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SUMMER UNIVERSITY OF SREBRENICA Bosnia and Herzegovina, 04–14.07.2016

The Summer University of Srebrenica (SUS) is a programme for postgraduate students and researchers from all around the world. The main purpose of the University is to conduct research projects on topics related to genocide, transnational justice and human rights. The annual programme is organised in memory of the crimes committed in July 1995. In the massacre, more than 8,000 Muslim Bosniaks, mainly men and boys, were killed near Srebrenica.

The goals of the Summer University of Srebrenica are to bring together students and experts, and to facilitate a high-level academic discussion. Participants meet experts (judges, social workers and employees of international organisations) as well as survivors of the genocide of 1995. They have a possibility to understand how it was possible for such a terrible event to occur, to discuss strategies for dealing with the post-conflict phase and how to prevent such a tragedy from happening in the future. The programme is established under the auspices of the Center for Srebrenica-Potočari Memorial and Cemetery for the Victims of the 1995 Genocide.

From 4 to 14 July 2016, another edition of the Summer University of Srebrenica was organised, with 25 people from all over the world taking part in the programme. There were selected researchers from the United States, Poland (Małgorzata Myl, University of Silesia), Ukraine, Turkey, Germany, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Canada. The programme of SUS was divided into several parts: panels with experts, study visits and a Peace March.

On the first day of the Summer University of Srebrenica, the participants took part in an opening session led by Mr Mohamed Duraković, one of the founders of SUS. He is a survivor of the Srebrenica genocide, having managed to escape from Srebrenica after a 37-day ordeal through forests, on the route known as the “March of Death”. In his speech, he reminded the participants of the most important facts about the massacre of 1995 and its impact on everyday life in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The next speakers of the opening panel were Ms Mary-Ann Hennessey – Head of the Office of Council of Europe and Mr Hasan Nuhanović – author and survivor of genocide. Ms Hennessey, in her speech, drew attention to challenges that Bosnia and Herzegovina needs to face nowadays. One of the most important challenges is hate speech and a lack of tolerance. For Bosnia and Herzegovina, with its tragic history, bias-motivated violence might be very dangerous. The role of international organisations is to observe the situation and to take action in order to avoid any tensions between citizens. Speaking next was Mr Hasan Nuhanović, a former U.N. interpreter for the Dutch peacekeepers stationed in Srebrenica in 1995. In his speech, he raised the issue of cooperation with the UN. He presented the results of the case *The Netherlands v. Hasan Nuhanović*, also known as the *Nuhanović case*. The judgments dealt with the legal responsibility of the Netherlands

for the deaths of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica in 1995. This was the first ever case where a government was held responsible for actions performed by its peacekeeping troops while being part of a UN operation.

The subsequent days of the Summer University of Srebrenica were filled with meetings with experts and study visits. Dr David Pettigrew, from Southern Connecticut State University, raised a controversial question about prohibited memorials as a continuation of genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He proved that in many places in Bosnia and Herzegovina, memorials for victims have been prohibited and survivors have been prevented from using the term “genocide”. On the other hand, memorials to perpetrators have been located in many places, e.g. a plague honouring Ratko Mladić has been installed in the hills above Sarajevo. Dr Pettigrew claimed that, considering the discriminatory practices regarding memorials in Republika Srpska, this constitutes violations of human rights. He referred to Raphael Lemkin’s definition of genocide. In Dr Pettigrew’s opinion, the prohibitive policies in Republika Srpska with respect to memorials and commemorative practices constitute a continuation of genocide – a second phase of genocide that is designed to ensure the permanent erasure of a world that was destroyed. This concept led to heated discussion between all the participants.

The next speech was given by Ms Margriet Prins, Head of the Mission at International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. In 2013–2014, she was also a special Assistant to the Prosecutor at International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Ms Prins referred to the newest sentences of ICTY, in case of Vojislav Šešelj and Radovan Karadžić. She also commented on the work of local prosecutors of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In her opinion, the work of national justice, though slow, deserves a positive evaluation.

