



**ISLAMSKA ZAJEDNICA
U BOSNI I HERCEGOVINI**



مؤسسة قرطبة
The Cordoba Foundation



**FRIDAY SERMON (*KHUTBA*)
BY HUSEIN EF. KAVAZOVIĆ,
GRAND MUFTI AND REIS-UL-ULEMA OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA**

*COMMEMORATING THE 31ST ANNIVERSARY
OF THE SREBRENICA GENOCIDE*

Gazi Husrev Bay Mosque, Sarajevo, 10 July 2026

All praise is due to Allah, the Sustainer of the worlds, the Deliverer of the oppressed, the Helper of the believers, and the Protector of the faithful. He is the One in whose Name all things begin and all things end. I bear witness that there is no deity but Allah, the One, without partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) is His Messenger. O Allah, bestow Your mercy and blessings upon the Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon him*), his noble family, and his companions.

Dear brothers and sisters in Islam, respected members of our congregations,

We find ourselves in days that, both in our collective consciousness and in the history of all humankind, carry the heaviest burden of grief, sorrow, and remembrance. Every year, the middle of July unfailingly brings us back to the valley of the river Drina, to our Srebrenica. It returns us to the martyrs' cemetery in Potočari, where the white gravestones stand in solemn silence, yet bear powerful witness to a crime that shook the conscience of humanity – the Genocide committed against the Bosniak people within the United Nations designated Safe Area.

Inscribed within those white gravestones are our love and our grief for those dearest to us. They bear witness not only to the cruelty of the aggressor, but also to the indifference of the world. Today's *khutba* is not merely a remembrance of historical dates; it is a call to perpetual vigilance, to remembrance and collective memory. For in Islam, remembering is an act of worship (*ibadah*), while forgetting is a danger that paves the way for the repetition of evil.

The pain and grief that we carry within us will remain with us forever, for it has rightly been said that suffering once endured can never truly be forgotten. Yet it is our duty to rise above its overwhelming weight and never allow it to break our spirit. Our faith teaches us and instils within us the strength to endure every trial with patience, even the most difficult ones. By the grace of Allah, throughout all these years we have neither lost heart nor bowed our heads before evil. We have offered a steadfast resistance that has earned the admiration of the world. We have learned how to bear the burden of the pain that was inflicted upon us. With patience and unwavering determination, we shall continue our struggle against forgetfulness, but also against hatred, ensuring that it never poisons our hearts or our souls.

Dear brothers and sisters, in the Qur'an, the Almighty Allah commands us never to conceal the truth and reminds us to bear witness against injustice. In *Surat al-Mā'idah*, He says:

"O you who believe! Be ever steadfast in your devotion to Allah, bearing witness with justice; and never let hatred of anyone lead you into the sin of deviating from justice. Be just; this is closest to righteousness." (Qur'an, Surat al-Mā'idah, 5:8)

From this noble verse we learn a fundamental moral lesson: preserving the memory of the victims of the Genocide is an act of the highest justice and righteousness. It is the fulfilment of Allah's explicit command to bear truthful and just witness. We remember Srebrenica in order to avoid nurturing hatred, but to ensure that truth prevails over falsehood and that such evil never again happens to anyone, anywhere.

We, the Bosnian Muslims, have learned, perhaps more than any other people in the world, that the paths of hatred lead only to death, despair, and the corruption of the human soul. Upon the mythology of blood and soil, nothing can be built except misery and crime. Those who forget that the Earth and all that it contains belong to God, and that all of His creation is equal in dignity, stand only one step away from committing atrocities.

Srebrenica teaches us that evil never rests. We live in a time marked by the growing and institutionalised denial of the crime of Genocide. The proponents of evil make enormous efforts to minimise the crime they committed and to erase the distinction between the perpetrator and the victim. They believe that lies can cast doubt upon established historical facts. They deliberately count on our weariness, hoping that we will eventually yield to their brazen lies.

