

Man arrested for becoming US citizen by fraud, failing to disclose Bosnian war crimes

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) sent this bulletin at 07/26/2013 04:05 PM EDT

- [SAKOC Indictment.pdf](#)

WASHINGTON – A 54-year-old Burlington, Vt., man was arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) [Homeland Security Investigations](#) (HSI) special agents earlier today on charges that he obtained his naturalized citizenship through fraud by failing to disclose his prior acts of persecution and crimes committed during the Bosnian conflict.

According to the indictment, Edin Sakoč committed naturalization fraud by providing false and fraudulent information about his commission of crimes and his participation in the persecution of Bosnian Serbs during the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Specifically, the indictment alleges that in July 1992, Sakoč kidnapped and raped a Bosnian Serb woman and aided and abetted the murders of her elderly mother and aunt. Sakoč also allegedly aided and abetted the burning of the victims' family home. According to the indictment, Sakoč allegedly failed to disclose his participation in these activities during his immigration and naturalization process.

Sakoč was charged in a two-count indictment filed Thursday in federal court at the U.S. District of Vermont. The charges carry a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison as well as automatic revocation of his U.S. citizenship and a fine of up to \$250,000.

“Alleged human rights violators who believe they can find a safe haven in the United States are sorely mistaken,” said Bruce M. Foucart, special agent in charge of HSI Boston. “Even if they take on a different identity in an effort to protect themselves from prosecution, they will be discovered and they will be brought to justice for their crimes.”

The case is being investigated jointly by HSI Burlington and the FBI's Albany Division. ICE's Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center assisted in this investigation. Valuable assistance was provided by the Department of Justice (DOJ) Criminal Division's Office of International Affairs and its counterpart at the Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

HSI is committed to rooting out alleged human rights violators who seek a safe haven in the United States. [ICE's Human Rights Violators and War Crimes Center](#) (HRVWCC) investigates human rights violators who try to evade justice by seeking shelter in the United States, including those who have participated in war crimes and acts of genocide, torture, the use of child soldiers and extrajudicial killings. These individuals may conceal their past to enter the country and attempt to blend into communities in the United States. Members of the public who have information about foreign nationals suspected of engaging in human rights abuses or war crimes are urged to call the toll-free HSI tip line at 1-866-DHS-2-ICE or to complete its [online tip form](#). Both are staffed around the clock. To learn more about the assistance available to victims in

these cases, the public should contact HSI's confidential victim-witness toll-free number at 1-866-872-4973. Tips may be provided anonymously.

Since fiscal year 2004, ICE has arrested more than 250 individuals for human rights-related violations under various criminal and/or immigration statutes. During that same period, ICE obtained deportation orders and physically removed more than 640 known or suspected human rights violators from the United States. Currently, HSI has approximately 140 active investigations and ICE is pursuing approximately 1,850 leads and removal cases involving suspected human rights violators from 97 different countries.

Over the last four years, ICE's HRVWCC has issued more than 20,000 lookouts for people from more than 111 countries and stopped approximately 124 human rights violators or war crime suspects from entering the United States.

The case is being prosecuted by Senior Trial Attorney Matthew C. Singer of DOJ Criminal Division's Human Rights and Special Prosecutions Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Eugenia Cowles of the District of Vermont.

<http://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDHSICE/bulletins/84fdbe>