

# For the Second Time Budimir Indicted for Pardoning Criminals

Cantonal Prosecutor's Office in Sarajevo filed an indictment today against Živko Budimir, president of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (FBiH), and five other persons on charges of abuse of office, illegal interceding and corruption.

Also facing trial are his advisor Petar Barišić, the president of United Veterans' Organization in FBiH Saud Kulosman, the president of Pardoning Commission Hidajet Halilović, a former legislator with the FBiH House of Representatives Željko Asić and Armin Kulovac.

The Prosecutor's Office wants to call up 58 witnesses and have 400 pieces of evidence admitted. The officials did not want to comment on the indictment.

At the end of 2013, the BiH Prosecutor's Office filed an indictment against the same persons and the FBiH Justice Minister Zoran Mikulić on charges of pardoning convicts and soliciting bribes. However, the hearing never got off the ground and the case was remanded to the Cantonal Prosecutor's Office because the Court of BiH held it lacked jurisdiction. According to the Cantonal Prosecutor's Office, the new, somewhat shorter indictment, does not include Mikulić.

The FBiH President was earlier charged for illegally pardoning convicts by expunging their criminal records or by cutting down their sentences or letting them get away without serving time. According to the charges Budimir signed pardons alone or with the assistance of the other accused ones, on his own initiative or at the requests of politicians and criminals.

Among those who were pardoned were convicted murderers, those sentenced for attempted murders, tax evasion, drug trafficking; those on the run or who have been waiting to go to prison as well as reoffenders.

The state indictment against Budimir and his associates listed the names of 27 pardoned persons among whom were Mersed Hadžić a.k.a. The Swiss, Naser Orić, Elvis Hodžić, Damir Vašiček and Alija Delimustafić.

According to the BiH Prosecutor's Office charges, [Budimir received a €40,000 bribe to pardon Hadžić.](#)

Hadžić received 2.5 years for murder and was pardoned in August 2012, not long after he began serving his sentence. The prosecutors say that the minister Mikulić asked the Pardoning Commission to approve Hadžić's request despite its earlier objections.

"I have never denied that there was some pressure, requests to help certain people, but this is not illegal. That's (called) lobbying", Budimir told CIN earlier. He said that he responded to pleas from the convicts who were in dire straits and denied taking money for pardons.

Budimir's lawyer Ragib Hadžić told CIN today that he was not informed about the new indictment against his client.

"In accordance with the customs of our judiciary, I'm learning this just from you," Hodžić told the reporters.

According to a CIN investigation, at least three persons were pardoned twice for the same crime. These are Hazim Vikało, former Tuzla Canton's Prime Minister, Alija Delimustafić, former BiH interior minister, and Irena Obradović, former clerk at the Municipal Court in Čapljina.