



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)

Judge Graciela Gatti Santana
President, International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals
Remarks for 30th Commemoration of 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica
11 July 2025

Esteemed survivors and families of victims,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am humbled to join you today in marking the 30th commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica. This milestone brings to the surface several complex emotions for the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also for the international community, which witnessed in shock the horrific events that unfolded 30 years ago.

It is a moment of grief.

For the survivors and families of those lost, time might gradually soften the pain, but the physical and emotional scars are a permanent reminder. The crimes committed against the population of the Srebrenica enclave – both locals and others who sought safety there – stand out for their systematic brutality: the methodical separation of men and boys from women and girls; the execution of men and boys targeted solely for their identity; the forcible transfer of women and girls; the clinical and pervasive perpetration of other heinous crimes.

Three decades later, some of the victims have yet to be found, depriving their families of needed closure. Some of the suspects continue to evade justice. And some of the convicted criminals are glorified, while the judicially established facts concerning Srebrenica are denied. These disturbing realities result in additional trauma for victims and perpetuate ethnic divisions within the generations born after the conflicts.

Though the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (Mechanism) have successfully completed the task of trying persons indicted for crimes committed in Srebrenica and elsewhere during the 1990s conflicts in the former Yugoslavia, the Mechanism remains committed to addressing these issues, within the confines of its mandate. The Mechanism continues to provide key evidence and support to national jurisdictions in delivering justice, and support to legacy and educational initiatives across the region based on the judicial findings of these tribunals.



Today is also a moment of remembrance and of honouring the victims and survivors.

An opportunity to recognize once more your resilience for having rebuilt your community from the ground up, for standing strong and reminding the world of what has transpired here, and for your perseverance in seeking justice and truth. An opportunity, also, to pay tribute to the courage of the more than 1,000 witnesses who set aside personal fears in order to testify in ICTY and Mechanism cases relating to Srebrenica.

The designation by the United Nations General Assembly of 11 July as the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica acknowledges these extraordinary qualities. This act by the General Assembly further recognised the importance of judicial findings about the Srebrenica Genocide, including those made by the ICTY and the Mechanism, for education and remembrance.

I strongly encourage national authorities, civil society, international and regional organisations, and the academic community to use the judicial findings of the ICTY and the Mechanism to combat denial and work towards preventing future conflicts. In this context, the Mechanism is proud to have recently concluded an agreement with the Srebrenica Memorial Centre, which will showcase public judicial records relating to Srebrenica for the benefit of the public.

Finally, this is a moment of hope.

Hope that healing is possible. Hope that the strength of the survivors and victims will continue to inspire and empower others. Hope that persistent efforts towards remembrance and education can lead to true reconciliation.

The United Nations resolution highlights that “criminal accountability under international law for the crime of genocide is individualized and cannot be attributed to any ethnic, religious or other group or community as a whole”. Through open acceptance, we must allow everyone to be proud of their ethnic background, assure communities that the horrific war crimes committed by the few are not a reflection of the whole, and insist that denying such atrocities only leads to more pain and conflict. Thirty years on, I hope that everyone concerned can demonstrate such acceptance.

In the *Krstić* case before the ICTY – the first conviction for genocide in Srebrenica – the Appeals Chamber stated: “Those who devise and implement genocide seek to deprive humanity of the manifold richness its nationalities, races, ethnicities and religions provide. This is a crime against all of humankind, its harm being felt not only by the group targeted for destruction, but by all of humanity.”

I agree wholeheartedly. May we remember that it is our differences that allow for the fullest experience of being human, and that there is unity in diversity. And may we continue to stand in solidarity and compassion with those whose humanity, because of their differences, was denied here in 1995.

Thank you sincerely for your attention.
