

V A U G H A N REMEMBERS SREBRENICA

October 7th, 2025



The working Material only for the
meeting of Vaughan Mayor with
Bosnians and Herzegovinians,
Vaughan on October 7th, 2025



MOTHER AND FLOWER OF SREBRENICA

A poet once said: *"...a mother's love, even if expressed through tears, is the only sincere and true love that always gives us strength..."*

NEVER AGAIN
Srebrenica 1995



INTRODUCTION

- Honorable Mayor Del Duca, good morning. My name is Semir Ahmic, I am a resident of Vaughan, and I was born in Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina. As Srebrenica survivor, I am honoured to be here today to talk with you about the Srebrenica Genocide.
- Thank you for your kindness, allowing us to speak at City Hall, as well as for sparing your time from your busy schedule to join us today. We consider this event as kind of commemorating victims of the Srebrenica Genocide, which took place 30 years ago.
- This year the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of that tragic event started on July 5th in the city of Windsor, ON and continued across Canada
- **Srebrenica** in English means **Silver City**



PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

- As this year marks the 30th anniversary of the Srebrenica Genocide (July 11, 1995), the Bosnian Canadian Community, particularly survivors respectfully request that government of Vaughan city stands in solidarity with us by issuing a public Proclamation to mark this solemn event in the recent history of Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- The Bosnians in Vaughan expect that the government of Vaughan city through educational system proactively supports the process of learning and preserving the truth about the Srebrenica Genocide.
- The Bosnians in Vaughan would appreciate it, if Vaughan city would allow designated park area where a monument would allow the annual gathering of Bosnians and others to show deserved respect to all who perished in the Srebrenica Genocide. The project design for such monument will be submitted for approval by following current established procedures for it.
- The Bosnians in Vaughan would be more than happy, if any form of a future street in Vaughan carries name that have "Srebrenica" word in it.

WHAT HAPPENED IN SREBRENICA

- The Srebrenica Genocide happened on July 11th 1995 and it is the most severe genocide on European soil since the Holocaust
- The Srebrenica Genocide, is perpetrated by Bosnian Serb forces in July 1995 within the "United Nations protected area" of Srebrenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- As a reminder, in 1993, the UN passed Resolution 819, declaring Srebrenica a "safe zone." Thousands of Bosnians fled there seeking protection, placing their trust in the UN and its 200 stationed Dutch peacekeepers



HOW IT HAPPENED

- However, the resolution that authorized their deployment did not permit the use of force to defend civilians. In July 1995, Serbian occupying forces led by criminal general Ratko Mladić captured the city while UN troops stood by.
- What followed was a **cold, calculated**, and systematic genocide. Unarmed men and boys were separated from their families and brutally executed within days. Women and girls were placed in camps, where many were raped and tortured.

NUMBER KILLED IN SREBRENICA

- To conceal the crimes, bodies were buried in mass graves, then later exhumed and reburied in secondary and tertiary graves in an attempt to destroy the evidence.
- **There are currently 8,372 names on the preliminary list of murdered Srebrenica residents, and over 12,000 people are still listed as missing. New mass graves are still being discovered to this day.**
- Every year on July 11, newly identified victims are laid to rest at the memorial cemetery in Potočari, near Srebrenica city.



INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES DURING THE END OF 20TH CENTURY

- Srebrenica remains one of the darkest and most shameful chapters of the 20th century - a symbol of the international community's failure, and a lasting reminder of the need to stand firmly against genocide, wherever it may occur.
- UN made "serious errors of judgment" in Srebrenica and that highlighted the UN's inadequacy in peacekeeping during wars.
- The international community needs to learn from Srebrenica to improve the UN's ability to prevent genocides in the future.
- Today the phrase "never again" is perceived as "not working" because of ongoing genocides and mass atrocities in the world.

