

Kreso Meddžida  
The President of the Court of  
Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Dear, Kreso Meddžid**

Civil Rights Defenders is concerned regarding the adoption of the *Ordinance on gaining access to information under the control of the court and cooperation with the community*. This type of Ordinances could have incalculable consequences when it comes to transparency of trials, which is one of the basic preconditions for the realization of the right to fair and justice trial. And we give you the opportunity to eliminate this *Ordinance*.

This newly adopted *Ordinance* implies that the courts only need to make audio and video recordings of a trial available if it is continuing for more then ten minutes and that these records will be anonymous and edited.

The implementation of the *Ordinance* will mean that testimonies of victims and witnesses of war crimes will not be available for the public, or for broadcasting.

In addition, specialized television and radio programs of war crimes trials will no longer be allowed. Purposes of this *Ordinance*, such programs could only be implemented if the Court has developed the concept and content, with the obligatory participation of the public service broadcasters, which completely excludes independent reporting such as that currently implemented by our partner - Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN).

Civil Rights Defenders believes that the provisions of *Ordinance* are violating the right to access information of public importance, substantially limiting the right to a fair and justice trial, and presenting an extraordinary obstacle on the path to truth and dealing with the past.

The public immediately needs to be fully informed of the war crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order for the victims and their families to learn and get access to the truth. To limit the amount of information will contribute to a climate of impunity which already exists in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Civil Rights Defenders are fully committed to work for full transparency in trials, in all states where we are active. In Bosnia and Herzegovina we are also aiming to improving the level of professionalism in media reporting on war crimes together with our local partners. We expect the repeal of the *Ordinance* in order to maintain an objecting reporting with full transparency.

Sincerely,

**Goran Miletic**

*Program Director for the Western Balkans*

We defend people's civil and political rights and empower human rights defenders - in Sweden and globally. Become a human rights defenders, you too! Read more about how you can support our work on: [www.civilrightsdefenders.org](http://www.civilrightsdefenders.org)