

# RELEVANT FACTS ON EVENTS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AT THE END OF XX AND BEGINNING OF XXI CENTURY

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Published: April 24, 2010

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Numerous relevant sources of different provenance reliably suggest the two initial and basic, essential fundamental settings and provisions for the contemporary events and episodes in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of XX century:

- - First, a **classic armed aggression** was conducted against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that is, it was crime against peace and safety of mankind which is according to the basic understanding and definition an **international armed conflict** and
- - Second, the worst crimes – **crime of genocide** was committed in the territory of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina against Bosniacs under siege.

Considering previously mentioned basic assumptions, it is necessary, for the purpose of historic truth, to remind of the relevant facts determine based on the original and relevant documentation:

- - **Serbian Nazism** again – during the last decade of XX century – **generated the gravest crimes** known to the mankind;
- - Serbian nationalistic elite (political, intellectual, and clerical), in accordance with the great Serbian project of great Serbia ("**all Serbs in one state**"), during the last decade of XX century, caused an internal crisis in SFRY and destroyed the common state;
- - The Republic of Serbia, by the Amendments to the Constitution of 28 September, practically **made the cessation** (from SFRY) and took over the functions of independent and sovereign state, by which it was excluded from the legal system of SFRY, which based on the SFRY laws constituted the gravest criminal offense;

- - The aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and genocide against Bosniacs make **the essence of joint criminal enterprise** conducted by the states of FRY (Serbia and Montenegro) and the Republic of Croatia, their leadership, and numerous top representatives of their respective political, military, police and administration, as well as their fifth column, collaborationists and mercenaries;
- - The intention of that criminal act, based in the Serbian and Croatian project of great state, had for its objective **taking over of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the state, and “final solution” for the Muslim issue – extermination of Bosniacs or their limitation to an insignificant ethnic group.** The fifth column from Bosnia and Herzegovina (“Croatian Community Herzeg-Bosnia”, “Republika Srpska” and “Autonomous Province of Western Bosnia”) and from the Republic of Croatia (“Republic of Serbian Krajina”) joined obediently, as associates and executors, the function of these criminal activities;
- - To achieve this joint criminal enterprise, the following activities were undertaken: **the Constitutional concept of the defense of SFRY was destroyed; the Territorial defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina was reduced and disarmed as well as some other constitutive elements of the Federation; JNA “transformed” from antifascist and multiethnic to the great Serbian army; the great Serbian and great Croatian movements were renewed and they escalated; the methods, mechanisms, and procedures for planning and preparation of the crimes were defined; the principle agreement on the destruction of Bosnia and Herzegovina (March 1991) was reached; new borders of great Serbia and great Croatia were drawn; the fifth column of the neighboring countries was organized and armed (great Serbian and great Croatian) in Bosnia and Herzegovina; the command in the occupied territories was united in the heads of neighboring countries – occupational forces; the initial positions for the aggression were taken as well as for other criminal activities, including genocide against Bosniacs;**
- - The aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina and genocide against Bosniacs were **planned** (intellectually, ideologically, politically, militarily, economically, media, intelligence, psychologically, etc), with clearly set **objective**, and **ordered** from the respective political and military centers, and **executed** as planned, systematically, and well organized. The **state aggressors**, then **ideologists**, **planners**, **order issuing authorities**, **executors**, and **associates** are well known, and also **how these crimes were committed and why**;
- - The genocide against Bosniacs in Bosnia and Herzegovina was well envisaged and executed even more efficiently, by, unfortunately, **massive involvement of Serbian people.** Based on the study of the Republika Srpska Government, more than 25,000 persons, participated (on various grounds and in various ways) only

in the genocide against Bosniacs of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the UN safe heaven Srebrenica in July 1995;

