



INSTITUTE FOR THE RESEARCH OF GENOCIDE
CANADA



September 20, 2012

Steve Linde
Editor-in-Chief
The Jerusalem Post
The Jerusalem Post Building
P.O. Box 81, Jerusalem, 91000 Israel

Dear Mr. Linde,

On behalf of the survivors of ethnic cleansing and genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), we are writing to express our deep concerns regarding the hateful and grotesquely inaccurate article written by Mr. Gordon Bardos that was published in the Jerusalem Post on August 20, 2012 titled “The Balkans: Militant Islamism’s new front”

The above mentioned article contains deceitful information and hateful rhetoric against the Bosniak (Bosnian Muslim) people as well as Bosniak political and religious leaders. We object to the uninformed and distorting information regarding the alleged threats of terrorism in the Balkans. In truth, the non-Serb people within BiH such as Bosniaks, Bosnian Croats, Bosnian Roma, Bosnian Jews and others have experienced firsthand some of the worst terrorism committed against humanity by the Serbian Army during the Bosnian War in the early 1990’s. In fact, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) declared the actions that were committed by Serbian militants against the non-Serb population as genocide. As far as terrorism accusations go, it is important to note that BiH increased its counterterrorism capacity in 2011 and serves as a cooperative counterterrorism partner with the United States. BiH law enforcement agencies regularly interact with their U.S. and European counterparts on counterterrorism investigations. Additionally, in the wake of the October 28 embassy attack mentioned in the article, the head of the Islamic Community, Reis-ul-ulema Mustafa Cerić openly and strongly criticized extremism thought his public sermons.ⁱ Moreover, the Bosniak and Jewish communities share a strong bond; at the recent opening ceremony of the Community of St. Egidio's 25th annual meeting of world religious leaders that took place in Sarajevo, the Reus-ul-ulema, Mustafa Cerić presented Oded Wiener, Director General of the Israeli Rabbinate with the world famous "Sarajevo Haggadah of Passover" –the precious document that has been protected by Sarajevo's Bosniak community throughout a series of wars.ⁱⁱ

Before allowing hateful rhetoric to be used against an entire population, the Jerusalem Post would be best served to explore the real reasons behind Mr. Bardos’ writing. You should be aware that another institution was already used by Mr. Bardos to promote anti-Bosniak and pro-Serbian ideas. As a former employee of Columbia University, Mr. Bardos was involved in an embarrassing situation by inviting a known genocide denier and current president of Republika Srpska (RS), Mr. Milorad Dodik to give a lecture on BiH. At the public event, individuals with

non-Serb names from the Balkan region were not allowed to attend the lecture even though they had previously registered and had printed tickets in hand.ⁱⁱⁱ According to various sources, after a wave of protest from American, Jewish and Bosnian American communities, Mr. Bardos resigned. It is clear by that incident alone that his views of the Bosniak people are skewed and antagonistic.

We respectfully request an apology from the Jerusalem Post and removal of the article written by Mr. Bardos.

Sincerely,

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ⁱ <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/501fbcc01e.html>

ⁱⁱ <http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/en/homepage/world-news/detail/articolo/sarajevo-18030/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.columbiaspectator.com/2011/10/26/balkan-politician-draws-protesters-low-library-speech>