January 26, 2022. University of Vienna

Universitätsring 1 A-1010 Vienna

Austria

Rector Mr. Heinz W. Engl  
Chair and spokesperson of the Rectorate

Dear Rector Engl,  
Dear Members of the Ethics Committee of the University of Vienna,

Since at least September of 2021, you, the Members of the Committee and the University of Vienna were made aware of the fact that the University of Vienna has been actively involved in the topic of the Bosnian Genocide. Perhaps the most recent formality of this involvement was the denial of genocide by Mr. Walter Manoschek – an associate professor of the University of Vienna – who co-authored an academic study on the subject. Please note that this study is bearing your institution's name and it has directly contributed to the new crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina which, if further escalated, is very likely to lead to another ethnic conflict and genocide within Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The official position your rectors' office adopted regarding the aforementioned formal genocide denial development was communicated by Florian Feldbauer to Mr. Sirbegovic. The statement mentions that it is a private opinion and stance of professor Manoschek.

Indeed, this statement itself is a contemporary genocide research artifact. It is of particular importance for the research of all the facets of systematic genocide denial and its fine granularity on the highest institutional levels responsible for genocide prevention.

By allowing its professor to take this radical position, the University of Vienna is not only dehumanizing, offending and degrading victims of genocide and their families but is also discrediting itself as a serious academic institution and trivializing all research conducted by itself. In the advanced, Western world, when a senior faculty member of an academic institution – be it a University or a Research Center – authors an academic study of this sensitivity, extremity and unpopular opinion, and associates it with the institution the author is employed in – then that study is not his private opinion but rather supported and encouraged by the mentioned institution. If legally and academically this is the case in Austria, as officially stated by your office, other academic institutions worldwide should be informed of these pariah circumstances as this is not befitting a Western, world-recognized university.

Please kindly note that the initial impression of this self-discrediting official statement by Mr. Florian Feldbauer was the fact that one cannot be sure if genocide denial is his private opinion or the official position of the University of Vienna. Therefore, The Institute for the Research of Genocide Canada, the world over Bosnian diaspora and the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina are asking you as the head of an esteemed institution that is now actively involved in discussing the second European genocide within a century that occurred in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to clarify and state the official position of the University of Vienna regarding the following points:

•  The University’s stance on the Genocide in Bosnia and the broader academic activities of professor Manoschek;

•  The reason for the absence of your official response to the recent crisis in Bosnia and Herzegovina that this study further inflames as it directly supports the rhetoric of Bosnian-Serb leaders’ genocide denial rhetoric; (Due to this in large part – there are credible fears of a new war presently);

•  The co-authoring of a piece by Dr. Manoschek who is propagating genocide denial in Bosnia and Herzegovina – University of Vienna’s faculty member

•  The potential disregard of your University of Vienna’s Code of Conduct.

Besides genocide denial being a moral, ethical, academic and civilizational concern, this issue is also of legal concern for all U.S. entities (academic and business ones) dealing with the University of Vienna due to the sanctions by the U.S. Department of the Treasury imposed on Mr. Dodik and his associated entities. As a credible and renowned Western University, the University of Vienna’s stances ought to uphold basic human rights, promote peace and mutual bridge-building between countries and intra-ethnic groups, among other positive activities. Failure to do so in the case of the Bosnian genocide denial publication discussed in this letter will result in the further dissemination of the details regarding this incident before the Western governments and other credible institutions and academics, which could ruin the reputation of your institution. We truly do not wish nor want this to happen. We hope and believe that the University of Vienna’s leadership will do what is right and take the issue discussed in this letter seriously by taking appropriate measures. The Institute for the Research of Genocide of Canada will eagerly wait to hear back from the University of Vienna and looks forward to future areas of potential collaboration.

Respectfully,  
Dr. Emir Ramic  
Director  
The Institute for the Research of Genocide Canada