For this reason, the culture of remembrance and memory must never be confined to a single day of the year or reduced to a mere expression of mourning. It must become an integral part of our daily identity, our educational system, and the

upbringing of our families. It is our moral duty to pass the truth on to our children, not to burden them with hatred, but to equip them with vigilance and the awareness that evil never rests.

It is for this reason that the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), teaches us in the well-known hadith narrated by Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him):

"A believer must not allow himself to be stung from the same hole twice." (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim)

This hadith constitutes the religious foundation of our culture of remembrance, as well as our direct obligation to prevent Genocide. The prevention of Genocide is not merely a political or legal issue; it is, above all, a profound religious and moral obligation. We have no right to be naïve. Prevention means recognizing the early signs of evil, dehumanisation, and denial before it is too late.

In this context, the adoption of the United Nations Resolution on the Srebrenica Genocide represents on the global scale an important civilizational milestone. This Resolution is a clear indication that the international community, despite its delayed response, has established both a legal and a moral barrier against falsehood and denial. Yet international resolutions provide only a framework; genuine prevention begins within our homes, our congregations, and our institutions.

Our daily commitment to education, vigilance, and the preservation of truth within our local communities and congregations constitutes the essential first line of defence against the repetition of the past.

If we surrender to complacency and the comfort of forgetting, we risk experiencing again the horrors endured by our fathers, our grandfathers, and our sons. Our history in this land reminds us that every act of historical forgetfulness has served as a prelude and invitation to new crimes against us. Negligence and indifference are luxuries we can never again afford. Remembering Srebrenica, and actively working to prevent the recurrence of evil, are the very pillars of our survival and our continued existence in our ancestral homeland.

The Genocide committed in Srebrenica obliges us to think vigilantly and responsibly about the future of our people and of our Srebrenica. Almighty Allah says:

"Allah has promised those among you who believe and do righteous deeds that He will surely cause them to accede to power on earth ..." (Qur'an, Surat En-Nur, 24:55)

We believe with certainty that God's promise is true. At the same time, we are equally convinced that much depends on us today. It is our duty to care for Srebrenica, for it is the birthplace of our collective suffering. Nothing in this Bosnian country can be compared to it. We prevent genocide by strengthening our institutions, by striving for excellence in education, scholarship, and economic development. Our strength, together with our readiness to defend ourselves and safeguard our right to life, is the greatest deterrent against any future evil. It is our

responsibility to persevere, to invest in knowledge, and to secure a dignified and safe life for all the people of Srebrenica and its surrounding region. Those who take God as their Protector and remain steadfast in faith and endeavour will attain what they seek.

Islam is a religion of honour, dignity, and steadfastness; a religion of truth and justice. Therefore, let not grief cast us into despair, nor compassion into weakness. Allah tests us in good times and in bad times, in abundance and in hardship, and our steadfastness is measured by our unity.

The Qur'an tells us that Allah loves those who strive in His cause, standing together in ranks as solid as a fortified structure. Let us therefore stand together as one soul and one body. Let Srebrenica remain for us an everlasting lesson that the weak, the divided, and the unprepared cannot expect mercy. And let it be our solemn pledge that, by strengthening our unity and our collective resilience, we will ensure that such suffering is never inflicted upon us again. Raise your hands in supplication morning and evening – and call upon your Lord.

O Lord, to You we raise our hands. You are the One who knows the whisper of every heart and the only true remedy in the midst of despair. Help us heal our wounded souls and grant us everlasting peace in Your presence.

O Lord, bestow Your blessings upon the people of Srebrenica and upon their descendants for all generations to come.

O Lord, grant us the wisdom, the strength, and the unity to recognise and prevent every evil that may threaten us. Preserve the memory of Srebrenica in our hearts for all eternity. May Srebrenica forever remain the pledge of our freedom, our unity, and our life in peace. By Your Majesty and Your Infinite Mercy.

Āmīn.

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