EUROPEAN UNION

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Statement by EU High Representative Catherine Ashton
on the commemoration of Srebrenica

The High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the Commission issued the following statement today:

"Eighteen years have passed since the genocide was committed in Srebrenica in July 1995. The pain and grief of those who lost their children, parents, relatives and friends remain ever present. On behalf of the European Union, I pay my respect to the victims.

409 people will be buried in Potočari today, thus joining thousands of those who have already found their final resting place in Srebrenica Memorial and Cemetery. Among them there will be the remains of 20 year-old Nermin, whose mother, Munira Subašić, guided me during my visit to Srebrenica in April this year.

No words can describe the pain a mother and father feel when burying a child of theirs. And no words can give peace of mind to families of the victims. Nevertheless, what we can demonstrate is respect for their loss, refusal of genocide denial and, as a concrete measure, support to justice. The processing of the war crimes committed throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina shall continue to ensure that truth is established, justice is guaranteed, and reconciliation can be consolidated, including at the regional level.

The decades - long reconciliation process that brought to the creation of the European Union should inspire the reconciliation in the Western Balkans. Large steps have been made in that direction, but there is still much to be done, especially by those in positions of authority, so that citizens of the region can fully enjoy peace and prosperity, together with their fellow Europeans."

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