

Göttingen, 16. September 2016

AN APPEAL BY BOSNIAN VICTIMS AND CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS OF ALL NATIONALITIES

"Preserve the unity of Bosnia and Herzegovina!"

- to the High Representative of the International Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Valentin Inzko
- the member states of the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) and its Steering Board
- the President of the European Parliament
- the member states of the European Union; the EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy
- the European Commission and the Council of Europe

Dear Mr. Inzko,

on behalf of the Bosnian victims and civil rights organizations, we would like to address this urgent appeal to you and the member states of the Peace Implementation Council, asking you to try and prevent the national day referendum in the Republika Srpska (RS) on January 9 (announced on September 25, 2016) by all means.

The planned referendum is not only unconstitutional and discriminatory to the other peoples of Bosnia-Herzegovina, it could also be a precursor for a referendum on the secession from the Republika Srpska and an accession to Serbia in the near future. Both the Serbian extremists in Bosnia and the Government of Serbia see this referendum as a first step to finally break up Bosnia-Herzegovina. The international community must not tolerate this!

In this context, we would like to recall the war and the genocide crimes, which claimed 150,000 Bosnian victims. Jewish personalities of international recognition have condemned these crimes (see the Annex), including Marek Edelman, the recently deceased last commander of the resistance fighters of the Warsaw Ghetto: "Europe has learned nothing from the Holocaust. What happened in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a posthumous victory for Hitler."

Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker (GfbV)
Society for threatened Peoples
Associazione per i popoli minacciati
Société pour les peuples menacés
Asociación para los Pueblos Amenazados
Общество защиты угнетенных народов
Društvo za ugrozene narode
جمعية الشعوب المهددة بالانقراض

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NATIONALE SEKTIONEN UND REPRÄSENTANTEN

Arbil (IRQ)
Bern/Berne (CH)
Bozen/Bolzano (I)
Goettingen • Berlin (D)
London (GRB)
Luxemburg/Luxembourg (L)
New York (USA)
Sarajevo • Srebrenica (BiH)
Wien/Vienna (A)

Für Menschenrechte.
Weltweit.



For three years, the governments of Europe and the United States watched idly while more than one hundred concentration, internment, and rape camps were established. The fact that about two million Bosnians were displaced or forced to flee – which is why they are now scattered across four continents – was passively accepted, just like the encirclement and starvation of hundreds of thousands of peoples, or the air raids on the so-called UN safe zones. We have included a list of all these terrible crimes.

During the three years of war (1992-1995), the international community hardly made any constructive steps to put an end to genocide, mass expulsion, and mass rape in the country. Finally, the country was divided into two entities by means of the Dayton “Agreement”. Especially appalling: Germany, freshly unified, also played a role in breaking up the defenseless European country of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Since 2006, all initiatives for a constitutional reform that were suggested by the EU or the United States were inhibited by nationalist politicians. Milorad Dodik, the president of the Serb-controlled part of Bosnia, is undermining the constitutional order of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which was established in the scope of the Dayton Peace Agreement in 1995. Again and again, he threatens to hold a referendum on secession in the Republika Srpska. Here, the STP would like to recall that hundreds of thousands of Bosnians were forced to flee before and after the outbreak of war in 1992. Now, the non-Serb returnees in the RS live in fear of flight and expulsion once again. The international community must not let Bosnia and Herzegovina down again like in 1992. A new war must be avoided at all costs!

Therefore, the signatories and co-signatories would like to appeal to the governments of the EU countries and the United States to take action soon, and to put an end to Milorad Dodik’s secession plans immediately. Now, Europe and the United States still have a chance to keep Bosnia and Herzegovina from falling apart and to prevent a new war. This chance must be used! The governments of the PIC (Peace Implementation Council), especially the EU and the United States, have to act immediately in order to prevent a new war in the heart of Europe, with thousands of victims and hundreds of thousands of new refugees in the own back yard.

The Board of the Society for Threatened Peoples – Bosnia and Herzegovina:

Dr. Eli Tauber, Advisor for Culture and Religion to the BiH Jewish Community (Sarajevo)

Prof. Dr. Fra Mile Babić, Professor at the Faculty of Franciscan Theology in Sarajevo

Miro Lazović, Deputy President of the City Council of Sarajevo

Prof. Dr. Ljubomir Berberović, academic, co-founder of the Serbian Citizens Council - Bosnia Herzegovina

Emir Zlatar, representative of the foundation “Justice for Bosnia and Herzegovina”, Secretary General of the Congress of Bosniak Intellectuals
Prof. Dr. Nedžad Mulabegović, President of the Council of the Congress of Bosniak Intellectuals

