



Genocide Watch
Alliance Against Genocide

Serbia Country Report
May 2025
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[Serbian](#) history is replete with genocide, war crimes, denialism, and [triumphalism](#). World War II saw the Nazi-collaborator Chetniks commit genocide [against Catholic Croats and Bosniak Muslims](#). In 1945, Josef Broz Tito installed a communist dictatorship with its capital in Belgrade. After the death of Tito in 1980, [Serbian President Slobodan Milošević](#) promoted a "[Greater Serbia](#)" ideology.

In 1992, [Slovenia](#), [Croatia](#), and [Bosnia-Herzegovina](#) declared independence from the Yugoslav Federation. The Bosnian breakaway [Republika Srpska](#) led by Radovan Karadžić, organized an army under the command of Radko Mladić. It took control of Serb majority areas in Bosnia and Croatia. It carried out [forced deportation, mass rape, and murder](#) against Croats and Bosniak Muslims and drove them out of Serb territories. The Bosnian War ensued from 1992 – 1995. It ended with the Dayton Agreement in 1995, creating a federation in Bosnia and granting autonomy to the [Republika Srpska](#).

The [Republika Srpska](#) occupied Srebrenica in 1995, a so-called "safe area" that was supposed to be protected by the UN Peacekeeping Force, UNPROFOR. The city's Dutch defenders surrendered to the [Republika Srpska](#) army and allowed it to abduct 8000 Bosniak Muslim men and boys. It massacred all of them in July 1995 and buried them in mass graves.

The [Srebrenica](#) massacre was held to constitute genocide by the [ICTY](#) and [ICJ](#). It was the largest "mass murder within Europe since World War II." In 2016, Karadžić was convicted of [genocide in Srebrenica](#), war crimes, and crimes against humanity, [Mladic was convicted in 2017](#) of genocide and crimes against humanity. Both are serving life sentences.

In 1998, Serbian Army forces in the Serbian province of [Kosovo](#) were targeted in [sporadic terror attacks](#) by the [Kosovo Liberation Army \(KLA\)](#). In 1998, Serbian Army forces began a campaign of retributive massacres. They drove tens of thousands of Kosovar Albanians out of their towns. Both [Serbian forces](#) and the [KLA](#) committed atrocities against civilians. The withdrawal of the [Kosovo Verification Mission \(KVM\)](#), the [Račak massacre](#), and the failure of the [Rambouillet Accords](#) led to [NATO bombings of Belgrade](#). Serbia surrendered quickly and withdrew its army from Kosovo. [Kosovo declared independence in 2008](#). Serbia still refuses to recognize Kosovo's independence.

In Serbia today, denial and glorification of Serbian crimes during the Yugoslav Wars and the Kosovo War are [rampant](#). [Serbian schoolbooks](#) emphasize Serb victimhood and deny any Serb atrocities. They misrepresent the boundaries of Balkan nations. Convicted war criminals like Karadžić and Mladić are [celebrated](#). A mural stands in Belgrade bearing the words "We are thankful to your mother, general" with an image of [Republika Srpska Commander Ratko Mladić](#).

In May 2024, [the U.N.](#) General Assembly passed [Resolution 78/282](#), declaring July 11th as an annual day of remembrance for the Srebrenica genocide. Serbia voted against the resolution. Donning the Serbian flag, Serb [President Aleksandar Vučić](#) claimed the resolution was "[highly politicized,](#)" aimed "[to stigmatize Serbian people,](#)" Vučić said he is "[proud of my Serbia.](#)" Serbian leaders still deny that "[genocide](#)" occurred in Srebrenica.

[In September 2023](#), Serb militants enter Banjska, Zvečan, ambushing and killing four Kosovo police. Kosovo's Prime Minister Albin Kurti claimed that Serbia "[orchestrated and financed](#)" the attack. Serbia's Vučić replied that Serb [militants acted independently](#) and were reacting to Kosovo's discriminatory policies in its Serb-majority areas of northern Kosovo.

Serbian draft laws [proposed in October 2024](#) describe Kosovo as an "area of special protection" rather than as a sovereign country. They "assert Serbian jurisdiction over criminal acts committed in Kosovo." [Prime Minister Kurti denounced](#) the proposed Serb laws. Serbia's Vučić contends he has "[no relationship at all](#)" with the Kurti government.

Genocide Watch considers **Serbia** to be at **Stage 6: Polarization** and **Stage 10: Denial**.

Genocide Watch recommends that:

- The EU should condition Serbia's EU membership on Serbia's recognition of Kosovo's independence.
- Serbia should revise its schoolbooks to acknowledge the Srebrenica genocide and ICTY and ICJ judgments.
- Serbia should officially reject [Republika Srpska](#) proposals that it be annexed by Serbia.
- Serbia should recognize the UN's declaration of July 11th as Srebrenica Remembrance Day.