



UNITED NATIONS

International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals

The International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals ("Mechanism") was established on 22 December 2010 by the United Nations Security Council to continue the jurisdiction, rights, obligations and essential functions of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda ("ICTR") and the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia ("ICTY") which closed in 2015 and 2017, respectively.

STATEMENT

PRESIDENT

(Exclusively for the use of the media. Not an official document)

The Hague, 11 July 2022

Judge Graciela Gatti Santana, President International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals Remarks for the 27th Commemoration of the Srebrenica Genocide 11 July 2022

Excellencies, esteemed victims and survivors,
Mothers of Srebrenica and other victims' associations,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am honoured to be here today. Indeed, it is very meaningful for me, as the new President of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, to be able to join you in Potočari to mark the Twenty-seventh Commemoration of the Genocide in Srebrenica so soon after the start of my mandate, which commenced 10 days ago.

Yesterday I felt privileged to participate in the Srebrenica Heroines Conference, which brought together not only women who survived the Genocide, but a variety of participants who are working to preserve the truth about the Genocide through women's perspectives. And preservation of the truth is really the essence of our presence here, today.

In anticipation of this Commemoration, I have reflected at length on the events that occurred in and around Srebrenica in July 1995. In so doing, I became cognizant of the fact that, whatever language we may speak, wherever we may come from, the name "Srebrenica" carries such weight, and is so significant, that it is known by people around the world. It evokes a full spectrum of memories and emotions that can bring one from the depths of despair, through to real belief in the human spirit and hope for the future. Srebrenica connotes on the one hand cruelty; atrocity; inhumanity; as well as loss; anguish; and heartbreak. But on the other hand, it signifies enormous courage; resilience; perseverance; and the potential for reconciliation. Srebrenica has transcended all ages, religions, and cultures.

As a Judge of the Mechanism's Appeals Chamber in the case of Radovan Karadžić, I became deeply familiar with the Trial Chamber's findings in relation to the Srebrenica component of that case. Understanding what happened here in this very location, in the nearby buildings, and in the surrounding area makes being here in person even more poignant for me. Moreover, in my personal capacity, as a mother, and as a wife, I can only imagine the

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torment that you, the victims, have experienced. I take this opportunity to express my sincere solidarity with all those who lost their loved ones during the horrors that took place.

Despite the incontrovertible judgements of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, the Mechanism, the International Court of Justice, and the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which have proven beyond reasonable doubt that genocide was committed in Srebrenica, we still find ourselves confronted by those who deny their findings; who deny your suffering. However, we know the truth. We stand for the truth, and we can seek solace in these judgements, which speak for themselves. We must also remember that those engaging in such rhetoric are in the minority. While their voices are loud, the name Srebrenica resonates far further.

As the new President of the Mechanism, I am proud to take the helm of this institution which, in the context of the former Yugoslavia, exists not only to deal with residual functions of the ICTY, but also to safeguard its precious legacy. This includes the myriad findings made by various Chambers of the Tribunal on the crimes that were committed and the responsibility of those convicted for those crimes. The legacy of the ICTY therefore reflects your own lives and the experiences that you have endured. As more of those lost are finally laid to rest today, please know that your stories are recorded for posterity, and they are a testament to your bravery in facing what happened to you, your families, your friends, and to humanity as a whole, here in Srebrenica.

We owe it to the generations that came before us, and those that will follow, to safeguard the truth. However, it is also our responsibility to reach out to others and to share our knowledge about what happened during the conflict. After all, if we forget the past, we are doomed to repeat it.

In closing, allow me to assure you how committed I am to making sure that the Mechanism continues to protect, uphold, and promote the ICTY's legacy, thereby ensuring that the voices of the victims will always be heard, and that the truth is never suppressed.

I thank you sincerely for your attention today.
