

WORLD LEADERS AND OUTRAGED INDIVIDUALS SUPPORT AP CAMPAIGN

AdvocacyNet

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Washington, DC,: Ten years after the end of the Bosnian war, there is renewed pressure to arrest Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, the former Bosnian Serb leaders who have been indicted for their role in the 1995 Srebrenica massacre.

An international campaign to arrest the two men was launched in May by The Advocacy Project and three partners – the Center for Balkan Development, Physicians for Human Rights, and the Congress of North American Bosniaks. AP's online petition has now attracted support from NATO, the US Government, the International Criminal Tribunal, and the High Representative in Bosnia.

The petition has been signed by 9,600 individuals from over 90 countries. It was presented recently in Washington to Nicholas Burns, a US Under-Secretary of State. Burns pledged that the US will use diplomatic and economic pressure on Bosnia and Serbia until Karadzic and Mladic are brought to trial. "We will not blink on this," he said.

Even though the US only has 150 troops serving in Bosnia, Burns said that US intelligence is actively trying to locate the two fugitives. He said that one recent NATO raid was so close that it found "hot meals" on a table.

Shortly after receiving the petition, Burns met with leaders of Bosnia's three ethnic communities to mark the tenth anniversary of the Dayton Agreement, which brought an end to the Bosnian war. Participants at the meeting pledged to create a truly unified constitution. For the first time ever, the Bosnian Serb leaders also called for the arrest of Karadzic and Mladic.

The petition is an example of how AP uses online campaigns to complement the work of its partners, to lobby and to network. It was originally by AP, and then widely disseminated by the Center for Balkan Development, an AP partner, which used it to approach Lord Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative in Bosnia; Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the NATO Secretary General; and Carla De Ponte, the Chief Prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal.

Secretary-General de Hoop Scheffer wrote: "NATO nations are fully aware of the concerns raised in your letter." Three days later, he raised the indictments with the Serbian President.

While this diplomatic support is encouraging, the campaign will only really succeed when Karadzic and Mladic are arrested. The campaign makes the point that their continuing liberty will discourage the return of Bosniak refugees to Srebrenica. According to the UN, only 480 Muslims returned in the first nine months of this year.

- Find more on the campaign at the [Center for Balkan Development](#)