



NEWS BULLETIN 270
TUESDAY JULY 7, 2015

Srebrenica Quilt Display Will Cap 20 Years of Advocacy and Anguish

Eleven memorial quilts to be shown at the site of the massacre on July 11

SREBRENICA, BOSNIA - Weavers from the [Bosnian women's group BOSFAM](#) will commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre on July 11 with a powerful exhibition of quilts that carry the names of over 350 massacre victims, including their own relatives.



Relatives will rebury at least 135 massacre victims on July 11

The eleven quilts will be exhibited at the massacre site of Potocari in the former battery factory which served as a base for UN peacekeepers at the time of the massacre. The base has been turned into a museum, but remains a powerful symbol of the UN's inability to protect civilians and prevent genocide.

The Srebrenica massacre began on July 11, 1995, after the town's defense collapsed

following three years of siege by the Bosnian Serb Army. More than 8,000 Muslim men and boys were separated from their families and taken off to be killed. Srebrenica has been declared an act of genocide and described as the worst massacre in Europe since World War 2.

Each quilt carries the names of victims, organized into groups that include teachers, children and women who remained at the side of their husbands. The quilts will be ranged around a large central carpet and [can be viewed on the BOSFAM website](#).

More than 50,000 visitors are expected to attend the July 11 commemoration at Potocari, and Beba Hadzic, the founder of BOSFAM, expressed the hope that many would visit BOSFAM's simple but powerful exhibition and never forget its sobering message. "The memorial quilts will last for many years and be a memory forever," she said. More than 40 women worked on the quilts that will be displayed.



At the BOSFAM weaving center in Tuzla

The BOSFAM weavers will also participate in the reburial of massacre victims whose remains have been identified in the past year. The [International Commission on Missing Persons \(ICMP\)](#) expects to rebury 135 victims on July 11, including the son-in-law of Zifa Bumbulovic, one of the most active BOSFAM weavers.

"When I am weaving, I am not crying," said Ms Bumbulovic. So far, the ICMP has identified 6,584 massacre victims.

The idea for the memorial quilts was conceived in 2006 by BOSFAM and the Advocacy Project (AP), which began working with Bosnian civil society in 1999 and has sent 15 graduate students to volunteer at BOSFAM since 2003. The 2015 AP Peace Fellow, [Sarah Reichenbach](#), has helped BOSFAM to assemble the upcoming quilt exhibition.

In 2007, AP brought the first quilt back to the US, where it was [displayed at a Bosnian mosque in St Louis](#) by former Srebrenica survivors living in the US. The response was so moving and unexpected that BOSFAM made another 15 memorial quilts. AP has exhibited BOSFAM quilts at exhibitions across North America, including at UN headquarters in New York, and before the Bosnian diaspora.



Meanwhile, AP [has re-posted 17 dispatches](#) that tell the terrifying story of the 1995 massacre and the years of brave advocacy by survivors like BOSFAM that followed. The Bosnian Serbs resisted all efforts by Muslims to return to their homes in Srebrenica and build a shrine at Potocari, until their hand was forced by the international community in 2003.

The dispatches were written by Peter Lippman and Iain Guest and sent out by email through AP's online newsletter On the Record. The story of the massacre, and of BOSFAM's advocacy, is also told [on BOSFAM partner pages on the AP website](#).

- * View [Weavers for Hope](#), AP's video about BOSFAM and the Srebrenica massacre
- * Meet the 15 AP Fellows who have worked at BOSFAM on the [BOSFAM partner page](#)
- * Read the [blogs of 2015 Fellow Sarah Reichenbach](#) and [follow Sarah's photos](#).

Thanks to Humanity United for supporting our fellowship program and to the Peace and Collaborative Development Network for re-posting our bulletins.

