

Article by Christian Schwarz-Schilling, High Representative for BiH: "Srebrenica Is a Special Case"



The RS Government has made Srebrenica municipality an area of special socio-economic significance and unveiled a Srebrenica Development Programme. This includes earmarking 16 million KM of public spending to Srebrenica and legislative changes to channel higher budget allocations to the municipality over the long term. These moves should be commended. But they are not the only yardstick by which the RS Government's conduct should be measured.

Srebrenica is a special case. The systematic elimination of the town's male population in July 1995 was carried out on the orders of Ratko Mladic, the commander of the Army of Republika Srpska. This fact does not make the citizens of Republika Srpska culpable. But it does place Republika Srpska under a moral and political compulsion to deal with the consequences of the genocide. Srebrenica must therefore remain at the very top of the RS Government's agenda.

The citizens of Republika Srpska can look forward to a prosperous future in Bosnia and Herzegovina as the country integrates itself into the European Union. But for this to

happen, the Government's commitments on Srebrenica must be met in full. Honouring these commitments is crucial not only for the survivors of Srebrenica, but for all the citizens of Republika Srpska.

Christian Schwarz-Schilling is the international community's High Representative and EU Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina.