



**PERMANENT DELEGATION  
OF NORWAY TO THE OSCE**

**STATEMENT BY THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
NORWAY, AMBASSADOR METTE KONGSHEM, ON THE  
COMMEMORATIONS OF THE 10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
SREBRENICA MASSACRE**

**OSCE Permanent Council  
14 July 2005**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,

Monday the 11th of July marked the tenth anniversary of the largest massacre of civilians committed in Europe since the Second World War. More than 8,000 men and boys were brutally massacred, while the International Community stood by, unable to prevent it. The events in Srebrenica in July 1995 cannot and must not be forgotten. These tragic events hold lessons of vital and lasting importance for us all.

Now, ten years after the massacre, persons accused of responsibility for the killings remain at large. This is unacceptable, not only from a moral standpoint, but also from political and legal perspectives. Stabilization of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Western Balkans region depends on normalization of societal relations. This can only be achieved through processes of reconciliation at all levels of society. It is inconceivable that this can happen without due process of justice.

Justice and reconciliation is not only important in the context of Srebrenica or Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is of vital importance for the normalization of relations in the region. The European perspective for the countries of the Western Balkans can only materialize to its full extent if the “ghosts of the past” are dealt with and put to rest. This can only be done by the people of the region. We, however, can and must support such processes of reconciliation.

It was significant that representatives of the Bosnian Serb community, as well as the president of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Boris Tadic, were present at the

ceremony. By his very presence, as well as his statements, president Tadic made an important contribution to the establishment of trust and confidence between Serbs and Bosnians. His unequivocal condemnation of the perpetrators of the massacre, as well as his confirmation that Serbian authorities are committed to the early arrest of ICTY-indictees, was timely and helpful.

Clearly, the massacre at Srebrenica underscored the need for effective international engagement in conflict situations. While the international presence in the Srebrenica region has been substantial in the aftermath of the 1995 events, we should seek to ensure that our efforts in the future are more effectively managed, both pre-conflict, during conflict, and post-conflict. The OSCE can also draw lessons for its own efforts. Our early warning monitoring must be timely and relevant, and our post-conflict operations should do more to address both immediate effects as well as root causes. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, and the Western Balkans in general, more work remains to be done.

I thank you