

Address of the High Representative at the Commemoration for victims of Srebrenica genocide



Srebrenica-Potočari Memorial Center, 11 July 2018

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Humbly I stand today before the victims and families of victims of genocide in Srebrenica.

With deep sorrow I pay respect to the genocide survivors who grieve for their loved ones.

As a human being, and in my official capacity as the High Representative, I wish to repeat what has been said on numerous occasions and must be repeated indefinitely: the genocide in Srebrenica should have never happened, just as the atrocities in other places in Eastern Bosnia and throughout the country should never have happened.

These are all stains on our conscience. They cannot be removed, and many international officials have already expressed that they were co-responsible for Srebrenica.

On several occasions I expressed my personal conviction that the start of the mankind was the first funeral.

It was only with the first funeral that we started being

human. That is why I believe that a dignified funeral is the oldest right of humans – the oldest human right of every human, of every victim.

Precisely that right to a dignified funeral belongs to baby Fatima Muhić, only several minutes old, Remzija Dudić, only twenty years old and six months pregnant, and her husband, Nijazija Dudiću, 22 years old. This right also belongs to Vesid Ibrić and Feris Mehmedović – 16-year-olds, son of my friend from Austria Nezir Kadrić, Šahin Halilović, 71 years old, Šaha Izmirlić, 90 years old, the eldest victim, and all other victims. Today Mirsad Mujčinović is burying his third brother.

In our grief, in our frustration with injustice, or justice, which comes only slowly or not at all, in our fear that some may still seek to revive evil ideologies, with monuments, posters, student dorms or parties that are named after war criminals, we should also remember that the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina lived together for centuries in peace and good neighborly love, for much longer than they have been separated.

BiH citizens' ability to live together in harmony despite their differences still exists, and I believe it is getting stronger.

People in this country understand that today we grieve the victims and reflect on what happened here, but, at the same time, that tomorrow we must return to the pursuit of building a better world together, a new Bosnia and Herzegovina, in honor of the victims, to make sure their sacrifice has not been in vain.

I know that this will not bring back all those who are buried here, and will not soothe the pain of their loved ones. But an indestructible hope for a better tomorrow is the best tribute to the victims of genocide.

As every war does, the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina brought to light the best out of good people and the worst out of bad people. Forgiving is important for reconciliation. But, because of the future generations, we should never forget.

Dear victims of genocide, survivors of genocide, we will never forget this tragedy of planetary proportions, the genocide that was committed.

We will never forget Srebrenica, as a universal category and a warning to the humanity.

We will keep on working for peace, justice and truth in this beautiful country.

Because only the truth can free us!

May the victims rest in peace.

It is my humble opinion that human kind started with the first burial of humans. Accordingly, the right for a dignified burial is the oldest human rights. You all came here to exercise this oldest right, and to pay respect to innocent victims. We should never forget these victims, otherwise we have killed them for the second time.

Thank you.

Photo gallery: HR Valentin Inzko and PDHR Dennis Hearne at the commemoration in Potočari