

Mr. Meni Mazuz
Attorney General

Dear Sir:

Re: The International Criminal Tribunal and House Demolitions

We wish to draw your attention to the judgment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which convicted senior commanders and politicians for the destruction of houses and neighborhoods, among other charges. The Tribunal imposed sentences of between 15 and 45 years' imprisonment. The defendants argued that the destruction was carried out on the grounds of "urgent military necessity." The Tribunal ruled, inter alia:

The acts of war carried out with disregard for international humanitarian law and in hatred of other people, the villages reduced to rubble, the houses and stables set on fire and destroyed, the people forced to abandon their homes, the lost and broken lives are unacceptable. The international community must not tolerate such crimes, no matter where they may be perpetrated, no matter who the perpetrators are and no matter what the reasons for them may be ...International courts, today this Tribunal, tomorrow the International Criminal Court, must appropriately punish all those, and especially those holding the highest positions, who transgress these principles.

The Prosecutor v. Blaskic (2000), IT-95-14-T

The complete text of the judgment can be downloaded at:

www.adalah.org

Adalah - The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel