

H.E. Mr José Manuel Barroso
President of the European Commission
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June 12, 2012

Your Excellency,

We are writing to inform you about the painful battle the survivors and families of the victims of ethnic cleansing, mass atrocities, and genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) are fighting in order to secure the rights to remember and commemorate the dead and to seek your support.

Over the years, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) has been instrumental in bringing to justice those guilty of war crimes committed during the 1990s. Through its judicial mandate the ICTY has provided legal redress for victims, where domestic courts were unwilling or unable to deal with the volume and severity of the crimes.

While our right to justice is being addressed, our right to memory and commemoration, as enshrined in the principles of successful models for dealing with the past, is being blatantly denied. The denial of our right to commemorate our dead and access the site of former concentration camps as well as sites of mass atrocities has reached a pivotal point this year.

We are reaching out to you to ask you to take concrete steps against the conduct of the authorities in the Republika Srpska (RS), the smaller entity within BiH - and in particular the Municipality of Prijedor but also ArcelorMittal, the world's largest steel conglomerate which now owns 51% of the industrial complex where the former concentration camp Omarska was situated. Omarska, a notorious death camp near Prijedor, whose discovery in August 1992 by British journalists Ed Vulliamy and Penny Marshall caused widespread outrage, was one of the key triggers for the international

community's reaction which, culminated in the establishment of the ICTY. Omarska has featured prominently in numerous trials before the ICTY including the trials of wartime leaders Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic.

In March 2012, ArcelorMittal denied access to a group of students from Munich and on April 14, 2012 a delegation of former detainees, Four Faces of Omarska, art/theory group based in Belgrade, Banja Luka, Prijedor, and Graz, Grupa Spomenik, New Yugoslav art/theory group, and researchers from Goldsmiths University of London. This policy is in compliance with local authorities who have been denying mass atrocities committed in Prijedor. Mr. Marko Pavic, the Mayor of the Municipality Prijedor, has not only denied any public commemorations of the 20th anniversary of mass atrocities organized by the local NGO's - comprised of representatives of the survivors, but has also announced that any obstruction of his orders or the use of the word "genocide" will result in legal actions to be taken against the local NGO's.

The ongoing situation further escalated on May 31, 2012 in response to the "White Armband" campaign launched by local NGO's to mark the date in 1992 when all non-Serbs of the Municipality of Prijedor were ordered to wear white armbands as an identification of the "others." It was then that Mr. Rajko Vasic, the spokesman for the SNSD party of the RS issued a statement on his blog calling on local authorities in Prijedor, Srebrenica and elsewhere in the RS to publicly deny genocide and prevent any events of remembrance through the use of police. The text of his statement can be read in local language on his blog. We have attached the translation; however, we have to warn you of its explicit content.

We are already seeing widespread effects of those and other incendiary remarks by politicians, which we find deeply troubling. Aside from the developments in Prijedor, survivors of war crimes in Visegrad have recently come under pressure for the use of the word "genocide" on a monument commemorating Bosniak civilian victims. The counter initiative underway in Visegrad is being carried out by numerous political parties.

We also feel that the recent election of Mr. Tomislav Nikolic as President of the Republic of Serbia and his stated positions about the denial of genocide in Srebrenica has further entrenched the outright denial of the right to remembrance in Prijedor, Visegrad and a number of other municipalities throughout RS.

This also represents infringement on the right to freedom of speech across the RS and its consequences are keenly felt by survivors. Annex 7 of the Dayton Peace Agreement guarantees protection for returnees against hostile verbal or written incitement. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that the situation on the ground differs markedly from the General Framework. The survivors and the families of the victims feel that the threat to their safety and freedom is more credible than ever since the war.

President Barroso, we are writing to ask for or your kind assistance and support in our continued struggle to secure the right to remember our dead and to visit the site of our suffering. We are aware and supportive of your and your predecessors' initiative for the

establishment of a prosperous and peaceful Europe. This support does not have to be of monetary nature in relations to European Union enlargement but also of symbolical acts or projects of value to the community. The plight of the Omarska camp survivors and survivors in general throughout BiH, falls in this category.

As the President of the European Commission, your voice resonates throughout the international community. In the name of the innocent victims, it is our duty as well as responsibility to make sure that fundamental human rights are upheld and that the denial of these heinous crimes is stopped. Recognizing the crimes that were carried out and finding an appropriate way to remember these crimes is one of the most important conditions for reconciliation between different ethnic groups in BiH and the Balkans.

And yet, due to the current situation in Prijedor, 20 years after the war in BiH, the survivors of concentration camps in the Prijedor municipality are experiencing the echo of these camps once more.

We would like your help in ensuring this injustice is righted for the victims of Omarska and other survivors and appeal that you mention it during your meeting on June 14, 2012 with President Mr. Tomislav Nikolic. We are convinced that a constructive message from Belgrade, Serbia, will have an enormous political impact not only in BiH, but the region and Europe as a whole.

Finally, we would like to invite you to join us on 6 August, 2012 at the official commemoration of the 20th anniversary since the closure of the Omarska concentration camp.

In addition, a copy of this letter will be sent to Mr. Stefan Fule, Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy; Mr. Johannes Hahn, Commissioner for Regional Policy; Mr. Valentin Inzko, High Representative for BiH; Mr. Peter Sorensen, European Union Special Representative and Head of the EU Delegation to BiH; Mr. Martin Schulz, President of the European Parliament; Mrs. Emine Bozkurt, Member of the European Parliament; and Vincent Degert, Head of the EU Delegation to Serbia.

Thank you very much for your time and attention. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

The Union of Associations of Camp prisoners in Bosnia and Herzegovina
Mr. Sacir Srebrenica, (over 50 associations and 16000 members) – Bosnia and Herzegovina

On behalf of the Association of Camp prisoners “Prijedor ‘92”
Mr. Mirsad Duratovic, survivor of Omarska and Trnopolje

Research and Documentation center Sarajevo – Bosnia and Herzegovina
Mr. Mirsad Tokaca

Association of victims and witnesses of genocide, Sarajevo - Bosnia and Herzegovina
Mr. Murat Tahirovic

Association Cuprija – Visegrad, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Society for Threatened Peoples International,
Sarajevo and Srebrenica – Bosnia and Herzegovina
Bern - Switzerland
Vienna - Austria
Bolzano - Italy

On behalf of the Society for Threatened Peoples, Germany
Mr. Tilman Zülch

On behalf of the Society for Threatened Peoples, Section of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ms. Fadila Memišević

On behalf of Four Faces of Omarska, Art/Theory group based in Belgrade, Banja Luka,
and Prijedor
Ms. Milica Tomić, Artist

Women in Black, Serbia

Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia
Ms. Sonja Biserko

Peace and Collaborative Development Network (PCDN)
Dr. Edina Becirevic

Coalition Against Discrimination (Serbia) comprised of:
The Center for Advanced Legal Studies Belgrade,
Civil Rights Defenders, LABRIS - Organization for Lesbian Human Rights,
Network of Committees for Human Rights in Serbia (CHRIS),
Association of Handicapped Students, Gayten LGBT, PRAXIS,
Regional Center for Minorities

Coalition for Access to Justice comprised of: The Center for Advanced Legal Studies,
Civil Rights Defenders, CHRIS, Humanitarian Law Center, Youth Initiative for Human
Rights, Independent Journalists' Association of Vojvodina, Sandzak Committee for

Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms, PRAXIS Belgrade

Association of women of Bosnia and Herzegovina - "Through Heart to Peace" – Kozarac, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ms. Emsuda Mujagic

On behalf of Guardians of Omarska - a formal group of volunteers and human rights activists worldwide, supported by thousands of former camp prisoners and family members of those killed in and around Prijedor in 1992

Mr. Satko Mujagic, survivor of Omarska and Manjača – The Netherlands
Mr. Benijamin Tadzic, survivor of Omarska and Manjača - Switzerland
Mr. Hamdija Draganovic, survivor of Omarska - The Netherlands
Ms. Aida Mia Alic, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ms. Mevlida Rovcanin – Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
Ms. Emina Beslagic, survivor of Trnopolje, The Netherlands
Ms. Lejla Zivkovic – USA
Ms. Jasna Ceman - Croatia
Ms. Helena Anusic - Croatia
Ms. Alison Sluiter - USA
Ms. Senada Jujic – The Netherlands
Ms. Sabina Tanovic - The Netherlands
Ms. Alisa Mujagic – survivor of Trnopolje – United Kingdom
Ms. Adisa Pamukcic – United Kingdom

On behalf of the Congress of North American Bosniaks (CNAB)
Mr. Haris Alibašić, MPA, President

On behalf of the Advisory Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina (ACBH)
Ms. Ajla Delkić, Executive Director – Washington D.C., USA

Mr. Werner Fenz, Ph.D. Professor for Art History at the KF University of Graz, Member of the Working group art in public space, Graz, Austria

Ms. Evelyn Kraus, Curator, Member of the Working group art in public space, Graz, Austria

Ms. Mirjana Peitler, Art historian, Member of the Working group art in public space, Graz, Austria

Ms. Edith Risse, Ph.D. Art historian, Member of the Working group art in public space, Graz, Austria

Ms. Irina Karamarkovic, Jazz singer, KUG Graz, Austria

Ms. Emina Saric, Gender mainstreaming, Caritas Graz, Austria

On behalf of the Post-Conflict Research Center (PCRC)
Ms. Elmina Kulasic, Survivor of Trnopolje and Chief Political Analyst and Director of Policy

Association Sedra, Rotterdam - The Netherlands
Ms. Elvira Kapo

Platform of Associations and Foundations of Bosnians in the Netherlands (28 organizations and 12 independent members/artists)
Mr. Ervin Sendijarevic

Mr. Darko Gasparovic, PhD., Retired Professor of the University of Rijeka, Croatia

Mr. Guido Snel - Ph.D., Assistant-professor of Modern European Literature, University of Amsterdam. Novelist and translator of Mr. Emir Suljagic's Srebrenica Memoir - Postcards from the Grave. - The Netherlands

Ms. Erna Rijdsdijk, Phd, author of the Lost in Srebrenica: Responsibility and Subjectivity in the Reconstructions of a Failed Peacekeeping Mission, VU University, 2012 - The Netherlands

Prof. Dr. Franziska Bollerey, Institute for History of Art, Architecture and Urbanism, IHAAU, Delft Technical University - the Netherlands

Prof. Emir Ramic
Director of the Institute for Research of Genocide - Canada

Mr. Ed Vulliamy – Journalist of the Guardian and the Observer and author, United Kingdom

Ms. Florance Hartmann – Journalist and author, France

Mr. Rezak Hukanović – survivor of Omarska and Manjaca camps and author of the first book about these camps in 1993 (“Tenth Circle of Hell”)

We append below a list of co-signatory victims' associations who have authorized us to send this letter with their support and on their behalf:

List of co-signatory victims' associations on whose behalf this appeal is issued:

1. Mothers of Srebrenica (Srebrenica)
2. Women of Srebrenica (Tuzla),
3. Srebrenica Citizens' Forum (Srebrenica / Tuzla)
4. Srebrenica 99 (Tuzla)
5. Srebrenica Intellectuals' Club (Srebrenica)
6. Society for the Prevention of Genocide (Srebrenica)

7. Students' Association (Srebrenica),
8. Bosfam Women's Union (Srebrenica / Tuzla)
9. Association of Former BiH Concentration Camp Detainees (Sarajevo)
10. Women's Section of the Association of Former Camp Detainees (Canton of Sarajevo)
11. Women - Victims of War (Sarajevo)
12. Return - Union of Returnees to Bijeljina
13. Mostovi - Union of Families of the Missing (Bosanska Krupa)
14. Union in Search of the Missing (Brčko)
15. Union of Camp Inmates (Brčko)
16. Union of Families of Prisoners and Missing Persons from the Prozor Area (Prozor)
17. Union of Families of Victims and the Missing (Hadžići)
18. Union of Families of Victims and the Missing (Kladanj)
19. Union of Families of Victims and the Missing (Ključ)
20. Union of Families of Prisoners and Missing Persons from Neretva Canton, Herzegovina (Mostar)
21. Union for the Missing (Mostar)
22. Zepa Union of Returnees (Žepa)
23. Vrbanja Union of Families of the Missing (Kotor Varoš, Travnik)
24. Union of Families of the Missing from Zvornik (Tuzla)
25. Kotorsko Union of Returnees (Kotorsko - Doboj)
26. BiH Roma Union (Sarajevo/Lukavac)
27. Sae Roma Roma Union (Tuzla)
28. Zenica Roma Union (Zenica)
29. Roma Union (Kalesija)
30. The Future Roma Union (Sarajevo)
31. Roma Women's Union (Tuzla)
32. Association of Drina Valley Unions
33. Women of the Drina Valley (Bratunac),
34. Women of the Drina Valley (Vlasenica)
35. Women of the Drina Valley (Sarajevo)
36. Vrbanja Union of Returnees (Banja Luka)
37. Coalition for Return (Banja Luka)
38. Visegrad 92 Union of Families of the Missing from Višegrad (Sarajevo)
39. Women's Strength Women's Union (Tuzla)
40. Council of the Congress of Bosniak Intellectuals (Sarajevo)
41. Institute for the Recording of War Crimes (Sarajevo)
42. Serb Citizens' Council (Sarajevo)
43. Serb Citizens' Council (Tuzla)
44. Serb Citizens' Council (Zenica)
45. Serb Citizens' Council (Mostar)
46. Croat People's Council (Sarajevo)
47. Justice for Bosnia and Herzegovina Foundation (Sarajevo)
48. Obrazovanje gradi BiH [Education Builds BiH] Citizens' Union (Sarajevo)
49. Democratic Council of Bosniaks (Bijeljina)
50. Terra Citizens' Union (Sarajevo)

51. Mak-Bosanka Women's Union (Sarajevo)
52. Merhamet Humanitarian Union (Sarajevo),
53. Children of Sarajevo Union of Parents of Murdered Children (Sarajevo)
54. FOKUS-BiH Association of Women's Organisations from Bosnia and Herzegovina
55. Medica (Zenica / Visoko)
56. Eho Union (Ljubuški)
57. Women of BiH Women's Union (Mostar)
58. Youth Forum Citizens' Union (Stolac)
59. Return and the Right of Residence Returnees' Union (Bijeljina)
60. Astra Women's Union (Bijeljina)
61. Republika Srpska Helsinki Committee (Bijeljina)
62. Woman's Future Women's Union (Kalesija)
63. For The Missing Union of Families of the Missing (Hadžići)
64. Trebinje Returnees' Union (Trebinje)
65. Deblokada Citizens' Union (Sarajevo)
66. Youth Initiative for Human Rights (Sarajevo)