Amina Rizvanbegović-Džuvic, Director of the Bosniak Institute in Sarajevo
Jasmin Mešković, president of the Association of Former Camp Detainees – Bosnia and Herzegovina

Hatidža Mehmedović, the STP’s BiH-coordinator in Srebrenica, president of “Mothers of Srebrenica” (Srebrenica)

Bajro Beganović, president of the Roma association “Our Future” in Sarajevo

List of signatory organizations in Bosnia and Herzegovina:

1. Serb Civic Council (Sarajevo)
2. Serb Civic Council (Tuzla)
3. Serb Civic Council (Zenica)
4. Serb Civic Council (Mostar)
5. Croatian People’s Council (Sarajevo)
6. Foundation “Justice for Bosnia and Herzegovina” (Sarajevo)
7. Haggadah – Association for the promotion of Jewish culture in Bosnia and Herzegovina
8. Mothers of Srebrenica (Srebrenica)
9. Women of Srebrenica (Tuzla)
10. Citizens Forum Srebrenica (Srebrenica / Tuzla)
11. Srebrenica 99 (Tuzla)
12. Association of intellectuals of Srebrenica (Srebrenica)
13. Society for Prevention of Genocide (Srebrenica)
14. Students Association Srebrenica (Srebrenica)
15. Congress of Bosniak Intellectuals (Sarajevo)
16. Association of former camp inmates BiH (Sarajevo)
17. Women’s Section of the Association of Former Camp Detainees – Canton Sarajevo (Sarajevo)
18. Association “Women – Victims of War” (Sarajevo)
19. “Return and the Right of Residence” (Bijeljina)
20. Bridges – Association of Families of Missing Persons (Bosanska Krupa)
21. Association of the families of missing and killed Bosniaks in Brcko District (Brcko)
22. Association of camp prisoners Brčko (Brčko)
23. Association of the families of prisoners and missing persons from the Municipality Prozor (Prozor)
24. Association of the families of the missing from Hadzici (Hadzici)
25. Association of the families of prisoners and missing persons from the Canton Herzegovina-Neretva (Mostar)
26. Association of families of the missing from Mostar (Mostar)
27. Association of returnees to Zepa (Zepa)
28. Association of the families of the victims and missing persons from Kotor Varos “Vrbanka” (Travnik)
29. Association of the families of prisoners and missing persons from Zvornik municipality (Tuzla)

30. Association of returnees to Kotorsko (Kotorsko in Doboј)
31. Roma Union (Sarajevo / Lukavac)
32. Roma Association "Sa E Roma" (Tuzla)
33. Roma Club Zenica (Zenica)
34. Roma Club Zavidovici (Zavidovici)
35. Roma Association "Our Future" (Sarajevo)
36. Women's Roma Association (Tuzla)
37. Union of Associations of families of missing persons from the Drina Valley (Tuzla)
38. Women of the Drina Valley (Bratunac)
39. Women of the Drina Valley (Vlasenica)
40. Women of the Drina Valley (Sarajevo)
41. Association of returnees to Banja Luka (Vrbanja in Banja Luka)
42. Coalition for Return (Banja Luka)
43. Association of the families of missing persons "Visegrad 92" (Sarajevo)
44. Association "Women's Strength" (Tuzla)
45. Women's Union Bosfam (Srebrenica / Tuzla)
46. Democratic Council of Bosniaks (Bijeljina)
47. Civic Association Terra (Sarajevo)
48. Women's Association Mak Bosanka (Sarajevo)
49. Humanitarian Organisation Merhamet (Sarajevo)
50. Association of parents of children killed during the occupation in Sarajevo (Sarajevo)
51. Network of women's organizations of BiH – "FOCUS BiH" (Sarajevo)
52. Medica BiH (Zenica / Visoko)
53. Union Eho (Ljubuški)
54. Women of BiH (Mostar)
55. Youth Centre Kwart (Prijedor)
56. Women's Organisation Amica (Srebrenica)
57. Women's Organization "Maja" (Kravica in Bratunac)
58. Women's Organization "Zelja" (Skelani near Srebrenica)
59. Women's Organization "Zora" (Milici)
60. Women's organizations "Astra" (Bijeljina)
61. Youth Forum Stolac (Stolac)
62. Women's organization United Women (Banja Luka)
63. Association of returnees to Trebinje (Trebinje)
64. Helsinki Committee for Human Rights – Republika Srpska (Bijeljina)
65. Association "With Heart to Peace" (Kozarac near Prijedor)
66. Association of the families of the missing from Prijedor "Izvor"