

REMARKS BY HER MAJESTY QUEEN NOOR, ICMP COMMISSIONER

SERVICE TO COMMEMORATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SREBRENICA MASSACRE

Potocari, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 11 July 2015

JUSTICE AND TRUTH WILL PREVAIL

Thank you for the privilege of sharing this time with you to rededicate our work together to ensure that justice, truth and compassion prevail.

Bismillah a Rahman a Raheem, (in the name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful)

Ramadan Kareem

Dearest Mothers of Srebrenica, you have had a special place in my heart since my first visit in July 1996, to express solidarity and bring Jordanian relief support. Over our many meetings since then your strength, compassion, trust and tolerance in the face of darkness and pain have reinforced my belief in the power of faith and humanity to triumph over evil. Thank you for the privilege of sharing this time with you.

Dear sisters and brothers, Families of the Missing, friends and my fellow commissioners and ICMP family members: We have come together here today, once again, to share your sorrow and to show unity. We stand with you who suffered the loss of loved ones 20 years ago in a crime confirmed by international courts as genocide.

However, we do not stand with you only to mourn, but to continue the long and steady process of seeking – and securing – truth and justice.

Today more than 100 of those lost 20 years ago will be buried at last in Potocari. After two decades, their families and friends, their mothers, sisters and daughters, will be able to lay them to rest and to honor them. They join the 6,241 others buried here, whose loved ones, following years of uncertainty, have begun to find peace.

These souls were lost, hidden, their lives destroyed and even their deaths denied. But, thanks to you and others who refused to let injustice prevail, they have been found. They have been identified and remembered through efforts that reaffirm the worth of every individual.

The International Commission on Missing Persons was created in 1996, following the end of the Balkan conflicts, to establish, in cooperation with regional governments, an effective, inclusive process, to determine the fate of over 40,000 missing persons.

Today, over 70 percent have been accounted for, including almost 90 percent of the approximately 8,000 missing from Srebrenica and surrounding municipalities. This unprecedented achievement has been central to helping the residents of this war-torn region recover.

Accounting for the missing has been indispensable to the struggle for justice; to answer lies with truth; to confront a monstrous crime with the steady, strong and certain application of the rule of law.

Today, the crime of enforced disappearance is still being committed in many parts of the world – in *too* many parts of the world. From this somber, sacred place let us send a message: perpetrators of such crimes will be found. Justice and truth will prevail.

Some might try to tell you that to move forward you must forget the past. We cannot – we must not – forget the human face of this tragedy. Politics and prejudice must not be allowed to obscure the reality of what you have suffered. This is a duty that all of us – from the most powerful to the most humble – owe to the living and to the dead.

The Holy Quran tells us: "We shall test your steadfastness with fear and famine, with loss of life and property and crops. Give good news to those who endure with fortitude; who in adversity say: 'we belong to God, and to Him we

shall return'. They are those on whom descend blessings from God and mercy, and they are the ones that receive guidance."

You, the women and families of Srebrenica, have endured the most painful adversity. You have endured with fortitude. You have been steadfast. I have witnessed you reaching out to others who have suffered pain like yours, with empathy, even to those who may once have been enemies. Some of whom are here, with us today.

Today, we have come here to mourn with you, but we learn from you as well. Your strength, your resilience and, your commitment to intercommunal understanding inspire us all.

Your compassionate wisdom, and steadfast leadership prove that the evil that held sway here 20 years ago will not overwhelm our common humanity. Justice, truth and compassion will prevail.

Salaam Alaykum - peace be upon you