CANADIAN ROLE

- Further, Canada has taken commendable steps to recognize the Srebrenica Genocide and to lead efforts in preserving the memory of its victims, both domestically and internationally.
- Notably, in 2010, the Canadian Parliament established Srebrenica Genocide Remembrance Day, and in May 2024, Canada co-sponsored the Resolution A/RES/78/282 at the UN General Assembly.
- Canada has consistently demonstrated its friendship and alliance with Bosnia and Herzegovina and its people. This is reflected in the significant Bosnian diaspora residing across Canada, many of whom are survivors of the Srebrenica Genocide.



INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES AT THE BEGINNING OF 21ST CENTURY

- On **23 May 2024**, the United Nations General Assembly adopted **Resolution A/RES/78/282**, officially designating **11th of July** as the **International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica**, to be observed annually. The resolution also established the **UN Outreach Programme on the Srebrenica Genocide**, reinforcing global commitment to memory, education, and prevention.
- **This resolution stands as proof that the world has not forgotten Srebrenica. It is a clear message to survivors, families, and future generations that the victims will be remembered, their suffering acknowledged, justice pursued, and the truth to be preserved.**

CONCLUSION #1

- Observing July 11, affirms the importance of acknowledging the rulings of international tribunals as an essential step toward justice, reconciliation, and the prevention of future crimes such as **genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.**
- By remembering and honouring the victims of Srebrenica, we become their voice. In doing so, we reject denial, uphold truth, and stand firmly against hatred and genocide. Our remembrance is not just an act of mourning - it is a commitment to justice and a call to protect future generations from similar atrocities.



CONCLUSION #2

- We would be grateful if your government could consider the following:
 - a) **issuing the mentioned Proclamation to mark Srebrenica Genocide,**
 - b) **supporting the process of learning about the Srebrenica Genocide,**
 - c) **preliminary approving building a small monument in a designated park area**
 - d) **planning to name any form of a future street by name “Srebrenica”.**
- The **Srebrenica flower** is a symbol of remembrance **the Srebrenica Genocide**. Its **eleven white petals** represent the innocence of the victims and the date of the genocide - **11 July 1995** - while the **green center** symbolizes hope for a better future.

CONCLUSION #3

- Your presence here today means a lot to us. I thank you for your time and efforts to come to this gathering.
- On behalf of the Bosnian Community in Vaughan, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support and look forward to continued cooperation.
- Thank you very much indeed!
- If you have any comments or question, please let us know. We would be more than happy to answer.



SUZE MAJKI **SREBRENICE**

Abdulah Sidran (02. okt.1944. - 23. mar 2024.) bio je bosanski pjesnik i scenarista. Sidran je jedan od najutjecajnijih pisaca u Bosni i Hercegovini.

Bosnski jezik

Bolje da je nema
Nego da je ima

Ovakve
Kakva danas jeste
Naša Srebrenica

Ni mrtvo ni živo
U njoj
Boraviti ne može

Pod olovnim nebom
Od olova zrak
Niko još nikada
Nije naučio
U pluća udisati

Iz nje bježi sve
Što ima noga
Su kojima može
I ima će pobjeći
Iz nje bježi sve
I ono što niđe
Nego pod zemlju crnu
Nema pobjeći

Pravoslavci bježe
Pridošli i domaći

Muslimani bježe
Pridošli i domaći

Oni što mišljahu
da su se vratili
u svoju Srebrenicu

TEARS OF THE MOTHERS OF **SREBRENICA**

Abdulah Sidran (02. Oct.1944. - 23. Mar 2024.) was a Bosnian poet and screenwriter. Sidran is one of the most influential writer in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

English translation

It's better that it isn't
Than that it is

The one
As it is today
Our Srebrenica

Neither dead nor living
Can dwell
In it

Beneath a leaden sky
The air filled with lead
No one has ever
Learned
To breathe into his lungs

Everything flees from it
Anything with legs
With which it can
Run away
If it has a place to run to
Everything flees from it
Even that which has no place
To run to
But into the black ground

Orthodox Christians run away
Newcomers and locals

Muslims run away
Newcomers and locals

Those who thought
That they came back
Into their Srebrenica

Koji je od njih
Živ nekako ostao
Otišao pa se vratio
Ni jedne jedite zime
Sa ljetom nije sastavio
Niti jednu jesen
Sa budućim proljećem

Nego je gledao
Da što prije opet
Iz Srebrenice
Umakne

Odavno više nema
Ni komšija katolika

Srebrenica bijaše
U davna doba
Preljepo i milo
Stono mjesto
Njihove
Plemenite udruge

Braća franjevci
Otišli su davno

Kao da su
U mudrosti svojoj
Znali da će doći vrijeme
U kome više neće biti
Ni dobre Srebrenice
Ni u njojzi ljudi

Govore nam
Dvanaest godina nam govore
Kako je u Bosni
Prestao rat

Uče nas
I pisane nam upute
O tome šalju
Kako je u našoj zemlji
Prestao rat

I kako više niko
Ne smije
Gledati
U prošlost

And the one who was here
And somehow stayed alive
Left and then returned
If he came in winter
He was gone by summer
If he came in autumn
He was gone by spring

He all but looked
To leave
Srebrenica again
As soon as possible

Our Catholic neighbors
Have departed as well

In bygone times Srebrenica
Was dear and beautiful
Venerated place
Of their
Noble brethren

Our Franciscan brothers
Left long ago

As if they
In their wisdom
Knew that a time would come
When the good Srebrenica
Would be no more
Nor the people in it

They have been telling us
For twelve years they have been
Telling us
That the war in Bosnia?
Is over

They teach us
And are sending us
Written instructions
That in our state Bosnia and
Herzegovina
The war is over
And that no longer
Should anyone
Look
Into the past

Zar oni
Uistinu vjeruju
Da smo živi mi
Koji ovdje stojimo
I sa ovog mjesta
Govorimo tako
Kao da stvarno jesmo živi

Zar misle da se zove zdravlje
Zar misle da se zove razum
Ono što je u nama preostalo
Od negdašnjeg našeg
Razuma i zdravlja ?

Zar ne vide
Zar ne čuju
Zar ne znaju
Da smo mi
Svi
Šta nas je preostalo
Mrtviji od svih naših mrtvih
I da ovdje, danas, njihovim glasom
Glasom naših mrtvih
Iz njihovijeh grla vrištimo
I njihovijem vriskom - govorimo

Ne date nam
Da u prošlost gledamo!

A mi u nju ne gledamo
Nego ona u nas gleda
Krvavijem očima

I kažete:
U budućnost gledajte!

A mi nju
Nikakvu i nigdje i nikako
Ne vidimo
Nit vidimo da ona
Ikakvijem okom
U nas gleda
A kamo li da nas vidi
I o nama brine

Nikakvu mi
Budućnost nemamo

Do they
Truly believe
That we who stand here
Are alive
And that we speak
From this place
As if we were indeed alive

Do they think that this is health?
Do they think that this is reason?
Which has remained within us
A mere shadow of reason and health
That we used to have?

Don't they see?
Don't they hear?
Don't they know?
That we
All
Who remain
Are deadlier than all our dead
And that here, today, with their voice
In the voice of our dead
From their throats we scream
And with their cry - we speak?

You don't let us
Look into the past!

And we do not look into it
But it watches us
With bloody eyes

And you say:
Look to the future!

And we
Do not see at all
At any place in any way
Nor do we see that it
Watches us
By any eye
Let alone that it see us
And cares about us

We do not have a future
Of any kind

Mi imamo sadašnjost
U koju se ljudskim okom
Pogledati ne može

Mi isti
Od olova zrak
U našoj Srebrenici
Koje više nema
Dišemo sa onima
Čije su oči
Čije su ruke
Čije su duše
U krvi
Naših očeva
U krvi naše djece
Naših muževa
Naše braće
Naših sinova
Ogrezle

I samo se oni
Mogu radovati
Vašoj komandi
Da u prošlost ne gledamo

U šta mi to drugo
Osim u nju
Imamo gledati ?

