



ASSOCIATION OF DEFENCE COUNSEL

PRACTISING BEFORE THE

INTERNATIONAL COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

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PRESS RELEASE

ADC-ICT EXPRESSES ITS CONCERN AT THE ACCUSATIONS MADE BY FLORENCE HARTMANN REGARDING THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE DEATH OF SLOBODAN PRALJAK AT THE ICTY

THE HAGUE – It has come to the attention of the Association of Defence Counsel practising before the International Courts and Tribunals (ADC-ICT) that disturbing accusations have been published and/or made by Ms. Florence Hartmann which wrongfully accuse defence counsels in relation to the unfortunate events of 29 November 2017 leading up to the death of Mr. Slobodan Praljak. The ADC-ICT expresses its concern that Ms. Hartmann has apparently claimed, without basis or justification, in several publications, that Mr. Praljak's defence counsels are implicated in transfer of a bottle of poison to Mr. Praljak while meeting with him in the holding cell, just moments prior to entry into the court-room for the rendering of the Appeals Judgement on 29 November 2017. Ms. Hartmann characterizes this as the only manner and means by which Mr. Praljak could have obtained the bottle he drank from, and which led to his death. Such allegations are serious, and when untrue, wrongfully tarnish the name of respected counsel, themselves long-standing and respected ADC-ICT members with unblemished reputations.

It is confirmed by the official [Report on the Independent Administrative Review regarding the Death of Slobodan Praljak in the Custody of the ICTY](#) that Praljak's counsels **did not** have occasion to meet with Mr. Praljak prior to entry into the courtroom on 29 November 2017, thus negating the primary claim by Ms. Hartmann. (see, para. 33). Events in the courtroom are subject to a video and photographic record, and do not support Ms. Hartmann's claims. It goes without saying that in light of these conclusive findings, counsels' involvement, as alleged by Ms. Hartmann, is untrue and based upon unsupported conjecture and disregard for the true facts as established by the official investigation.

As a journalist, the ADC-ICT believes Ms. Hartmann should adhere to journalistic creed and ethics before making such serious and untrue accusations against anyone in any public forum or media. In this case, as spurious public allegations were made against counsels who were members of the ADC-ICT, we believe that the facts set forth above should be brought to light by the ADC-ICT to remove any doubt and remove any

inference of wrongdoing from the reputations of the counsels and members named by Ms. Hartmann.

We call upon Ms. Hartmann to publicly apologize for such uninformed statements and publish retractions in all media or journals where such statements were made. If she is not willing to do so herself, she should be called upon by her peers to issue an apology and retraction, in line with journalistic creed and ethics, for issuing uninformed allegations of such a serious and untrue nature against anyone, let alone in this case, against respected ADC-ICT members whose image, reputation and careers as attorneys and officers of the court may be negatively impacted and harmed without just cause.

The ADC-ICT is an independent professional association which represents all defence counsel practicing the UN International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, and formerly before the UN International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. The ADC-ICT works to promote and protect the interests of defence counsel and their clients and ensure the proper function of defence is respected in proceedings before international courts and tribunals. Further information is available at: www.adc-ict.org