Study visits were a significant part of the Summer University of Srebrenica. The participants visited the office of the United Nations Development Programme in Sarajevo, the International Commission of Missing Persons (ICMP), the Office of the High Representative and the Office of the Organization for the Security and Cooperation in Europe. The meeting in the United Nations Development Programme was held by Ms Amela Ćosović-Medić, Justice and Security Sector Coordinator. The topic of discussion was the role of the United Nations as an international organisation in the reconstruction of post-conflict justice. Ms Ćosović-Medić pointed out that the biggest problem faced by the justice system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is a need for change in the internal law, especially in terms of legal satisfaction and pensions for survivors and their families. The need to activate society is another significant challenge. The conflict drastically affected the level of education and unemployment, which naturally influences the standard of living. The new challenges in Bosnia and Herzegovina were also at the heart of the discussion led by Ambassador Jonathan Moore, the Head of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In his speech, he mentioned the upcoming local elections, which eventually took part on 2 October 2016. The ambassador mentioned that voting in local elections is not only a democratic right, but also a duty of citizens. The upcoming elections were very important for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Mr Moore pointed out how clever and dedicated local officials could bring positive attention and prosperity for all. It is very important that voters can select their candidates based on their values, interests and needs. The ambassador underlined that one of main tasks of the OSCE in Bosnia and Herzegovina is to follow the local elections and to check that they are conducted with democratic values.

Study visits to offices of the International Commission of Missing Persons were incredibly valuable for all the participants. The ICMP was created in 1996 at the G-7 Summit in France, at the initiative of US President Bill Clinton. The main goal of the ICMP is to endeavour to secure the cooperation of governments and other authorities in locating and identifying missing persons as a result of conflict, disasters or human rights violations. Since 1996, the Commission has played a significant role in dealing with the issue of missing persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The participants of SUS visited two offices of the ICMP: the first visit was to a DNA laboratory in Sarajevo, and the second to the Podrinje Identification Project in Tuzla. The first meeting, in Sarajevo, was held by Mr Matthew Holliday, ICMP Head of the Western Balkans Programme, who explained how exactly the ICMP works in Bosnia and Herzegovina, what the structure is, what mandate the Commission has, and how it cooperates with local institutions and authorities. He also presented the working methods and pointed out some legal issues that the ICMP has to deal with. The participants also had a chance to visit The Centre of Podrinje Identification Project in Tuzla. This is a high level forensic facility that conducts human remains analysis and DNA sampling. The Centre also coordinates the identification process in the case of an estimated 8,000 missing persons from Srebrenica 1995. The meeting was held by Mr Edin Jašaragić, the Head of Identification Coordination Division (ICD), and Ms Dragana Vučetić, Senior Forensic Anthropologist. The experts presented the results of their work. They pointed out that in the first few years the process of identification was very slow. Specialists were able to identify approximately 50 human remains a year, mostly based on traditional methods (clothes, glasses, etc.). Now, thanks to DNA identification, the ICMP is able to identify 400–500 human remains a year. Each analysis costs approximately USD 600. Ms Vučetić explained the details of the advanced technology of the identification process, which allows genetic material to be obtained even from very small and old parts of human bones. The technology has been patented by the International Commission of Missing Persons and is used by the Commission in many countries. Mr Edin Jašaragić told the participants about a special data policy that had been introduced by the ICMP. The organisation signs special agreements with relatives of missing persons in order to keep their data, including genetic material, strictly confidential. The ICMP has created a special computer program that can encrypt the DNA code data, but at the same time the DNA code data remains accessible for sequencing and comparing.

One of the most important parts of the Summer University of Srebrenica was the Peace March. This is an annual three-day long walking campaign that aims to express support for the anniversary of genocide in Srebrenica. It reminds the international community of the crimes committed against Bosniaks in a safe area, the so-called “safe haven of the United Nations” in Srebrenica in July 1995. The Peace March lasted for three days, from 8 to 10 July. The route was divided into parts from 30 to 35 kilometres long. During the March, at certain checkpoints, short historical lessons were held, where there was an opportunity to hear some of the testimonies of survivors and participants of the real “Death March” in 1995. The March was ended with memorial ceremony during which 127 victims were buried (victims that have been identified since 2015 when the previous ceremony took place). The ceremony in 2016 was the first that had no Serbian delegation present. This was a result of events in 2015, when victims’ families said that those who deny that genocide happened in Srebrenica were not welcome. This attitude is a result of an accident that happened during the ceremony in 2015, when the crowd

chased away the Serbian Prime Minister Mr Alexandor Vučić. Mr Vučić enlisted its ally Russia to veto a UN resolution that would have condemned the denial of Srebrenica as genocide. In 2016, the survivors wanted to avoid such incidents, which it was felt would merely distract attention away from the victims.

The Summer University of Srebrenica is a unique initiative that aims not only to spread information about the genocide in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also to deepen knowledge about the tools that allow the international community and victims to perform the right to truth and an effective remedy, including repatriation and compensation. The participants of the University had an incredible chance to meet with experts, but also with survivors, hearing real testimony of what happened in Srebrenica. It is hoped that the graduates will use this experience not only in their professional work, but they will also develop selected topics in their doctoral work.