Zar možete materi kazati
da ne gleda sina ?

Zar sestri možete
Komandu slati
Da ne gleda brata ?

Uzmite nam oči
Ali nas više nemojte tome učiti
Ne šalžite nam više
Takve savjete, upute i komande !

We have the present
Which a human eye
Cannot even look at

We are the same once
Who breathe
Lead air
In our Srebrenica
Which is no more
With those
Whose eyes
Whose hands
Whose souls
Are soaked in
The blood
Of our fathers
The blood
Of our husbands,
Of our brothers
Of our sons

Only they
Could be pleased
With your command
That we do not look to the past

And what else
Do we have
But the past

What else
Besides it
Could we look to?

Can you
Ask a mother
Not to look at her son?

Can you command
A sister?
Not to look at her brother?

Take our eyes
But do not teach us those things
Don't send us yet again
Such advices, guidances and
Commands!

Možda i jeste
Kako vi velite
Prestao rat

Ali je nama
U našoj Srebrenici
Rat prestao maličuk
Prekodana
Dok se i same varakamo
Da jeste tako

Ali su nama
Već dvanaest godina
I ljeti i zimi
Prekratki dani
A duge i preduge
Noći srebreničke

Čim se prvi sumrak javne
Mi svoje kapije gvožđem mandalimo
Da ne dođe
Da ne uđe
Onaj što je onomad
Došao i ušao
I sve nam naše
Milo i drago
Od života rastavio

A danas nam ko doja
Mir u Srebrenici čuva

Kako da spava
Srebrenička majka ?
Čim oko sklopi
Eto rata na vrata
Eto onog trenu
U kom je vidjela kako se
Pod dušmanskim nožem
Od vlastitog tijela rastavila
Glava njenog sina!

Samo joj se ponekad
Od hiljadu u nesanici
Proučenih Jasina
Smiluje dragi Bog

Maybe it is
As you say
The war is over

But for us
In our Srebrenica
The war is barely over,
By day
While we just
Fool ourselves that it is so

But for the past twelve years
During the summers and winters
The days are too short
For us
And too long and longer still
Are nights in Srebrenica

As soon as the first dusk falls
We secure our gates with iron
To prevent from entering
To prevent from coming
The one who once
Came and entered
And took life from
All that we
Loved and cherished

And today, he is apparently
The keeper of peace in Srebrenica

How can a mother from Srebrenica
Sleep peacefully?
As soon as she closes her eyes
The war comes to the door
That moment
In which she saw
The head of her own son
Being severed from the body
By the executioner's dagger!

Only sometimes
By the dint of a thousand Ya sins
That she has recited
In her sleeplessness
Does God have mercy upon her!

A san kad joj
Na oči spusti
Ona u snu sastavlja
Glavu sa tijelom
Nesahranjenog sina

Kako da živimo sadašnjost?
Kako da u prošlost ne gledamo?

Naša jedna sestra ima
Pa grob sebi napravila
Od jednog sarajevskog stana

U Sarajevu živi
A Sarajeva
Ni vidjela nije

Prozora ne otvara
Kroz njih pogledati ne smije
A kamo li da smije
Na ulicu izići

Četvero je djece izgubila
Iz groba ne izlazi
Nego veli

Ako bi na ulici
Kakvo momče il djevojče srela
Pa joj koje od njih
Na koje od njenih zaličilo
Srce bi joj prslo
U četiri stotine
Krvavih komada

Je li to Mir ?
Da li tako prestaje Rat ?

Kad zašuti željezno oružje
A do neba vrišti materino srce ?

And when her eyes
Close in sleep
She tries to join
The head with the body
Of her unburied son
In her dream

How can we live the present?
How can we not look into the past?

