

Sonja Karadžić:

Hague tribunal is a disciplinary commission of NATO

The Hague tribunal prosecutors are not prepared, even after 12 years of allegedly looking for Radovan Karadžić, who is currently on trial at Hague, says his daughter Sonja Karadžić in an exclusive interview on RT.

RT: With us we have Sonya Karadžić, the daughter of the former Bosnia Serb leader Radovan Karadžić. Sonya, thank you very much for joining us here on RT. Do you think your father will get a fair trial in the Netherlands?

Sonja Karadžić: I want to believe, or at least I believed until the last couple of months and now it seems to me that there is no chance, or there is just a little chance for one Serb man to have a fair trial.

RT: What made you change your mind? Because many people here seem to say from the beginning they never believed your father would get a fair trial.

S.K.: One of the most important reasons is because my father is not able, or they don't allow him to make his own team for his defence.

They are doing everything possible to make a picture in the public, in the media, that he is not able to defend himself.

RT: Your father did say that he was planning to defend himself. Will he be allowed to do this?

S.K.: I do hope he will, because the procedures or the rules of The Hague tribunal allow the people to defend themselves.

RT: Do you have any idea how he plans to defend himself?

S.K.: I know how he'll defend himself, but I can't talk to you in public. There is another reason why I believe that he is not going to have a fair trial.

The Hague tribunal is not a court of justice, but just some kind of disciplinary commission of NATO.

RT: When was the last time you spoke with your father and how he was doing?

S.K.: I talk to my father by phone almost every day. And I visited him last year in the beginning of December and I'm planning to visit him again some time. But I cannot talk to you about my visits to him because I have signed a list of rules.

RT: Are you able to tell us if he is ok, if he's in good spirits? Anything about the way he's feeling?

S.K.: No, I'm sorry. It's part of the rules.

RT: Do you think that the prosecution will be able to prove its charges against your father?

S.K.: If the trial is fair for him on that occasion, there is no way for him to be charged for the things that we have in his accusations.

There is no way that such things can be proved and there is no way for any other sentence except his liberation. But there is another thing that worries me a lot – it's the behavior of the prosecutors at The Hague towards my father and other Serb prisoners.

There are more important questions regarding the status of my father and the trial in future. The prosecutors are quite unprepared. They didn't expect him and the question is why. The tribunal knew about his agreement with Richard Holbrooke. They believed he would never show up there in front of that court and he would never be tried. His accusations didn't change from the year 2000 before he came there, because he was present in front of the court. The question is: why were the prosecutors unprepared after 12 years of allegedly looking for him all over?

Another question is why the prosecutors slow down an impossible way of making his own defence too. Except, if they knew of the terms about the so-called deal to Mr. Holbrooke, and also the guarantees made by the UN Security Council, because one of the terms was that he would never be arrested.

RT: Do you think the tribunal was so unprepared for your father's arrest?

S.K.: Even people who don't have any kind of experience regarding court justice and law were able to see that the prosecutors were not prepared.

Even some judges didn't like that because of those accusations and materials were not prepared and they should have been prepared ten years ago. It's quite clear they didn't check the accusations. They didn't collect any kind of evidence. That's all because they were sure that he'd never be seen at that trial again. They are still not ready.

RT: You talked about the agreement with Richard Holbrooke. He, of course, denies it. What proof do you have, because you've used the same as your father's – that there was such an agreement?

S.K.: It's very hard for me to talk to you about those events, that period before making that deal. And also I'm quite suspicious that the other side, those who don't believe in that deal.

I don't believe they would trust me about it. But maybe we could try and make some conclusions in a simply logical way. The war was over, my father was the president of the Republic of Srpska and suddenly he left all his functions – all that he had. Why did he do that if he didn't have some kind of guarantees, some benefits for him?

Secondly, if there was no deal how it could be possible for my father to go all around the Republic of Srpska, including all kinds of checkpoints of the international task forces? And they didn't just let him, they saluted him.

So if we talk about my father with the assumption that he is guilty and he is a war criminal – how could it be possible?

Why would anyone from that level of the state department make any kind of deal with him?

RT: But the fact that you say that the prosecutors do not seem to be ready, would that suggest that somebody has broken that deal?

S.K.: No, they are not ready, because they trusted that my father would never come to The Hague tribunal. There are two different sides with one result and that result is that Radovan Karadžić would never show up at the Hague tribunal.

First we have that deal with Richard Holbrooke and the guarantees my father got on that occasion and the second – the deal changed in 1999. The American administration made one new part as an annex of that deal and that annex was an order for his execution.

As a contribution to what I said about the order for the liquidation of my father, maybe there is one of the best examples – that acclamations by the ex-prosecutor of the Hague, Carla Del Ponte, when she said that there is some preparation for the execution of my father and also she offered him help and safe transportation to The Hague with the help of the Swiss government and also a fair trial. So if someone like her, who used to be the main prosecutor of The Hague tribunal, if she could say something like that, then it means that we all think really deeply about it.

RT: Who do you think was helping your father in his disguise as Dr. Dabić, who do you think ultimately betrayed him?

S.K.: Your question is in a way pretentious because, first of all, I don't know who helped my father and probably if I knew I wouldn't tell you.

But I have to be honest – I really don't know.

We didn't know where he stayed for all these years because it was his choice to protect us. Also, I don't know if he was betrayed, which means I don't know who could do that. But one thing is sure – that there were not a lot of people who knew who helped him because what I know now, whatever he did, he did it himself. He changed his identity, he lived alone and he worked alone.

The other people around didn't know who he was. We didn't help him and he didn't help us – there was no possibility for that. And today we are trying to make a puzzle, we are collecting those parts of his life, but it's not connected with politics or with the trial, it's just a family thing.

RT: When your father was arrested you had actually already began the legal process to have him declared dead. You spoke before that when you had heard about his arrest and you had mixed feelings of fear and relief. Can you remember the moment that your dad had been arrested and share this experience with us?

S.K.: I cannot believe that it would be possible for me ever to forget that moment and just like you said that was exactly my statement.

That moment still comes back to me in my mind, everything is still fresh. But in the first place it was some kind of deliberation to us. Suddenly we had an opportunity to hear his voice, to see him from time to time. We were happy because he was alive and also we heard his health was fine. And one more important thing is that now we have a legal right and possibility to

help him in any way. We are all trying to help him. So that evening was just the beginning of the story which still goes on, so it's impossible to forget it.

RT: It must have been a heavy responsibility being the daughter of Radovan Karadžić. Do you still have a lot of pressure from NATO? Do you still find that your life is not your own life, because of who you are and who your father is?

S.K.: It is a great responsibility to be his daughter, but it's also a pleasure and my personal happiness. For me and for my brother.

RT: Sonya Karadžić, daughter of Radovan Karadžić, thank you very much for joining us here on RT.

http://www.russiatoday.com/Politics/2009-05-27/Sonja_Karad_i___Hague_tribunal_is_a_disciplinary_commission_of_NATO.html

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