The Broader Atrocities of the Bosnian War Beyond Srebrenica

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> This presentation argues that while Srebrenica was a tragic genocide, nearly 90% of Bosniak deaths during the 1992–1995 Bosnian War occurred across other municipalities. The speaker contends that international attention to Srebrenica alone has overshadowed broader awareness of systematic ethnic cleansing, mass killings, sexual violence, and siege warfare across Bosnia.

SAŽETAK

The speaker challenges the dominant historical narrative around the Bosnian War, arguing that exclusive focus on Srebrenica has created a significant gap in global understanding of the broader atrocities committed between 1992 and 1995. While acknowledging Srebrenica as the largest killing on European soil since the Holocaust and the only municipality internationally classified as genocide by the International Court of Justice, the speaker emphasizes that this legal distinction does not diminish the scale or severity of atrocities elsewhere. The presentation documents systematic campaigns of ethnic cleansing, mass killings, torture, sexual violence, and siege warfare across municipalities including Prijedor, Foča, Višegrad, Ključ, and Sarajevo. The speaker argues that because Srebrenica dominates collective memory and education outside Bosnia, future generations risk inheriting a severely incomplete understanding of what occurred. The video aims to contextualize Srebrenica within the larger campaign of violence and to encourage remembrance of the full scope of suffering across all affected communities.

KLJUČNE PORUKE

- Approximately 90% of Bosniak deaths during the 1992–1995 war occurred outside Srebrenica, yet Srebrenica dominates international awareness and education.
- The International Court of Justice classified events at Srebrenica as genocide but not in other municipalities, though this legal distinction does not indicate the absence of atrocities elsewhere.
- Prijedor, including the Omarska, Keraterm, and Trnopolje concentration camps, saw systematic detention, torture, and murder of Bosniak civilians.

> Foča was the site of systematic sexual violence and sexual enslavement of Bosniak women and girls.

> Mass killings in Višegrad included deliberate incidents in which civilians were gathered under false pretenses of safe passage, then trapped and burned alive in houses.

> Ključ witnessed the annihilation of Bijani village, with men and boys separated and executed while women, children, and elderly were killed in wider operations, totaling at least 260 deaths.

> The siege of Sarajevo was the longest siege of a capital city in modern warfare, with inhabitants subjected to years of shelling and sniper attacks.

ČLANAK

The Scope of the Bosnian War and Historical Memory

I want to ask you a question, and this is for those of you outside of Bosnia, aside from Srebrenica. Can you name me one municipality, city or town in which Bosniaks—Bosnian Muslims—were killed during the Bosnian war between the years 1992 and 1995? If you can, can you name two or possibly even three? Do you know that nearly nine out of every ten Bosniaks that were killed during the war were killed outside Srebrenica? Probably not. And it is my belief that we have a problem when it comes to the transmission of history regarding the atrocities that took place in Bosnia. Srebrenica was a tragic, unforgivable event that took place during the Bosnian war, but it is part of a much larger story—the majority of which most of us are completely unaware of.

If the only anchoring of our collective human consciousness regarding the atrocities that took place in Bosnia is tied to Srebrenica, then it is my fear that when it comes to our future generations, their knowledge of what took place in Bosnia will be limited to Srebrenica. This is perhaps the most important video that I have made to date, so I request you to watch it all in its entirety.

The Srebrenica Massacre and International Legal Classification

On the 11th of July 1995, the town of Srebrenica, which was a designated UN safe zone, fell to Bosnian Serb forces. In the days that were to follow, more than 8,000 Bosniak boys and men were murdered and their bodies discarded into mass graves, the remains of which are still being found to this very day. It was the single largest killing on European soil since the Holocaust. Now, this is significant. When the International Court of Justice analysed the events that took place in Bosnia, they did not treat the country as an undifferentiated whole. Rather, they examined events by

municipalities and regions in order to determine whether the legal requirements of genocide could be established.

The court concluded that the evidence brought before it established genocide at Srebrenica, but not in the other municipalities. The term genocide hinges not on the scale of the killings, but whether there is proven intent to kill in whole or in part a racial, ethnic, national or religious group. But just because the International Court of Justice did not classify the other municipalities as genocide does not mean atrocities were not committed elsewhere. In fact, the vast, vast majority did—some 90%.

Scale of Killings Across Municipalities

I am now going to present a slideshow that consists of 15 municipalities that are among those with the highest war victim totals. Note I say "among"—this is not an exhaustive list, but it is to give you an idea as to the scale of the killings that took place during the Bosnian war and how Srebrenica fits into it all. Of all these municipalities that you have seen on your screen, it is only Srebrenica that has a designated international day of reflection. Now, there are reasons for that, primarily because of the International Court of Justice's ruling that the events that took place in Bosnia constituted genocide, and also the catastrophic failings of the United Nations that enabled this genocide in Srebrenica to happen in the first place.

There are days of memorial within Bosnia that are dedicated to specific municipalities, such as White Armband Day on the 31st of May that commemorates Prijedor. But these are localized events. They do not have global attention like that of Srebrenica, which was designated an International Day of Reflection by the UN in 2024. But, and this boils down to my main point—outside of Bosnia, the vast, vast majority of us know nothing about what took place in Bosnia between 1992 and 1995. The only link of our human awareness, the only link of us as an Ummah to the atrocities that were committed in Bosnia is the Srebrenica Memorial Day, and it is our only source of education.

The Broader Campaign of Ethnic Cleansing and Violence

The purpose of this video is that when the 11th of July comes by, you look at it from the perspective of knowing that, as catastrophic as it was, it was part of a greater, greater campaign of killings. So when the 11th of July rolls by and the attention of the world briefly turns towards Srebrenica and remembers the horrors that transpired there, and social media becomes alive and Srebrenica is trending, please, please remember the ethnic cleansing campaigns and killings in Prijedor and the Omarska, Keraterm and Trnopolje concentration camps established there, whose inmates were subjected to torture, beatings, humiliation, sexual violence and murder.

Remember Foča and the systematic sexual violence and sexual enslavement of Bosniak women and girls. Remember Višegrad and the mass killings of Bosniaks,

including the 59 women, children and elderly that were gathered in a house on Pionirska Street on the pretense that they would be transported to safety, but instead were forced into a room with all the exits blocked before the house was set alight. And days later, in Bikavac, where the same thing happened again when 60 women, children and elderly were forced into a house that was then set alight.

Remember Ključ and the annihilation of the village of Bijani when the army of Republika Srpska, which was supported by local police, entered the village, separated the men and boys from the women, children and elderly, transported the men to detention camps, who were then taken to execution sites where they were shot dead, with women, children and elderly killed in wider operations, resulting in at least 260 killed. And remember the siege of Sarajevo, the longest siege of a capital city in modern warfare, where its inhabitants were subjected to years of repeated shelling and sniper attacks. And remember, there was more. There was much, much more.

#Bosnian War atrocities (1992–1995) #Srebrenica massacre and genocide #Ethnic cleansing in Bosnia #War crimes and systematic violence #Historical memory and education #International law and genocide classification #Concentration camps and sexual violence

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