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Review of the 26th Traditional International Scientific Conference of the International Criminal Law Association, 12–15 June 2026, Palić, Serbia

The 26th Traditional International Scientific Conference of the International Criminal Law Association, entitled *International Criminal Law at a Turning Point – Reform of Criminal Legislation of the Republic of Serbia*, was held in Palić, Serbia, between 12 and 15 June 2026. The conference brought together academics, legal practitioners, judges, attorneys, doctoral researchers, and representatives of public institutions from several European countries to discuss contemporary challenges in criminal law, international criminal justice, and the ongoing reform of Serbian criminal legislation.

The conference commenced with an opening ceremony featuring welcome addresses by distinguished representatives of Serbian academia and the judiciary, including Professor Milenko Kreća, President of the International Criminal Law Association, Professor Milan Škulić, President of the Organizational Committee, as well as representatives of the Constitutional Court, the Judicial Academy, the Bar Association, and the Institute for Criminological and Sociological Research.

Their speeches emphasized the importance of international academic cooperation and highlighted the necessity of adapting criminal law to emerging global challenges. The opening keynote lectures established the intellectual framework of the conference.

Professor Milenko Kreća examined the role of the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court in adjudicating the crime of genocide, offering valuable reflections on the interaction between public international law and international criminal justice. This was followed by Professor Milan Škulić's presentation on the implemented and planned amendments to the Criminal Code of Serbia, providing participants with an overview of the country's ongoing legislative reforms and the policy considerations underlying them. These introductory presentations effectively

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linked theoretical developments in international criminal law with current legislative initiatives at the national level.

The English-language session represented one of the highlights of the conference. The programme demonstrated the interdisciplinary nature of contemporary criminal law research by covering topics such as criminal law theory, international criminal justice, victims' rights, corruption, artificial intelligence, cybercrime, humanitarian law, juvenile delinquency, and comparative criminal procedure.

Several presentations addressed the increasing impact of technological innovation on criminal justice systems. Particularly noteworthy were the contributions discussing artificial intelligence-assisted jurisprudence analysis, AI-assisted crime committed by young people, and the application of customary international humanitarian law to new technologies in armed conflicts. These presentations demonstrated how technological developments increasingly influence both substantive criminal law and criminal procedure, while also creating new legal and ethical challenges for legislators and courts.

The conference also devoted considerable attention to victims' rights and international criminal justice. Presentations concerning the procedural status of victims before the International Criminal Court, the legal protection of victims during the Nuremberg Trials, and international responses to armed conflicts and humanitarian crises illustrated the continuing relevance of victim-centred approaches within international criminal law.

These discussions reflected broader trends in international legal scholarship, where the protection of victims has become an increasingly significant component of contemporary criminal justice policy.

An especially valuable feature of the conference was the opportunity to compare different national legal systems. Presentations examined criminal law reforms and procedural solutions in Serbia, Poland, Croatia, Romania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and other European jurisdictions. Comparative analyses of the European Arrest Warrant, preliminary criminal proceedings, criminal sanctions, and juvenile delinquency provided participants with a broader understanding of both shared legal challenges and diverse legislative approaches adopted across Europe. Such comparative discussions greatly enriched the academic value of the conference by encouraging dialogue between researchers working in different legal traditions.

The afternoon round table on the conditional release of persons convicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals represented another significant component of the programme. Rather than focusing solely on theoretical questions, the discussion examined practical and policy-oriented issues concerning the execution of international criminal judgments, reintegration of convicted persons, and the relationship between international criminal justice and domestic legal systems. The participation

of both academics and experienced practitioners contributed to a balanced discussion combining doctrinal analysis with practical experience.

The second full day of the conference continued with parallel sessions devoted to international criminal law, the rule of law and human rights, and criminal procedure. These thematic panels reflected the growing interconnectedness of criminal law with constitutional law, human rights protection, and international legal standards. The concluding book presentation, featuring leading Serbian criminal law scholars, also highlighted the continuing importance of academic publishing in supporting legal education, legislative reform, and judicial practice.

Participation in this conference proved highly valuable from both academic and professional perspectives. The event provided an excellent opportunity to become acquainted with current debates surrounding the reform of Serbian criminal legislation while also following broader developments in international criminal law and comparative criminal justice. The diverse composition of participants fostered meaningful academic exchange and facilitated networking among senior scholars, early-career researchers, and legal practitioners from various European countries.

Beyond the formal academic programme, the conference created an atmosphere conducive to informal discussions and future cooperation. Coffee breaks, shared meals, and social events offered additional opportunities to exchange research ideas, discuss ongoing doctoral projects, and establish professional contacts that may lead to future joint research initiatives. Such interactions constitute an essential element of international scientific conferences and contribute significantly to the development of long-term academic cooperation.

Overall, the 26th Traditional International Scientific Conference of the International Criminal Law Association successfully fulfilled its objective of providing a forum for discussing contemporary developments in international and domestic criminal law. The high scientific quality of the presentations, the diversity of topics addressed, and the active participation of both established scholars and young researchers made the conference an intellectually stimulating and professionally rewarding event. The discussions demonstrated that criminal law is currently undergoing substantial transformation in response to technological innovation, evolving international standards, and changing societal expectations. Consequently, the conference made a valuable contribution to ongoing scholarly debate while strengthening international academic cooperation in the field of criminal law.

