

Statement by the High Representative, Paddy Ashdown Marking the Tenth Anniversary of the Massacre in Srebrenica

There Can Be No Peace Without Justice

Attending the ceremony today in Potocari to commemorate ten years since the massacre of Bosniaks in the United Nations protected safe zone of Srebrenica, the Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, said "today is above all a day for the families who are burying their dead: our efforts to open the memorial in Potocari has provided a place where they can do so with dignity."

"Most importantly we must ensure that those responsible; Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, face justice in the Hague . In this way will we ensure that the truth of these terrible events is known and recognised. Serbia is moving from denial to recognition of the crimes that were committed here in their name. The way to absolve collective guilt is to establish individual guilt under the law. These crimes are the crimes of individuals and with the arrest and trial of those individuals we can start to say we are moving towards reconciliation".

"I welcome the attendance of the President Boris Tadic of Serbia today, just as I welcome the invitation offered to him by BiH Presidency Member Sulejman Tihic. Both the invitation and the attendance are marks of bravery and statesmanship. Srebrenica was by far the worst but not the only crime of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina . If this is the start of a process where the memory of the dead, be they Bosniak, Serb or Croat, is honoured then this would mean real progress for the whole region."

"The worst crime to take place in Europe in the latter part of the twentieth century took place here. The world's failure to protect the people of this country and the people in Potocari in particular is our greatest shame. A decade later, Bosnia and Herzegovina stands on the threshold of formal negotiations with the European Union. We owe it to those who died to see through the task of building a brighter future for this country".