- - There was a **genocidal criminal intention and genocidal plan** for the extermination of Bosniacs, a group (ethnic and religious) protected by international humanitarian law (among other things, there are orders to commit genocide, including the establishment of the concentration camps). Slobodan Milošević was “**a member of the joint criminal enterprise, which included the leadership of Bosnian Serbs, whose objective and intention were to destroy in part the Bosnian Muslims as a group**” (ICTY, *Prosecutor vs. Slobodan Milošević, Decision upon the Motion to render the acquittal*, the Hague, 16 June 2004);
- - The aggression against the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with **embargo on weapons and humanitarian policy** by the United Nations, Europe, and international community, and **the international strategy of ignoring the great Serbian fascistic and genocidal project of great Serbia**, was an integral part of the Milošević state policy, in which name the biggest portion of Bosnia and Herzegovina was occupied, Bosniacs killed, expelled, taken to the concentration camps because of their belonging, taking over of their land, looting of the property and other moveable items, and taking and confiscation of their houses and apartments, as well as eradication of the traces of their cultural and civilization heritage;
- - Collaborationists of the great Serbian aggressor (political, military, police, and administrative-executive potential of Republika Srpska, that is, official Republika Srpska authorities) under the direct management, organization, command, participation and support of the states Serbia and Montenegro / Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which occupied more than 70% of the territory of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, took part in genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes against Bosniacs;
- - Fascist and genocidal leadership of the collaborationist creation of Republika Srpska, with Radovan Karadžić, Momčilo Krajišnik, Biljana Plavšić and others at its top, generated by the Serbian Nazism and on bones of the killed Bosniacs inaugurated a genocidal creation called a Republic, had **a genocidal intention and genocidal plan** to exterminate Bosniacs that were subjected to genocide;
- - In addition to the military and police forces of the collaborationist, fascist, and genocidal Republika Srpska Army and Republika Srpska Krajina Army, the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Yugoslav Army and the Republic of Serbia Ministry of the Interior) participated in the take over of Srebrenica, United Nations safe heaven, and genocide against Bosniacs in July 1995. Thus, as an illustration, members of the Yugoslav Army and the special units of the Serbian Ministry of the Interior took part in the execution of the captured Bosniacs;

- - Genocide against Bosniacs was carried out continuously, with major or minor oscillations by the end of 1995, in accordance with the great Serbian genocidal ideology, policy, and practice, following the model of fascism and Nazism, irrespective of the number of the killed. The biggest slaughters were in the regions of around ten municipalities with the Bosniac majority in Podrinje, Bosanska posavina, Potkozarje, and along the Sana valley. **Mass graves concentration camps** were relevant indicators of the aggression and the execution of its main intention – biological and spiritual extermination of Bosniacs, that is, genocide against that people;
- - Genocide against Bosniacs is still concealed, minimized, and/or contested, including Judgments by the international (ICTY and ICJ) and national (Federal Republic of Germany and Bosnia and Herzegovina) criminal courts, as well as results of the *Commission for the Research of the Events in and around Srebrenica from 10 to 19 July 1995 by the Republika Srpska Government and the Working Group for the Implementation of Conclusions from the Final Report of the Commission for the Research of Events in and around Srebrenica from 10 to 19 July 1995*;
- - The victims of genocide have been permanently and continuously equalized, which is unacceptable (it has been talked more and more about crimes on all “sides”, by which genocide and other forms of crimes against humanity and international law reduced to war crimes only, which, least to say, insults the scholars of these crimes, particularly the victims of genocide), and the qualification is given to this important issue, judgmentally and in a wrong way, such as the character of crime, which finally does not correspond the state of facts and it is in contravention of the relevant documentation;
- - We are witnesses, unfortunately, of frequent manipulation of the victims of genocide in Bosnian and Herzegovina at the end of XX century, in which particularly active were the pseudo scholars. The holders of the manipulation are different and versatile, individuals, groups, various associations, institutions, and others, whose interests and objectives are very different and difficult to be articulated, detected, identified, established, and formulated in a unique manner. We have identified them as not well intentioned, counterproductive, and with hidden agenda, with potentially long-lasting harmful implications for Bosnia and Herzegovina as the state and all of its citizens, irrespective of their national, religious, or political background. The basis for this qualification stem from the fact that the so-called studies have not been organized or executed on a scientific ground or scientifically defined procedure, by which the process is defined – from the research idea to the establishment of the results of a scientific research and their potential application in a scientific and social practice. It is well known that there is only one truth, and the objective of science is a scientific truth, reachable only by the application of scientific methods;
- - The criminal prosecution of genocide and other forms of crimes against humanity and international law before the courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina has

been continuously obstructed, least to say, whereby we have the forces on the stage which, instead of gravity of the crimes, character, status and number of victims, choose cases based on the ethnic background of the victims, for the purpose of making balance among the crimes committed against three peoples (Bosniacs, Serbs, and Croats) and the pronouncement of the victim of genocide – criminal; moreover, they want to change, through the procedure, the character of “conflict” and the character of crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina, so that the international armed conflict, that is, the aggression, could be qualified as a civil war and the crime of genocide as an “ethnic cleansing”;

- - The planners, order issuing authorities, participants, accessories, co-perpetrators, and perpetrators of genocide are in the great Serbian ideology, politics and practice the biggest heroes in the Serbian people (in science, culture, art, education), who live unpunished and enjoy, unfortunately, in the results of genocide while mocking with the victims of those crimes;
- - The Serbian people and its political and scientific elite have not distanced from the committed genocide, let alone that they apologized to victims or asked for the forgiveness offering the hand of reconciliation. Instead, they keep denying genocide and they transfer responsibility to the victim of genocide, and fabricate and forge the historic facts such as, for example, “thesis” that the legitimate authorities of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina expelled Serbs from Sarajevo, including “more than 650 University professors and assistants”;
- - Entity Republika Srpska is a genocidal creation of the great Serbian Nazism, created on grave violations of international humanitarian law, marked and soaked mainly in Bosniac blood and bordered and covered with numerous mass graves and concentration camps, in which fascistic organization legally operate. This genocidal creation was legalized by the so-called international community and it established the creation as a Constitutional category. Political leadership and other structures of Republika Srpska, in accordance with great Serbian genocidal ideology, policy, and practice, obstruct in all possible ways the strengthening of Bosnia and Herzegovina as the state, and they keep pursuing the policy of cessation, destruction and annulling of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

These are only the most basic facts, deeply engraved in the mind of all the survivors of genocide and other forms of crimes against humanity and international law, and they constitute part of social reality, and as such they by all means try to maintain (live and legal) the Nazi projects that finally imply permanent instability of Bosnia and Herzegovina, deny the political-legal and state continuity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, deny the possibility of common living and affirm this position, raising most serious doubts into the universal human values, freedoms and rights, civilization, and cultural legacy.

It is the time indeed, and the necessity to unify and ally all the antifascists and the antifascist forces to fight for the sustainability of human dignity in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

## **BOSNIA GENOCIDE – 1992-1995 : 200,000 DEATHS**

In the Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina, conflict between the three main ethnic groups, the Serbs, Croats, and Muslims, resulted in genocide committed by the Serbs against the Muslims in Bosnia.

Bosnia is one of several small countries that emerged from the break-up of Yugoslavia, a multicultural country created after World War I by the victorious Western Allies. Yugoslavia was composed of ethnic and religious groups that had been historical rivals, even bitter enemies, including the Serbs (Orthodox Christians), Croats (Catholics) and ethnic Albanians (Muslims).

During World War II, Yugoslavia was invaded by Nazi Germany and was partitioned. A fierce resistance movement sprang up led by Josip Tito. Following Germany's defeat, Tito reunified Yugoslavia under the slogan "Brotherhood and Unity," merging together Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, along with two self-governing provinces, Kosovo and Vojvodina.

Tito, a Communist, was a strong leader who maintained ties with the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War, playing one superpower against the other while obtaining financial assistance and other aid from both. After his death in 1980 and without his strong leadership, Yugoslavia quickly plunged into political and economic chaos. A new leader arose by the late 1980s, a Serbian named Slobodan Milosevic, a former Communist who had turned to nationalism and religious hatred to gain power. He began by inflaming long-standing tensions between Serbs and Muslims in the independent province of Kosovo. Orthodox Christian Serbs in Kosovo were in the minority and claimed they were being mistreated by the Albanian Muslim majority. Serbian-backed political unrest in Kosovo eventually led to its loss of independence and domination by Milosevic.

In June 1991, Slovenia and Croatia both declared their independence from Yugoslavia soon resulting in civil war. The national army of Yugoslavia, now made up of Serbs controlled by Milosevic, stormed into Slovenia but failed to subdue the separatists there and withdrew after only ten days of fighting.

Milosevic quickly lost interest in Slovenia, a country with almost no Serbs. Instead, he turned his attention to Croatia, a Catholic country where Orthodox Serbs made up 12 percent of the population.

During World War II, Croatia had been a pro-Nazi state led by Ante Pavelic and his fascist Ustasha Party. Serbs living in Croatia as well as Jews had been the targets of widespread Ustasha massacres. In the concentration camp at Jasenovac, they had been slaughtered by the tens of thousands.

In 1991, the new Croat government, led by Franjo Tudjman, seemed to be reviving fascism, even using the old Ustasha flag, and also enacted discriminatory laws targeting Orthodox Serbs.

Aided by Serbian guerrillas in Croatia, Milosevic's forces invaded in July 1991 to 'protect' the Serbian minority. In the city of Vukovar, they bombarded the outgunned Croats for 86 consecutive days and reduced it to rubble. After Vukovar fell, the Serbs began the first mass executions of the conflict, killing hundreds of Croat men and burying them in mass graves.

The response of the international community was limited. The U.S. under President George Bush chose not to get involved militarily, but instead recognized the independence of both Slovenia and Croatia. An arms embargo was imposed for all of the former Yugoslavia by the United Nations. However, the Serbs under Milosevic were already the best armed force and thus maintained a big military advantage.

The end of 1991 brokered a U.S.-sponsored cease-fire agreement between the Serbs and Croats fighting in Croatia.

