

**GRAND MUFTI
MUSTAFA CERIC'S STATEMENT (KHUTBA)
ON THE OCCASION OF 15TH ANNIVERSARY
OF GENOCIDE IN BOSNIA – SREBRENICA ON 11 JULY 2010**

(Issued on Wednesday, July 7, 2010)

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ، نَحْمَدُهُ وَنُسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ، وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شَرِّهِ وَأَنْفُسِنَا،
وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ أَعْمَالِنَا، مَنْ يَهْدِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مَضِلَّ لَهُ، وَمَنْ يَضِلَّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ
أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهُ وَرَسُولُهُ. قَالَ اللَّهُ
تَعَالَى فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْحَكِيمِ: فَطَوَّعَتْ لَهُ نَفْسُهُ قَتْلَ أَخِيهِ فَقَتَلَهُ فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ
الْخَاسِرِينَ. فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُؤَارِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ قَالَ يَا
وَيْلَتَا أَعْجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُؤَارِي سَوْءَةَ أَخِي فَأَصْبَحَ مِنَ النَّادِمِينَ. مِنْ
أَجْلِ ذَلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَى بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي
الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا وَلَقَدْ جَاءَ
تَهُمُ رَسُولُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِنْهُمْ بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ .

But the other's passion drove him to slaying his brother; and he slew him: and thus he became one of the lost. Thereupon God sent forth a raven which scratched the earth, to show him how he might conceal the nakedness of his brother's body. [And Cain] cried out: "Oh, woe is me! Am I then too weak to do what this raven did, and to conceal the nakedness of my brother's body?" - and was thereupon smitten with remorse. Because of this did We ordain unto the children of Israel that if anyone slays a human being-unless it be [in punishment] for murder or for spreading corruption on earth-it shall be as though he had slain all mankind; whereas, if anyone saves a life, it shall be as though he had saved the lives of all mankind. And, indeed, there came unto them Our apostles with all evidence of the truth: yet, behold, notwithstanding all this, many of them go on committing all manner of excesses on earth. (Qur'an, 5:30-32)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The 15th anniversary of genocide in Bosnia is the occasion that poses more hard questions than offers easy answers. Why the cry "never again", raised by so many in the years after 1945, has rung increasingly hollow with the passing

decades? Indeed, the evil of Holocaust remains a unique crime against humanity, but instances of genocide have continued to reoccur - from Bosnia to Chechnya, from Rwanda to Sri Lanka, from the Congo to Cambodia.

It is metaphysical, but the question about *evil* is a relevant one because "evil is a fact of life". We can see it, not only on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of genocide in Bosnia, but also in everyday large-scale brutality of homicide, rape, incest as well as of the millions of human lives lost by disease, poverty and starvation. We know that the Evil is morally wrong; it is causing harm; it is marked by misfortune; it is characterized by anger or spite; it is the quality of being morally wrong; it is a force or power that brings about wickedness or harm against humanity.

However, the definitions of Evil do not provide answers to the questions: Why Holocaust? Why Genocide? Why was an infant girl of Bosnia raped? Why was an innocent boy of Srebrenica killed? Why the Bosnian Muslims were betrayed by the United Nations Protection Force on 11th of July 1995 in Srebrenica where thousands of men and boys who had sought safety were massacred? Why Europe has allowed to be deceived by the evil of Serbian army? Where does evil begin? What makes evil so fascinating?

While the metaphysical reflections about the roots of and reasons for evil-doing may continue as an abstract debate, the legal action against evildoers must be concrete so that they may receive their rights as it was noticed that: 'the war criminals have the right to punishment' because their evil cannot survive human conscience.

Hence, the most important questions concerning the genocide in Bosnia are about: truth, justice, remembering and reconciliation. Truth and justice are inseparable not only because of their organic order, but also because of the fact that the human power may last with infidelity (*kufir*), but it cannot continue with injustice (*zulm*)."
(الملك يبقى مع الكفر و لا يبقى مع الظلم). In other words, anything that was established by injustice or genocide in Bosnia cannot survive and must be abolished sooner or later. Unfortunately, the perpetrators of genocide in Bosnia are more obsessed with the denial of their crime than the victims of genocide are occupied with thoughts of revenge.

But the perpetrators of genocide in Bosnia should know that the denial of crime is a crime in itself, while the desire for justice is a sign of reconciliation in itself. Thus, it is not difficult to conclude that the sooner the war criminals cease their denial of their crime the sooner the road to reconciliation will be revealed.

The victims of genocide in Bosnia will remember and always remind the world of what happened on the 11th July, 1995. They appreciate the fact that the majority of 565 members the European Parliament has adopted the resolution of 15 January 2009 on Srebrenica whereby it commemorates and honors all the victims of Srebrenica genocide.

Also, it is good that the European Parliament calls on the Council and the Commission to commemorate appropriately the anniversary of the Srebrenica-Potočari act of genocide by supporting Parliament's recognition of 11 July as the day of commemoration of the Srebrenica genocide all over the EU, and to call on all the countries of the western Balkans to do the same.

The victims of Srebrenica genocide are aware that the past cannot be changed, but they appreciate the recognition of their pain by EU as a good sign that genocide will not be repeated in the future to anyone.

Yes, it is easy to identify with victims. But if we want to prevent future genocides, we must do more than occasional show of sympathy with the victims of genocide. We must understand the deep psychology of the perpetrators as well as bystanders. We must comprehend what it is that makes some people, who otherwise look "normal", to hate other groups and to join in, or stand by and witness their planned and systematic elimination? We all must learn about the Holocaust and Genocide not only as a historical fact, but also as a way to teach our children about the danger of racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and other instances of human intolerance. We must teach all high-school pupils to value democracy and human rights and encourage them to reject hatred, intolerance and ethnic conflict.

And we must be all united in Bosnia, in Europe and around the world - in all mosques, in all churches, in all synagogues and in all places of human decency so that we may say together the Srebrenica prayer on the 11th of July in the noontime in Potočari where only parts of hundreds of innocent men and boys will be buried.

This prayer is our hope that our future shall be better than our past and that our children shall not have fear of genocide.

O Man, whoever you are and wherever you might be, remember God who created us all in the same way and the same way so that we all might say our honest prayer:

Oh God

Do not let success deceive us
Nor failure takes us to despair!
Always remind us that failure is a temptation
That precedes success!

Oh God

Teach us that tolerance
Is the highest degree of power
And the desire for revenge
The first sign of weakness!

Oh God

If you deprive us of our property,
Give us hope!
If you grant us with success,
Give us also the will to overcome defeat!
If you take from us the blessing of health,
Provide us with the blessing of faith!

Oh God

If we sin against people,
Give us the strength of apology!
And if people sin against us,
Give us the strength of forgiveness!

Oh God

If we forget Thee,

Do not forget us!
Oh God
May grief become hope!
May revenge become justice!
May mother's tears become prayers!
That Srebrenica never happens again!
To anyone, anywhere!

أللهم اليك اشكو ضعف قوتي، و قلّة حيلتي، و هواني علي الناس، يا ارحم
الرحمين.
انت رب المستضعفين، و انت ربي.
الي من تكلني؟ الي بعيد يتجهمني؟ ام الي عدو ملكته امري؟
إن لم يكن بك علي غضب فلا ابالي، بلا عافيتك هي اوسع لي.
أعوذ بنور وجهك الذي اشرقت له الظلمات،
صلح عليه امر الدنيا و الآخرة من ان تنزل بي غضبك، او يحلّ علي سخطك.
لك العتبي حتي ترضي، و لا حول و لا قوة الا بك.