



Genocide in Bosnia 1992-1995

Srebrenica Survivors © Photo Arts

In 1980, the population of Bosnia consisted of Serbs, Bosniaks (Sunni Muslim) and Croats. In the turmoil following the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Bosnia declared independence in 1992. This was resisted by the Bosnian Serb population who saw their future as part of 'Greater Serbia'. Bosnia became the victim of the Serbs' determined wish for political domination, which it was prepared to achieve by isolating ethnic groups and, if necessary, exterminating them.

In July 1995 Serb troops and paramilitaries descended on Srebrenica. Women and children were forced onto trucks and buses, men and boys remained. The deportation of Srebrenica's population took four days.

The first killing of unarmed Muslim men began on 13 July 1995 in warehouses. At least 8,000 were murdered. Others were trapped in warehouses, football fields, school playgrounds and farms and shot, in their thousands. Their bodies were buried in mass graves. Some have been recovered and reburied, but identification has proved extremely difficult.

In the Bosnian municipality of Prijedor, non-Serbs were forced to wear white armbands. Serbian newspapers, radio and television stations began to publish and broadcast propaganda against the non-Serbs in the city.

After the takeover of power by Serb forces, non-Serb women were taken to Trnopolje Camp where systematic rape took place on a regular basis and camp officers would beat prisoners indiscriminately. It is estimated that around 7,000 people passed through the camp. Around 3,500 people, mainly men, were held in inhumane conditions in the Omarska Camp. The prisoners were given one meal per day and violence from the camp officers was widespread. Living conditions were atrocious, with suffocation caused by overcrowding being a constant threat to the prisoners. On HMD, we must honour the victims and the survivors of the genocide in Bosnia by creating a culture which respects and celebrates the differences between us.

To find out more about the genocide in Bosnia visit:

www.hmd.org.uk/genocides/bosnia