

Štefan Füle  
Commissioner for Enlargement  
European Commission

**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL**



**European Institutions Office**

Ref: B1593

Brussels, 17 June 2014

Dear Commissioner Füle,

**SERBIA: ENDING IMPUNITY FOR CRIMES UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAW**

Please find enclosed a copy of Amnesty International's new report, [Serbia: Ending impunity for crimes under international law](#), which was launched in Brussels today.

The report highlights continuing impunity in Serbia for crimes under international law – war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide – committed by Serbian police, military and paramilitary forces during the wars of the 1990s. It analyses the problems within the prosecutorial and judicial system in Serbia, and identifies a number of obstacles and institutional barriers to the thorough, impartial and effective investigation and prosecution of crimes under international law.

Amnesty International calls on the European Union (EU) to do everything it can to ensure Serbia addresses the culture of impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide, committed by Serbian police, military and paramilitary forces during the wars of the 1990s. The report proposes a series of measures to be taken by the Serbian government to end impunity including: providing sufficient staff and resources to the Office of the War Crimes Prosecutor; creating an effective Police War Crimes Investigation Unit; ensuring adequate witness support, including specialised support for the survivors of war crimes of sexual violence; and ending intimidation of witnesses protected by the Witness Protection unit. The report also highlights the lack of an effective administrative system to ensure the right of victims to reparation, including compensation.

Serbia stands on the brink of joining the EU. While Amnesty International takes no position whether Serbia, or any other country, should or should not join the EU or any other international institution, the organisation considers the process of enlargement as a critical moment to monitor and improve the human rights situation in the country and to address one of the most egregious and continuing violations: impunity for crimes under international law.

The accession process to the EU provides a unique opportunity for Serbia to address persistent obstacles to the effective and timely investigation and prosecution of crimes under international law, and for the EU to insist that the Serbian authorities to take the necessary measures towards ending impunity for such crimes in the context of negotiations on Chapters 23 and 24 of the *Acquis communautaire*. It is crucial for the EU to take up this matter now. The longer the EU waits before acting, the more time will pass during which evidence may be lost or destroyed, witnesses' memories may further fade, and many victims may die, still awaiting justice.

We hope you will give this report your due consideration, and welcome any responses.

Yours sincerely,

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Director of Programmes  
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