

The Genocide Prevention Group Solemnly Commemorates Srebrenica Remembrance Day

Ottawa, July 15, 2010 – The Genocide Prevention Group remembers the tragedy of the Srebrenica Genocide. On January 11, 1995, the army and police of “Republika Srpska” in Bosnia and Herzegovina staged a 5-day siege of Srebrenica that led to the deaths of 8,000 innocent Muslim citizens. Taking place within a UN-declared safe haven, the massacre is remembered as a failure of the will of the international community to prevent atrocities, and a failure of Serbia and Montenegro to fulfill their obligations to prevent genocide. The Genocide Prevention Group affirms the tragedy of the Srebrenica Genocide, condemns all discrimination and violence based on religion and ethnicity, and calls on Parliament to initiate changes to prevent future genocides. “It remains a mystery of sorts after so many years and many more papers and conferences on the subject, why nation states still demonstrate enormous reticence toward the R2P concept, and concern about having the Will to Intervene. Events like Srebrenica, as well as the Rwandan Genocide, are still very possible today as can be seen on a slower scale in Darfur. Optimism and the search for statesmanship will ultimately bring humanitarian intervention, conflict resolution and genocide prevention to the top of our priorities instead of being the last factor considered when trying to take appropriate political decisions in a timely fashion,” said Senator Romeo Dallaire, founder of the Genocide Prevention Group. “Remembrance reminds us of our past failures and motivates us to prevent future atrocities,” said MP Paul Dewar, Chair of the Genocide Prevention Group. “On behalf of the genocide prevention group, I express our sympathies to the Bosnian community and reaffirm our commitment to end violence against humanity.” “We can learn from the misguided acts and omissions, as well as the diplomatic paralysis that resulted in the Srebrenica Genocide. It goes beyond simply being an historical exercise and will guide us in ensuring that all states take responsibility for communities and populations threatened by mass violence,” said Megan Leslie, NDP MP for Halifax and Vice-Chair of the Genocide Prevention Group. Mr. Borys Wrzesnewskyj, Liberal MP for Etobicoke Centre and Vice-Chair of the Genocide Prevention Group, said “As I underscored during my remarks at the Srebrenica Remembrance Day ceremony held at the Bosnian Islamic Centre in my riding, when the world community witnessed emaciated Bosniak men behind barbed wire at places like Manjača concentration camp in 1992, they did not muster the moral courage to act. Three years later, this failure to act against the evil of ethnic cleansing only emboldened the perpetrators to continue on their path of hatred resulting in massacre of over 8,000 Bosniak men and boys and after the fall of Srebrenica. In Europe, humanity witnessed a series of the most horrific genocides: the Armenian genocide; the Holodomor, the famine genocide of Ukrainians; and, the greatest evil amongst all evils, the Holocaust. In horror, sixty-five years ago, we pledged “Never Again.” Fifteen years ago, it happened again, in Europe, in Srebrenica. As we mark this fifteenth anniversary, we do so in shame. When will our pledge of “Never Again” mean “Never Again.”

For more information: Renée Massicotte MIGS / Genocide Prevention Group Parliamentary Intern All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Prevention of Genocide and Other Crimes

Against Humanity, chaired by MP Paul Dewar Tel.: (613) 995-8955 Cell: (613) 799-9059
Fax: (613) 996-5323 prev-gen@parl.gc.ca **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**