

MILOSEVIC TO CALL ANOTHER 199 DEFENCE WITNESSES

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Slobodan Milosevic submits the list of remaining witnesses he intends to call. Milosevic estimates he would need at least 422 hours to examine the remaining 199 witnesses. If the accused continues dealing with his witnesses at the current pace, his defense case would take about 50 more months, according to the prosecutor's calculations

THE HAGUE, 18.10. (SENSE) - Slobodan Milosevic intends to call another 199 witnesses until the end of his case: 15 for Kosovo, 74 for Croatia and 106 for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The remaining four would be the witnesses Milosevic has labeled "hostile": Clinton, Blair, General Clark and Schroeder. He wants the Tribunal to issue summons to those witnesses.

The problem lies in the fact that according to the schedule in force, the defense has about 30 working days, or 120 hours to complete the case, while Milosevic estimates that he would need at least 422 hours for the examination-in-chief of those witnesses. According to him, this is the "necessary minimum" he has reached after a "rigorous selection process" from a list that first contained more than 5,000 names, then was cut down to 1,630 and finally to 237 witnesses, 38 of which have already testified.

After Milosevic presented his wishes and plans for the continuation of his defense case, there was a five minute silence during which the judges consulted about their course of action. The silence was broken by prosecutor Nice, who noted that in the past 13 months of his case, the accused managed to call and examine only 38 witnesses. As he intends to call five times as many, the prosecutor estimates that he would need five times as much time to examine them - about 50 months. Milosevic disagreed with him, claiming that 422 hours he is seeking for the examination-in-chief amounts to "less than 100 working hours, not 50 months".

The judges have warned Milosevic several times that they will not be changing their order of 5 February 2004, allotting Milosevic 90 days or 360 hours for the examination-in-chief of his defense witnesses. It remains to be seen if they will stick to their decision after the accused has presented his wishes and plans, which amply exceed the order and the calculation of the Chamber that the defense case should be completed "sometime in March 2006". Judge Robinson said today that the Chamber will "deal with this issue" and will soon call a status conference to discuss how to continue and bring to an end Slobodan Milosevic's defense case.