

Foreign Affairs Minister Pierre Pettigrew today extended his condolences and sympathies to the families and friends of the more than 8,000 Bosnians who were killed in the Bosnian town of Srebrenica on July 11, 1995.

"The killings marked one of the darkest points of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and constitute the worst crime committed in Europe since World War II.

"The most appropriate way to honour those murdered at Srebrenica is for the leaders of the region to bring to justice all of those indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, particularly Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, the architects of the Srebrenica massacre.

"Canada welcomes the recent commitments by the Serbian government to arrest Ratko Mladic and other indictees, and hopes that these commitments will be acted upon soon.

"We cannot undo the tragedy of Srebrenica but it is important that the right lessons be learned and applied to the future. In this regard, leaders of the region must acknowledge the atrocities committed in Srebrenica and elsewhere in the Balkans. Canada welcomes the announcement of Serbian President Boris Tadic's intention to attend the commemoration ceremony as a step toward full recognition of the horror of this crime."

This year marks the 10th anniversary not only of the Srebrenica massacre but also of the signing of The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, known as the Dayton Accords, which ended the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Since the early 1990s, Canada has been committed to supporting peace, stability and reconstruction in the Balkans. In successive UN, NATO and EU missions, more than 40,000 Canadian Forces members have served in the Balkans.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has disbursed more than \$500 million toward humanitarian assistance and development goals. Canada accepted tens of thousands who fled the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s. Canada is a member of the Peace Implementation Council, which provides political advice to the High Representative of the International Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina in overseeing the civilian implementation of the Dayton Accords.

Canada will be represented at the Srebrenica commemoration ceremony by Canadian Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Shelley Whiting.