during the summer recess last year (July 2006). The Accused has therefore had opportunities to tend personally to pressing personal matters, and

¹² Motion, paras. 5–7, 14.

¹³ Decision on Interlocutory Appeal of Denial of Provisional Release During the Winter Recess, 14 December 2006, paras. 8–10.

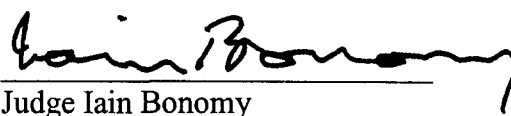
¹⁴ See Decision on Šainović Motion for Temporary Provisional Release, 7 June 2007, paras. 7–11; see also *Prosecutor v. Popović et al.*, Case No. IT-05-88-AR65.3, Decision on Interlocutory Appeal of Trial Chamber’s Decision Denying Ljubomir Borovčanin Provisional Release, 1 March 2007, para. 5; *Prosecutor v. Limaj et al.*, Case No. IT-03-66-A, Decision Granting Provisional Release to Haradin Bala to Attend His Brother’s Memorial Service and to Observe the Traditional Period of Mourning, 1 September 2006, p. 1; *Prosecutor v. Blagoje Simić*, Case No. IT-95-9-A, Decision on Motion of Blagoje Simić for Provisional Release for a Fixed Period to Attend Memorial Services for His Mother, 5 May 2006, p. 3; *Prosecutor v. Limaj et al.*, Case No. IT-03-66-A, Decision Granting Provisional Release to Haradin Bala to Attend His Daughter’s Memorial Service, 20 April 2006, p. 2; *Prosecutor v. Stanislav Galić*, Case No. IT-98-29-A, Decision on Defence Request for Provisional Release of Stanislav Galić, 23 March 2005, para. 15; *Prosecutor v. Blagoje Simić*, Case No. IT-95-9-A, Decision on Motion of Blagoje Simić Pursuant to Rule 65(I) for Provisional Release for a Fixed Period to Attend Memorial Service for His Father, 21 October 2004, para. 20; *Prosecutor v. Kordić and Čerkez*, Case No. IT-95-14/2-A, Decision on Dario Kordić’s Request for Provisional Release, 19 April 2004, paras. 5–12; *Prosecutor v. Krnojelac*, Case No. IT-97-25-A, Decision on Application for Provisional Release, 12 December 2002, para. 10.

¹⁵ Decision on Lazarević Motion for Temporary Provisional Release, 18 June 2007 (public with confidential annex).

the Chamber's previous decision to grant temporary provisional release, far from being a reason to grant yet another, reinforces the notion that the Accused already has been granted an adequate opportunity in this regard.

12. For the foregoing reasons and pursuant to Rules 54 and 65, the Trial Chamber hereby DENIES the Motion.

Done in English and French, the English text being authoritative.



Judge Iain Bonomy
Presiding

Dated this seventh day of December 2007
At The Hague
The Netherlands

[Seal of the Tribunal]