There is one sister of ours
Who has made grave for herself
Out of an apartment
Here in Sarajevo

She lives In Sarajevo
And Sarajeva
She has never seen

She does not open the windows
She dare not look through them
Let alone venture
Into the street

She lost four children
She does not come out of her grave
But says

If she were to meet a boy or a girl
In the street
And if one of them
Were to remind her of her own
Her heart would break into pieces
Into four-hundred
Bloody pieces

Is this Peace?
Is that the way for War to stop?

When iron weapons
Fall silent
And the mother's heart
Screams up to the heavens?

Kad zlikovac
Promijeni košulju
Pa u njoj
Pred našim kućama
Pod našim pendžerima
U našoj Srebrenici
Čuva naš mir ?

Vama jeste vaša
A nama naša prošlost
Nikako nije prošla
Niti će proći

Dok olovno nebo
Od srebra Srebrenicu
Našu prekriva

Dok pod njenim
Od olova nebo
Olovni zrak
I olovne zalogaje
Dišemo i gutamo
S onima što jesu
Promijenili košulju
A srce pod košuljom
I u srcu mržnju
Niti su mijenjali
Niti kane mijenjati

Vama vaša jeste
nama nije
naša prošlost prošla

Nemojte nas vraćati
Nemojte nas vraćati
U takvu i tu
Od olova Srebrenicu

Nego
barem na tren jedan
Pogledajte gdje vam se
U dušama
Po knjigama
Zagubilo zrno
Istine i Pravde

When the villain
Changes his shirt
And with it
Keeps peace
In front of our houses
Beneath our windows
Here in our Srebrenica

For you it may be so
But not for us
For our past is with us
And can not pass

As long as the leaden-silver sky
Is hovering above
Our Srebrenica

And as long as
Under this leaden sky
Leaden air
We breathe and swallow
The leaden air and leaden morsels
With those who have
Changed their shirt
And they have not changed
Nor do they intend to
The heart beneath the shirt
And the hate within the hearth

Your past is behind you
But our past
Is not behind us

Do not lead us back
Do not lead us back
To that very
Leaden Srebrenica

But
Just for a moment
Take a good look
Into your souls
Into your books
And see where you lost
The grain of Truth and Justice

Ako u svom srcu
Barem jedno jedino
Od Istine i Pravde
Zrno pronađete
Od dobra i srebra
Srebrenu i dobru
Ljepoticu Srebrenicu
Srebrenici vratite !

Mrvu Pravde
I zrnce Istine
U sebi nađite
Srebrenicu -
Srebrenici vratite !

I mi ćemo se
Uz Božju pomoć
Što žive što mrtve
Odmah u nju vratiti

Neka se
Uz Božju pomoć
Sastave i smire
Sve
Od svijeh vremena
Srebreničke duše

I duše ove naše
Žalosne i mrtve

Sa živim dušama
Svih naših mrtvih

If you find in your heart
Just one single
Grain
Of Justice and Truth
Out of good and silver
Silvery and good
Srebrenica- our beauty
Return to Srebrenica!

A speck of Justice
And a grain of Truth
Find within yourself
And Srebrenica -
Return to herself!

And we will
With the help of God
Alive or dead
Return at once

May they
With the help of God
Come together and find peace
All
The souls
Of Srebrenica
Of all times

And our souls as well
Sad and dead

With living souls
Of all our dead

Napomena:
Modificirano za potrebe sastanka u
Opštini Vaughan kao i čas historije o
genocidu nad Bošnjacima u
Srebrenici 11. jula 1995. godine,
zakazan u Vaughan, utorak,
07.10.2025

Modified for the needs of the
Meeting at City Hall, Vaughan and
the history lesson on the genocide
of Bosniaks in Srebrenica in July 11
1995, scheduled in Vaughan, on
Tuesday October 7th, 2025.











NEVER AGAIN

Srebrenica 1995



The working Material is prepared by
community of Bosnians and
Herzegovinans Vaughan Residents