In April 1992, the U.S. and European Community chose to recognize the independence of Bosnia, a mostly Muslim country where the Serb minority made up 32 percent of the population. Milosevic responded to Bosnia's declaration of independence by attacking Sarajevo, its capital city, best known for hosting the 1984 Winter Olympics. Sarajevo soon became known as the city where Serb snipers continually shot down helpless civilians in the streets, including eventually over 3,500 children.

Bosnian Muslims were hopelessly outgunned. As the Serbs gained ground, they began to systematically roundup local Muslims in scenes eerily similar to those that had occurred under the Nazis during World War II, including mass shootings, forced repopulation of entire towns, and confinement in make-shift concentration camps for men and boys. The Serbs also terrorized Muslim families into fleeing their villages by using rape as a weapon against women and girls.

The actions of the Serbs were labeled as 'ethnic cleansing,' a name which quickly took hold among the international media. Despite media reports of the secret camps, the mass killings, as well as the destruction of Muslim mosques and historic architecture in Bosnia, the world community remained mostly indifferent. The U.N. responded by imposing economic sanctions on Serbia and also deployed its troops to protect the distribution of food and medicine to dispossessed Muslims. But the U.N. strictly prohibited its troops from interfering militarily against the Serbs. Thus they remained steadfastly neutral no matter how bad the situation became.

Throughout 1993, confident that the U.N., United States and the European Community would not take military action, Serbs in Bosnia freely committed genocide against Muslims. Bosnian Serbs operated under the local leadership of Radovan Karadzic, president of the illegitimate Bosnian Serb Republic. Karadzic had once told a group of journalists, "Serbs and Muslims are like cats and dogs. They cannot live together in peace. It is impossible."

When Karadzic was confronted by reporters about ongoing atrocities, he bluntly denied involvement of his soldiers or special police units.

On February 6, 1994, the world's attention turned completely to Bosnia as a marketplace in Sarajevo was struck by a Serb mortar shell killing 68 persons and wounding nearly 200. Sights and sounds of the bloody carnage were broadcast globally by the international news media and soon resulted in calls for military intervention against the Serbs.

The U.S. under its new President, Bill Clinton, who had promised during his election campaign in 1992 to stop the ethnic cleansing in Bosnia, now issued an ultimatum through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) demanding that the Serbs withdraw their artillery from Sarajevo. The Serbs quickly complied and a NATO-imposed cease-fire in Sarajevo was declared.

The U.S. then launched diplomatic efforts aimed at unifying Bosnian Muslims and the Croats against the Serbs. However, this new Muslim-Croat alliance failed to stop the Serbs from attacking Muslim towns in Bosnia, which had been declared Safe Havens by the U.N. A total of six Muslim towns had been established as Safe Havens in May 1993 under the supervision of U.N. peacekeepers.

Bosnian Serbs not only attacked the Safe Havens but also attacked the U.N. peacekeepers as well. NATO forces responded by launching limited air strikes against Serb ground positions. The Serbs retaliated by taking hundreds of U.N. peacekeepers as hostages and turning them into human shields, chained to military targets such as ammo supply dumps.

At this point, some of the worst genocidal activities of the four-year-old conflict occurred. In Srebrenica, a Safe Haven, U.N. peacekeepers stood by helplessly as the Serbs under the command of General Ratko Mladic systematically selected and then slaughtered nearly 8,000 men and boys between the ages of twelve and sixty – the worst mass murder in Europe since World War II. In addition, the Serbs continued to engage in mass rapes of Muslim females.

On August 30, 1995, effective military intervention finally began as the U.S. led a massive NATO bombing campaign in response to the killings at Srebrenica, targeting Serbian artillery positions throughout Bosnia. The bombardment continued into October. Serb forces also lost ground to Bosnian Muslims who had received arms shipments from the Islamic world. As a result, half of Bosnia was eventually retaken by Muslim-Croat troops.

Faced with the heavy NATO bombardment and a string of ground losses to the Muslim-Croat alliance, Serb leader Milosevic was now ready to talk peace. On November 1, 1995, leaders of the warring factions including Milosevic and Tudjman traveled to the U.S. for peace talks at Wright-Patterson Air Force base in Ohio.

After three weeks of negotiations, a peace accord was declared. Terms of the agreement included partitioning Bosnia into two main portions known as the Bosnian Serb Republic and the Muslim-Croat Federation. The agreement also called for democratic elections and stipulated that war criminals would be handed over for prosecution. 60,000 NATO soldiers were deployed to preserve the cease-fire.

By now, over 200,000 Muslim civilians had been systematically murdered. More than 20,000 were missing and feared dead, while 2,000,000 had become refugees. It was, according to U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, “the greatest failure of the West since the 1930s.”

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