



HELSINŠKI ODBOR ZA LJUDSKA PRAVA U SRBIJI
HELSINKI COMMITTEE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN SERBIA

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Arrest of Ratko Mladić is Serbia's Moral Obligation

Fifteen years have passed since the genocide in Srebrenica and the main culprit of that crime Ratko Mladić is still at large. This is a moral mortgage which prevents us from moving forwards. Many new generations are hostage to this mortgage and the lack of government's readiness to fulfill its obligations toward the Hague Tribunal. But first and foremost its moral commitment toward the victims and Serbia's future.

Srebrenica provoked an unequivocal moral condemnation the world over. The International Court of Justice pronounced a verdict in the lawsuit launched by Bosnia and Herzegovina, ruling that genocide was committed in Srebrenica, and found Serbia responsible for failing to prevent it. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia also passed several verdicts which confirmed the Srebrenica genocide. There are several ongoing cases before this court - against Radovan Karadžić, Momčilo Perišić, Franko Simatović and Jovica Stanišić - who are standing trial for the genocide in Srebrenica but also in other parts of Bosnia. The European Parliament adopted a Declaration which proclaims July 11 Srebrenica Remembrance Day.

Recently, in accordance with the International Court of Justice verdict, Serbia adopted a Declaration condemning the Srebrenica crime, thus accepting its responsibility. This is an important step in acknowledging this crime, but it does not have full meaning without the arrest of Ratko Mladić.

Therefore, we demand from the Serbian Government to arrest Ratko Mladić without delay and extradite him to the Hague Tribunal. Any hesitation would represent further discrediting of the Government and diminish the possibility for Serbia to present itself to the world as responsible for its actions, present and past. The arrest of Ratko Mladić will not diminish the Srebrenica crime, but it will certainly show that Serbia possesses sensitivity and empathy towards the victims who expect fulfillment of justice. Equally important, Serbia would also show responsibility towards our own future.

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