

Serbs want the world to admit their losses

By [Global Research](#)

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Bosnian Serbs are filing a lawsuit against the United Nations and the Netherlands saying they turned a blind eye to atrocities committed by Muslims against Serb civilians during the war in Bosnia in the early 90s.

World attention has focused on the massacre of thousands of Muslim men in Srebrenica, but Bosnian Serbs say their lawsuit is being brought to show they too were victims – at the hands of Muslims – in a brutal civil war.

According to them, both the UN and the Netherlands had forces inside Bosnia-Herzegovina during the war and were supposed to protect civilians. The Serb survivors insist they turned a blind eye and failed to protect civilians on both sides during the conflict.

Their claim is less about money and more about asking the world to recognise that Serbian civilians also suffered at the hands of Muslim military forces during the Srebrenica war.

Serbs under fire

War broke out in Bosnia in April 1992. For the next three years Serb and Muslim villages surrounding the Muslim enclave of Srebrenica came under fire. Thousands of people died, among them at least 1,000 Serbs, while another 15,000 were expelled from their homes.

The violence culminated in what many see as a retaliatory massacre by Serb forces on Muslim men and boys in Srebrenica. As many as 8,500 Muslims died in the space of three days.

Memories of grief

Milojka Bibich stares at what remains of her family home.

“The Muslims attacked our village by surprise,” she recalls at the remains of her family home.

There’s nothing left there now to remind her of the tragedy that took place 17 years ago. But the trauma of that day is etched into her memory. She watched as one by one, each member of her family was killed.

“My older brother was killed about 100 kilometres from the house. They smashed his head and mutilated his body. My younger brother’s body was never found. My mother’s throat was slashed. I took refuge in the school, where later all my family’s bodies were burnt by the Muslims.”

Zlatko Vasich, a Serb, was seventeen years old when he was kidnapped while walking home. His abductors were Muslim neighbours whom he recognised. They forced him and his cousin, at gunpoint, to walk to the nearest Muslim village.

“I was tortured every day, three times a day. The Muslims beat me and my cousin. They also forced us to drink urine. We never had enough food. They kept us in prison for 18 days, until eventually we were traded for Muslim prisoners.”

Both Zlatko and Milojka are among a dozen Serbs suing the United Nations and the Netherlands.

Biased approach?

There are 3214 people buried at the place where the memorial to the thousands of Muslims who died in Srebrenica is located. The Muslims say many more are missing. The Serbs say the numbers have been exaggerated.

“I think during the Bosnian war, the Muslim side, for various geopolitical reasons, happened to be favoured by very influential Western powers,” said Stephen Kardanovic, president of the Srebrenica Historical Project.

“Their side continued to enjoy that favour in the Western media even after the war was over. So the impression was as if the Muslims were the only victims of Srebrenica, which is untrue.”

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