

# Causes of the genocide in bosnia



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In 1980, the president Josip Tito of Yugoslavia died. After the loss of their president, Yugoslavia had political and economic chaos. Slobodan Milosevic became the leader of Serbia in 1987. He was a strong Serb nationalist and encouraged his beliefs in Serbia and in other republics with large Serb communities. The Serbs in Bosnia were not happy feeling like they were now part of Milosevic's "Greater Serbia". The Yugoslavian Army mostly had Serbs. Radovan Karadzic led Serbs who built their own Republica Srpska in the East, while a Bosnian Serb army was in control of the other  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the country, driving out most of the Bosnian Croats. Then the European Union tried to help both sides, and failed. The U. N. didn't want to get involved, but helped a little by providing some troop convoys for humanitarian aid. They later decided to help more by providing six "safe areas". The Serbs invaded five of the six "safe areas" and "ethnically cleansed" them.

### **The Background:**

Bosnia is one of the several small countries that emerged from the break-up of Yugoslavia, a multicultural country created after World War One.

Yugoslavia was composed of ethnic and religious groups that had been historical rivals, including the Serbs (Orthodox Christians), Croats (Catholics) and ethnic Albanians (Muslims).

During World War Two, Yugoslavia was invaded by Nazi Germany and was separated. Following Germany's defeat, Tito reunified Yugoslavia by merging many countries. Tito, a Communist, was a strong leader who maintained ties with the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War, playing one superpower against the other while obtaining financial assistance and other

aid from both. After his death in 1980 and without his strong leadership, Yugoslavia quickly plunged into political and economic chaos.

### **Organizers:**

In the late 1980's, a new leader by the name of Slobodan Milosevic came to power in Yugoslavia. He used religious hatred to control the people by sparking old tensions between the Serbians and Muslims. He took advantage of complaints from the Orthodox Catholic Serbs by taking control of the country Kosovo, where the Serbs were the minority. Milosevic then turned his focus to Croatia, a country with 12 percent Serbs. With the assistance of Serbian guerrillas, Milosevic invaded the small country under the pretenses of protecting the Serbs.

Milosevic's motives for this genocide were strongly based on retaliation. Many Serbian citizens had been subject to genocide during World War Two and they finally had a chance to get " even" with their enemies. After 13 years at power, the Yugoslavian nations revolted and a national strike followed. Milosevic was tried on the following counts in 2002: genocide; complicity in genocide; deportation; murder; persecutions on political, racial or religious grounds; inhumane acts/forcible transfer; extermination; imprisonment; torture; willful killing; unlawful confinement; willfully causing great suffering; unlawful deportation or transfer; extensive destruction and appropriation of property, not justified by military necessity and carried out unlawfully and wantonly; cruel treatment; plunder of public or private property; attacks on civilians; destruction or willful damage done to historic monuments and institutions dedicated to education or religion; unlawful

attacks on civilian objects. Milosevic died on March 11, 2006, at the U. N. war crimes tribunal detention center.

### **Victims:**

In the Bosnian genocide, hundreds of thousands of people were victimized. About 80% of these people were Bosnian Muslims. After The Yugoslav Republic of Bosnia declared its independence, Bosnian Serbs along with the Yugoslav army attacked the Bosnian and Croatian civilians.

Between 1992 and 1995, Serbia decided to “ ethnically cleanse” the Bosnian land by removing all Bosnian Muslims systematically. Many were forced into concentration camps. The Muslims were tortured, starved, and eventually murdered. Over the war, about one million Bosnian Muslims were forced out of their homes. In 1993, the Security Council in the United Nation had Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Goradze, and other Muslim territories in safe areas that were protected by United Nation peacekeepers. At a safe area in Srebrenica, Serbs held a very large massacre. Many of the Muslims escaped the fighting by running away. The men that were able to fight were kept behind and killed. The elderly, women, and children were taken to a Muslim controlled territory on busses. Once the massacre ended, the bodies were moved by bulldozers by the Serbs in attempts to conceal the evidence.

### **World Response:**

As a result, U. S. President George Bush chose not to get involved militarily, instead recognizing the independence of Slovenia and Croatia. In April 1992, the U. S. and European community recognized Bosnia’s independence.

Even though media showed the secret camps, mass killings, and destruction of historic architecture in Bosnia, the world community remained mostly indifferent.

The United Nations finally responded by imposing economic sanctions on Serbia and the U. N. also deployed its troops to protect the distribution of food and medicine to dispossessed Muslims, however, the U. N. strictly told troops not to interfere with military against the Serbs.

Through 1993, the U. S. and European Community still hadn't taken any military action until August 30, 1995. On this day, The U. S. led a massive NATO bombing campaign in response to the killings.

## **Aftermath:**

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Peace negotiations were held in Dayton, Ohio, and an agreement was signed in December 1995. Bosnia is now divided into a Croat-Muslim Federation and Republika Srpska. A NATO peace-keeping ' Implementation Force' of 60, 000 was deployed; it was later replaced by a NATO ' Stabilization Force'.

The war in Bosnia led deaths of tens of thousands men and boys that left the country without enough workers to keep their economy stable. Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Muslims who make up the Federation of Croats and Muslims are not getting along because of their political and economic differences. There is a rotating presidency of a Bosnian Croat, Bosnian Serb, and a Bosnian Muslim every three years that many experts consider to be dangerous. The ethnic differences between Muslims, Croats, and Serbs are

still keeping the nation of Bosnia-Herzegovina from being one, because they all want more governmental control over the other. The effects of the Bosnian Genocide still float in the background for this troubled country. Because there is still ethnic disturbance in Bosnia, there is fear that genocide could occur once more in the torn country.

By now, over 200, 000 Muslim civilians have been systematically murdered. More than 20, 000 are missing and feared dead, while 2, 000, 000 have become refugees.