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AdvocacyNet  
News Bulletin 157  
July 14, 2008  
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## SREBRENICA MEMORIAL QUILT VISITS US CAPITOL AS MASSACRE VICTIMS ARE REBURIED IN BOSNIA



Washington, DC: A memorial quilt to those who were murdered at Srebrenica, Bosnia, thirteen years ago took center stage at the US Capitol Friday as Congressmen and staffers remembered the genocide in Bosnia.

The quilt was woven by members of the women's group BOSFAM, and each of its 65 panels carries the name of an individual massacre victim. The Advocacy Project (AP) is promoting the quilt in North America at the request of BOSFAM, an AP partner since 2002.

Those who attended the event at the Capitol Friday signed a book of remembrance, which will be given to the families of Srebrenica victims.

"By having their names on the quilt and by having a book where we are writing our thoughts, we are keeping their memories alive," said Elmina Kulasic, executive director of the Bosniak American Advisory Council for Bosnia and Herzegovina, which organized the event.

Meanwhile in Bosnia, over 40,000 grieving relatives and sympathizers gathered on Friday at Potocari, the scene of the 1995 massacre, to bury 307 recently-identified massacre victims. The participants included Shweta Dewan, an AP Peace Fellow who is

volunteering with BOSFAM, and Janet Rabin, a Peace Fellow with Women in Black in Serbia.

The memorial quilt has tripled in size over the past year as new sponsors have commissioned panels and it now comprises three separate pieces. These have been shown in seven North American cities and attracted over 80 sponsors from the Bosnian diaspora.

One of the three quilts was displayed Thursday at the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Washington, alongside a photo exhibition of images from Srebrenica. It was then taken to the Capitol.

The second quilt, which honors relatives of the weavers, was shown Friday at a prayer meeting of the Bosnian Islamic Center in Toronto, where it generated \$340 in donations.

The third quilt, commemorating murdered teachers, was displayed on Saturday by the [Reconciliation and Culture Cooperative Network \(RACCOON\)](#) in New York. Alison Morse, who served as an AP Peace Fellow with BOSFAM last year and helped to launch the project, showed the AP-produced film "Weavers for Hope."

Srebrenica, a Muslim enclave, was designated a UN safe haven during the war. But a lightly-armed Dutch peacekeeping force capitulated to the Bosnian Serbs, who seized the town and murdered over 8,000 men and boys over the age of 15. The women and children were bused out of Srebrenica to Muslim-controlled territory.

To date, about 2,900 massacre victims have been re-buried. Thousands of bodies and body parts have been exhumed from mass graves but not yet identified.

The anniversary of Srebrenica is always traumatic for BOSFAM's members, and one of the weavers buried two brothers at Potocari on Friday. Nine AP Peace Fellows have volunteered at BOSFAM since 2003, and they have all shared the distress of the weavers.

"The fact that so many people are still missing keeps wounds fresh," writes Shweta Dewan, this year's BOSFAM Peace Fellow, in her blog. "July 11th is commemorated every year...with pain and tears."

BOSFAM'S weavers have offered to make quilt panels for any family that lost a relative at Srebrenica. Families can commission a new panel for \$40 – the cost of materials.

AP has raised over \$5,000 for the memorial quilt in North America, and last week AP launched new, interactive web pages for the project. AP and BOSFAM are also hoping to launch a new training program for weavers in Srebrenica itself.

- Learn more about the [memorial quilt](#).
- Meet the [BOSFAM weavers](#).
- Read the blogs of [AP Peace Fellow Shweta Dewan](#).
- Read about [RACCOON](#).

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