

PETITION: Revoke the 1993 World Press Photo Award Given to Bojan Stojanovic

THE ISSUE: In 1993, the World Press Photo Foundation awarded [Bojan Stojanovic the Spot News prize](#) for a photograph depicting the execution of Husein Krso, a civilian prisoner of war during the Bosnian War. New evidence raises serious ethical concerns about whether this award should stand.

THE EVIDENCE: In her 2025 article, "[Killing for the Photo](#)", the award-winning journalist Barbara Matejic presents credible evidence that the event had been photographed with Stojanovic's prior knowledge of the execution about to take place, thus challenging the ethical foundation of this award.

Multiple sources, including experienced war photographers and war-crimes investigators interviewed or quoted, raised the technical points that strongly suggest the photographers' presence was more than incidental. This was eventually confirmed by Stojanovic though he has been known to change his account of the event over years. These conclusions are evidenced in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia official transcripts that feature statements by Goran Jelusic, the executioner whose actions the awarded photograph depicts. His testimony indicates that police officials had arranged for two photographers to capture the murders of two Muslim prisoners - Husein Krso and Hajrudin Muzurovic - and use it for propaganda purposes in Serbia.

When in 2022 Matejic's investigation provided initial evidence that the caption of the photo featured on WPP website is misleading, she contacted WPP and the Foundation agreed to change it acknowledging the victim, Husein Krso, was not a sniper as originally stated but a muslim civilian: *Accused of firing on a Serbian refugee convoy, a Muslim civilian is captured by a uniformed Serbian policeman and shot in the back of the head.* However, upon receiving more evidence about the circumstances in which the photos had been taken WPP chose not to act.

WORLD PRESS PHOTO PRACTICE: In 2015 World Press Photo adopted the Contest [Code of Ethics](#) stating clear ethical criteria candidates must uphold in order to be considered for the award. The document states that *WPP connects high-quality and trustworthy non-fiction reporting and storytelling with a global audience – through digital channels, exhibitions, and the yearbook. Millions of people around the world see the winning photographs and stories, often for the first time. Being a global platform gives us the responsibility to present the most accurate and compelling work. Entrants to the World Press Photo Contest must ensure that all entered material has been created ethically and provides a fair representation of the stories and people photographed.*

In accordance with it WPP has officially revoked awards after post-announcement investigations in two cases:

- In 2015 the award presented to [Giovanni Troilo's](#) series of images about the city of Charleroi in Belgium, was revoked due to *misleading captions and locations*
- In 2010 the award presented to [Stepan Rudik](#) for a black-and-white series titled "Street Fighting, Kiev, Ukraine was revoked due to *established digital content manipulation*

While the Code was introduced in 2015, the responsibility of WPP is to – upon receiving evidence that disputes that the awarded work – uphold its ethical standards and act upon it. In April 2026 the Independent Journalists Association of Serbia and BH Journalists Association have [formally requested of WPP to revoke the award](#) granted to Stojanovic, highlighting both broader concerns about photojournalistic ethics and WPP responsibility to act and the victim's surviving family for whom the continued recognition of the photograph on the WPP website perpetuates his family's suffering.

WPP RESPONSE: On June 3 2026 WPP refused to act, stating that based on internal research of existing and new claims presented, *no verifiable evidence has emerged for WPP to revoke Bojan Stojanović's award.*

THE PETITION AND ITS JUSTIFICATION: Based on the investigative report produced by Matejčić, this petition disputes WPP conclusions and calls it uphold the Article 11 of its Code of conduct that states that *entrants must be open and transparent about the entire process through which their photographs are made, and are accountable to World Press Photo for their practice*

Bearing in mind that the entry had been deliberately miscaptioned by the author, highlighting that the victim is a *suspected Muslim sniper who fired on a Serbian refugee convoy*, and that this had been acknowledged by the WPP upon evidence of the photographer disputing the claim presented to WPP by Matejčić in 2022, and testimony the executioner Goran Jelisić provided at the ICTY in The Hague, the following articles of the WWP Code of conduct appear to have been violated:

Article 3. *Entrants must ensure that individuals and/or groups photographed are treated with dignity and respect, and that the photographer causes no physical and/or psychological harm, further stigmatization, discrimination or rejection by their local communities, especially when photographing vulnerable individuals and/or groups, and children.*

Article 8. *Entrants must ensure that the content and edit of photographs and stories present an accurate and comprehensive representation of individuals and/or groups. Consider whether graphic and violent photographs are appropriate for the story presented, especially when they involve vulnerable people and children.*

Article 9. *Entrants avoid reinforcing stereotypes and be aware of biases that can result in misrepresentation.*

Article 10. *Ensure captions, and any other textual elements, are accurate.*

Article 11. *Entrants must be open and transparent about the entire process through which their photographs are made, and are accountable to World Press Photo for their practice.*

In addition, the evidence provided strongly indicates complete or partial absence of respect for the following articles of WPP Code of conduct

Article 6. *Entrants must ensure that independence is upheld and must not pay individuals and/or groups for information or participation, or accept any form of compensation – such as gifts, money or favours – from those who may seek to influence the story. Evidence strongly indicates that the photograph had been taken as a part of an organised propaganda effort by one warring side and that the photographer was provided with favours of accessing otherwise, for journalists, inaccessible areas by the organiser of the execution.*

Article 7. *Entrants must ensure that the personal safety of everyone involved – including the photographer, fixers and individuals and/or groups photographed – is appropriately handled. Avoid taking unnecessary risks that can result in dangerous situations.*

Bearing in mind all of the above, it is clear that this case tests whether photojournalism institutions will maintain ethical standards when confronted with evidence that challenges previously awarded work. Therefore, we request of the **World Press Photo Foundation** to:

1. **Revoke the 1993 Spot News award** given to Bojan Stojanovic
2. **Provide formal acknowledgment** to the Krso family regarding the misrepresentation of the image on its website
3. **Publish appropriate context** accompanying the photograph in archives and communications
4. **Issue a public statement** explaining their review of the evidence and institutional response

The request is endorsed by the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) through its [*Resolution On the Revocation of the 1993 World Press Photo Award Granted to Bojan Stojanovic*](#) adopted on June, 19 2026.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS

By signing this petition, you support:

- **Ethical accountability** in photojournalism
- **Institutional transparency** from leading organizations
- **Professional standards** that distinguish documentation from facilitation
- **Appropriate recognition** of victims' dignity in conflict photography

SIGN TO SUPPORT ETHICAL PHOTOJOURNALISM

The evidence deserves serious consideration. Professional standards require institutional response. Your signature supports the principle that ethical photojournalism must be distinguished from propaganda, even when that distinction is uncomfortable.

SIGNATORIES

1. Independent Journalists Association of Serbia (IJAS)
2. BH Journalists Association (BHJA)
3. Croatian Journalists' Association (CJA)
4. Association of Journalists of Kosovo (AJK)
5. Association of Journalists of Macedonia (AJM)
6. Trade Union of Media of Montenegro (TUMM)
7. European Federation of Journalists (EFJ)