



**METROPOLITAN CHIEF PROSECUTION
OFFICE**

**H-1054 Budapest, 5th District,
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PRESS RELEASE

Today the Budapest Investigative Prosecutor's Office has filed an indictment to the Metropolitan Tribunal in the criminal case initiated against Béla Biszku for the commission of war crime and other criminal offences.

According to the essence of the charges, after the suppression of the revolution of October 1956 and the subsequent war of independence in Hungary, Béla Biszku, defendant was actively involved in the central governing and decision-making body of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (hereinafter referred to as *MSZMP*), having been established at the beginning of November 1956, as a member entrusted with voting and decision making power and thus a member of the narrowest circle of party leadership, namely of the Temporary Executive Committee.

In the single-party regime the Temporary Executive Committee of the *MSZMP*, a body acting as an arm of the state party and entrusted with real power, created the so called „armed militia” with the objective that those forces should function as an organization responsible partly for maintaining order and partly for playing an active role in the retaliations and punishments against civilians after the revolution and war of independence were crushed. The Temporary Executive Committee directly governed the leading body of the armed militia, namely the Military Council, defined tasks and objectives for it which the armed forces of the militia executed.

As a result, the troops of the armed militia committed intentional homicides by firing volleys against civilians in various parts of the country. Such intentional homicides were committed at the so called “red-flagged” demonstration at the Western Railway Station in Budapest on 6th December 1956 where three people were killed, and afterwards in Salgótarján on 8th December 1956 where altogether 46 people – including women and children – were killed.

Furthermore; according to the charges members of the armed militia of the city of Székesfehérvár arrived in Martonvásár on 9th March 1957, and one of their purposes was to carry out house searches in the homes of some persons suspected to be anti-revolutionists. Among those persons were three researchers of the Hungarian Scientific Academy who had participated in the events of the revolution and were arrested and seriously battered after the said house searches. They were being beaten for three hours. Due to the batteries one of the victims suffered serious injuries healing beyond eight days, for several weeks.

Béla Biszku was shown an official report about the crime on 9th April 1957, he, however, did not initiate any criminal proceedings *ex officio* (contrary to the provisions of law effective at that time) and ordered to archive records of the case with regard to the fact that the crime had been committed on his and others' instruction during the merciless retaliation following the suppression of the revolution and the war of independence.

The legal qualification of the facts described in the indictment is as follows: pursuant to the Geneva Convention relative to the protection of civilian persons in time of war, promulgated in Hungary by Law-Decree No 32 of 1954, this conduct is qualified as a grave breach, constituting a war crime committed – as an abettor – by homicide against more than one person, with malicious motives and purposes and by other criminal offences. Having regard to Section 2 of Act C of 2012 on the Criminal Code, the maximum punishment imposable for this crime is life imprisonment.

Béla Biszku is also charged with possessing ammunition without authorization after 11 pieces of ammunition were seized during the house search carried out in his house on 10th September 2012.

Budapest, 16th October 2013

Tibor Ibolya Dr.
acting Chief Prosecutor
Metropolitan Chief Prosecution Office

