

2-28-1994

Letter from Graham Blewitt to M. Cherif Bassiouni

M. Cherif Bassiouni 1937-2017

Graham T. Blewitt

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OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR

BUREAU DU PROCUREUR

February 28, 1994

Professor Cherif Bassiouni
Chairman
United Nations Commission of Experts
United Nations Office
Geneva.

Dear Prof. Bassiouni,

It was a pleasure to meet you and your two colleagues, Lt-Col. Kempenaars and Mr Bill Schiller, at the Tribunal's premises last Friday. I would like to take this opportunity to again express my gratitude for re-arranging your schedule by travelling to Zagreb via The Hague. Also I wish to thank you for the excellent briefing concerning the work of the Commission.

Mr Schiller attended the Tribunal's premises again today as arranged and his visit was most beneficial. One consequence of his visit was the preparation of a list of material which you delivered to the Tribunal on Friday. I enclose a copy of that list by way of acknowledgment of receipt of the material by the Tribunal.

I have given consideration to a number of matters discussed at our meeting on Friday and I wish to record in writing my decisions in relation to a number of those issues.

First, in relation to the two mass graves, near Vukovar and in Sector West of the United Nations Protected Areas, I confirm that the Prosecutor's Office will now take over the responsibility for conducting the exhumations and forensic examinations of the human remains buried in the two graves. I have already been in contact with the Physicians for Human Rights and they propose the 28 May as a convenient starting date, from their point of view. I will contact the relevant Governments, including the Croatian, Serbian, Dutch and Canadian officials as soon as I can, together with other interested parties to set the formal arrangements and agreements in place.

I look forward to hearing from Col. William Fenrick at an early stage to further the arrangements. I agree that one of the most vital questions will be the site of the morgue where the post mortems are to occur and I intend to give this urgent consideration.

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Secondly, in relation to the remaining documents which have not been entered onto the Commission's database in Chicago, and I understand there are about ten thousand of such documents, I would be grateful, as discussed, if you could cause those remaining documents to be entered onto the database in accordance with the existing criteria and procedures.

Thirdly, it would be convenient for the Tribunal if the existing database could be copied and transferred to the Prosecutor's Office as soon as possible so that the Tribunal's staff could commence to enter the database onto the Tribunal's computers. In addition I request that the supporting documentation and other material already entered onto the database be transferred to the Tribunal at this time. I would propose that there be close liaison between the database staff in Chicago and the Tribunal's staff during the initial stages of entering the database onto the Tribunal's equipment.

In relation to the new material being entered onto the database in Chicago it would be convenient if regular updates of the database containing that material could progressively be forwarded to the Tribunal.

Fourthly, in relation to the holdings of the Commission being transferred to the Prosecutor's Office, I have contacted Mr Zacklin in New York and he has agreed to have the appropriate authorization issued to enable all of the Commission's holdings, including the Commission's "original copies" and the database, transferred accordingly.

I assume that when the transfer occurs that all of the Commission's holdings, including copies of all materials, will be transferred to the Tribunal and that thereafter there will be no copies anywhere outside of the Tribunal. We did not discuss this particular issue when you were in The Hague last week. For security purposes I am sure you would agree that the Tribunal must obtain all copies of the material, so that after the Commission's work is concluded at the end of April, there has been a complete transfer of all of the Commission's holdings.

For the same security reasons I request that the staff of the Commission, and for these purposes I include the staff in Chicago working on the database, be instructed that it would not be in the Tribunal's interests, particularly having regard to possible prejudice which may be occasioned to future investigations and prosecutions, if there was any public disclosure of information relating to the work of the Commission, its holdings, its investigations, methods of operation or findings. Accordingly I ask that the staff of the Commission be instructed not to make any such comment.

I look forward to our future cooperation and to meeting you again when you return to Geneva between 12 and 24 March.

Yours sincerely,



Graham T. Blewitt
Acting Deputy Prosecutor.

LIST OF MATERIAL
DELIVERED TO THE PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE
OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL
ON FRIDAY 25 FEBRUARY 1994
BY PROF. BASSIOUNI

Maps

1. Eastern Adriatic Series - By GSGS5726 Scale: 1:100,000
 - Nova Gradiska
 - Slovanski Pozege
 - Trebinje
 - Derventa
 - Gracac
 - Zadar
 - Vinkovc

2. Yugoslavia - Eastern Adriatic Series - BSGS5778 Series
Scale: 1:500,000
 - Sarajevo - No.45
 - Skopje - No. 56
 - Napolj - No. 54
 - Belgrade - No. 46
 - Tito Grad - No. 55
 - Zagreb - No. 44

3. Sarajevo City Map 1:15,000 (Source: U.S. Government
Defense Mapping Agency)
 - a. UNPROFOR Sarajevo Brief as at July 27, 1993 (See
reverse for UNPROFOR analysis of situation in
Sarajevo).

4. DMA Regional Map - Aviation (4 parts) Scale 1:500,000
(Source: U.S. Government Defense Mapping Agency).

5. UNPROFOR - Bosnia-Hercegovina Province Boundaries and
Areas of Potential Conflict (Source: HQ BRITFOR).

6. UN Dispositions as at December 1993 (photocopy only).

7. UNPROFOR Disposition of Warring Factions in BH as at
6/11/93.

8. UNPROFOR Routes and Obstacles in BH as at October 29,
1993 (2 part photocopy only).

9. HQ BH Command PICINFSUM as at January 30, 1994 (2
copies, 2 parts).

10. HQ BRITFOR - Current Situation Map as at February 1, 1994

Reports:

Procedural

1. IHRLI Summary of Documentarian Database - (Entries as of February 10, 1994).
2. IHRLI Database Procedures

Video Related

3. IHRLI Video Index on War Crimes in the Former Yugoslavia, February 1994 (includes list of tapes currently in IHRLI archives).
4. Tapes and Transcripts
 - a. "Bosnia: the Hidden Horrors, Part 1," Source: ABC News.
 - b. "War Victims: A Time to Mourn, Part 2."
 - c. "War Victims: A Time to Mourn, Part 1."
 - d. "Victims of War (Bosnia)," Source: IHRLI.

Substantive

5. IHRLI "Draft Report on Camps and Detention Facilities with Analysis of the Following: Brcko, Keraterm, Omarska, Trnopolje, Manjaca, Stajicevo, Lora, Foca, Luka, Doboje, Zenica, and Mostar Camps". (Date: August 27, 1993) Also includes supplement to report on camps and detention facilities (November 3, 1993).
6. IHRLI "Report on Dusan Tadic," February 24, 1994.
7. IHRLI "Draft Study of the Battle and Siege of Sarajevo," January 10, 1994". (Four volumes were received, including appendices.)
8. IHRLI general report, "Military Forces Operating Within the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia."

Other

9. UNPROFOR Confidential Report, "Who's Who in Former Yugoslavia." Edition No. 1, February 1, 1994. Source: Military Information Branch HQ UNPROFOR Zagreb.