

Relatives Mourn Dead at Srebrenica Anniversary

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By Merdijana Sadovic in Sarajevo (TU No 510, 13-July-07)

Thousands gathered this week near Srebrenica to mark the twelfth anniversary of the 1995 massacre in which 8,000 Muslim men and boys were killed when Serb forces took over the town.

The remains of 465 victims whose remains were identified last year were buried at the memorial centre in Potocari on July 11 – raising the number of identified and buried Srebrenica victims to 2,907.

Thousands of remains exhumed from mass graves around Srebrenica are still in morgues in Tuzla and Visoko.

Local and international officials attended the burial, including the tribunal's chief prosecutor Carla Del Ponte. She also met women survivors from Srebrenica, who asked why she hadn't kept her promise made a year ago that the tribunal's most wanted fugitive General Ratko Mladic would be arrested.

"I didn't lie to you - that's what I was told in Belgrade at the time," said Del Ponte.

Serbian officials did not attend the ceremony, but a number of Serbian NGOs, including the Women in Black association, came to express their sympathies to the survivors of the massacre.

The president of the association, Stasa Zajevic, said she and other members came to Srebrenica to "apologise to the relatives of the victims for the crime that was committed on our behalf".

"We admit that genocide in Srebrenica was a crime organised on a state level and that the country we are coming from was involved in it. We want the perpetrators of this crime to be punished," said Zajevic.

Merdijana Sadovic is IWPR's Hague programme manager.

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