



INSTITUTE FOR THE RESEARCH OF GENOCIDE  
CANADA

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SREBRENICA GENOCIDE – FACTS & SUMMARY

1. The Genocide in Srebrenica was among the worst of many atrocities to occur in the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina from April 1992 to November 1995, during which the policies of aggression and ethnic cleansing pursued by Bosnian Serb forces with the direct support of the Serbian regime of Slobodan Milosevic and its followers ultimately led to the displacement of more than 2,000,000 people, more than 100,000 killed, tens of thousands raped or otherwise tortured and abused, including at concentration camps in the Prijedor area, with the innocent civilians of Sarajevo and other urban centers such as: Bratunac, Foca, Kljuc, Prijedor, Sanski Most, Vlasenica, Zvornik, Osmaci, Doboje, Kotor Varos, repeatedly subjected to traumatic shelling and sniper attacks.
2. In addition to being the primary victims at Srebrenica, individuals of Bosniak - Bosnian Muslims heritage comprise the vast majority of the victims during the conflict in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole, especially among the civilian population.
3. Beginning in April 1992, the aggression and ethnic cleansing perpetrated by Bosnian Serb forces resulted in a massive influx of Bosniaks - Bosnian Muslims seeking protection in Srebrenica and its environs, which the United Nations Security Council designated a safe area within the Srebrenica enclave in Resolution 819 on April 16, 1993, under the protection of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).
4. The UNPROFOR presence in Srebrenica consisted of a Dutch peacekeeping battalion, with representatives of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the humanitarian medical aid agency Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders) helping to provide humanitarian relief to the displaced population living in conditions of massive overcrowding, destitution, and disease.
5. Early in 1995, an intensified blockade of the enclave by Bosnian Serb forces deprived the entire population of humanitarian aid and outside communication and contact, and effectively reduced the ability of the Dutch peacekeeping battalion to deter aggression or otherwise respond effectively to a deteriorating situation.
6. Beginning on July 6, 1995, Bosnian Serb forces attacked UNPROFOR outposts, seized control of the isolated enclave, held captured Dutch soldiers hostage and, after skirmishes with local defenders, took control of the town of Srebrenica on July 11, 1995.
7. An estimated one-third of the population of Srebrenica at the time, including a relatively small number of soldiers, attempted to pass through the lines of Bosnian Serb forces to the relative safety of Bosnian-government controlled territory, but many were killed by patrols and ambushes.



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8. The remaining population sought protection with the Dutch peacekeeping battalion at its headquarters in the village of Potocari north of Srebrenica, but many of these individuals were, with seeming randomness, seized by Bosnian Serb forces and beaten, raped, or executed.

9. Bosnian Serb forces deported women, children, and the elderly in buses, but held over 8,000 primarily Bosniak - Bosnian Muslim men and boys at collection points and sites in northeastern Bosnia and Herzegovina under their control, and then summarily executed these captives and buried them in mass graves.

10. Bosnian Serb forces, hoping to conceal evidence of the massacre at Srebrenica, subsequently moved corpses from initial mass grave sites to many secondary sites scattered throughout parts of eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina under their control.

11. The International Commission for Missing Persons (ICMP) deserves recognition for its assistance to the relevant institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina in accounting for close to 90 percent of those individuals reported missing from Srebrenica - despite active attempts to conceal evidence of the massacre - through the careful excavation of mass graves sites and subsequent DNA analysis, which confirmed the true extent of the massacre.

12. Article 2 of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide defines genocide as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) killing members of the group; (b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; (d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and (e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

13. On May 25, 1993, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 827 establishing the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), based in The Hague, the Netherlands, and charging the ICTY with responsibility for investigating and prosecuting individuals suspected of committing war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity and grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions on the territory of the former Yugoslavia since 1991.

14. The ICTY, along with courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as in Serbia, have indicted and in most cases convicted hundreds individuals at various levels of responsibility for grave breaches of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, violations of the laws or customs of war, crimes against humanity, genocide, and complicity in genocide associated with the massacre at Srebrenica, most notably Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, whose trials are ongoing.

15. Both the ICTY and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) have ruled that the actions of Bosnian Serb forces in Srebrenica in July 1995 constitute genocide.



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16. The European Parliament passed a resolution on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2009 calling on all European countries to mark 11 July as a Srebrenica Memorial Day to honor the victims and make pledge to tackle hatred and intolerance to create a better and safer society for all.

17. In 2010, the House of Commons unanimously passed motion M-416, which recognized the genocide and established Srebrenica Genocide Remembrance Day in Canada. In 2015, the Canadian Parliament passed unanimously a historic motion to recognize the month of April as Genocide Remembrance, Condemnation and Prevention Month and named the ones recognized by Canada's House of Commons, including the Srebrenica Genocide. A monument recognizing the genocide has been dedicated in Jackson Park in Windsor, Ontario. In 2019, Members of the Canadian Parliament tabled Petition e-1837, calling upon the Canadian government to enact legislation that would prohibit Srebrenica Genocide denial in Canada. In some Canadian schools and colleges, students are studying the genocide in Srebrenica.

18. The United Nations has largely acknowledged its failure to fulfill its responsibility to act and make decisions that could have deterred the assault on Srebrenica and prevented the subsequent genocide from occurring.

19. Some prominent Serbian and Bosnian Serb officials, among others, have denied or at least refused to acknowledge that the massacre at Srebrenica constituted a genocide, or have sought to otherwise trivialize the extent and importance of the massacre.

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