

Center for Justice and Accountability

Torture, Former Combatants, Political Prisoners, Terror Suspects, & Terrorists

<https://cja.org/what-we-do/litigation/mehinovic-v-vuckovic/>

Campaign and Advocacy

During the Bosnian War, Serb forces carried out an ethnic cleansing campaign, subjecting non-Serbs to brutal violence. CJAs case against Nikola Vuckovic, who subjected his Muslim neighbors to extreme torture, is representative of the horrific acts carried out during the Bosnian War. In 1998, CJA brought a case against Vuckovic in a U.S. court on behalf of those he tortured. The court found Vuckovic liable for torture, war crimes and other abuses and ordered him to pay his victims \$140 million in compensatory damage.

In May 1992, Kemal Mehinovic, a Bosnian Muslim baker, was taking a mid-day nap at home when Serb police and soldiers knocked on his door. They beat him in front of his family, arrested him without a warrant, and then drove him to a police station for interrogation. For the next six months, he was tortured at the hands of a Serb prison guard named Nikola Vuckovic.

Serb forces had seized control of Kemals Bosnian town of Bosanski Samac the month before and quickly implemented a policy of ethnic cleansing. They detained non-Serb adult males and forcibly expelled hundreds of women, children and elderly.

Prior to the war, Vuckovic and Kemal had been neighbors. His brother-in-law worked in Mehinovic bakery. Even Vuckovics own wife was a Bosnian Muslim. Yet none of this kept him from torturing his former neighbors with utter savagery.

Vuckovic beat the plaintiffs with bare fists and metal pipes, sometimes hanging them from ropes and beating their genitals. With a knife, he carved a Muslim symbol into one plaintiffs face and plunged his head into a latrine. Witnesses testified that Vuckovic often drank with other Serb soldiers and invited them to help themselves to the detainees.

After the war, Vuckovic was able to enter the United States as a refugee. He was residing in the suburbs of Atlanta when his presence in the United States was brought to CJAs attention.

CJA filed a complaint in 1998 on behalf of four individuals Vuckovic tortured.

In 2002, the U.S District Court for the Northern District of Georgia held Vuckovic liable for torture; cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; arbitrary detention; war crimes; and crimes against humanity. The court awarded the plaintiffs \$140 million in damages.



Center for Justice and Accountability
268 Bush St #3432
San Francisco, CA 94104

T: 415 544 0444
F: 415 544 0456



GERALD GRAY LEGACY CIRCLE

GERALD GRAY FOUNDED CJA IN 1998 AND CONTINUES
WORKING TO HELP TORTURE SURVIVORS TODAY.

Join the Gerald Gray Legacy Circle

To join, please let us know that you have included CJA in your estate plans, insurance policy, or planned giving instrument by contacting us at center4justice@cja.org. We will ensure your gift supports CJA's mission and welcome you to the Gerald Gray Legacy Circle.

Legal name: Center for Justice & Accountability
Tax ID# 94-3299-686
(415) 544-0444 • www.cja.org



***"We will never catch all the torturers—but we will always catch some,
and none of them will ever know who is next."***