

Don't forget all the victims of Srebrenica

Re: The inability to protect, June 21

Your editorial, on the inability of the United Nations to protect, has assumed the only victims needing protection were Muslims living in Srebrenica.

Much that has been written about Srebrenica has overlooked that from the outbreak of hostilities in 1992, the city was used as a base by Muslim forces to raid surrounding Serbian villages.

This was done under the cover of the city being declared a "safe haven" by the UN.

In the three years leading up to the fall of the city to Bosnian Serb forces (not from Serbia proper) over 3,000 Bosnian Serbs were killed by the Muslims, led by the notorious Naser Oric, who proudly displayed to western journalists videos of his forces decapitating Serb civilians.

The International Committee of the Red Cross has estimated that 7,079 Muslims died around Srebrenica. Some of these were civilians but most were Bosnian Muslim troops killed as they retreated across Bosnian Serb territory to Tuzla, the nearest Muslim stronghold.

These troops were not "executed" by the Bosnian Serb military but were killed by military action during their retreat.

There were executions carried out by Bosnian Serb forces after the fall of the city and these have been attributed to a special operations unit of the Bosnian Serb military -- the 10th Sabotage Detachment. It is estimated that as many as 2,000 may have been shot.

This is acknowledged to be a serious war crime but it is not genocide.

There has been a tendency in the Western media to assume that the only victims in the Bosnian conflict were Muslims and to overlook that thousands of Bosnian Serbs and Croats perished or were displaced by the conflict.

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