



Genocide Watch
Alliance Against Genocide

Bosnia-Herzegovina Country Report
May 2025
By Kolby Phillip

Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH) is facing a grave political crisis because of threats from [President Milorad Dodik](#) of the [Republika Srpska \(RS\)](#) to [secede](#) from Bosnia and merge with neighboring [Serbia](#). Dodik's threats have reignited fear of a return to the [civil war](#) that tore apart Bosnia in 1992 – 1995. It was an ethnic civil war caused by [the breakup of the former Yugoslavia](#) in 1991-1992. The war was marked by the [Srebrenica genocide, forced deportation](#) of hundreds of thousands of Bosnian Muslims and Croats from Serb controlled areas, and Serb-run concentration and rape camps reminiscent of the Holocaust.

Dodik's [secessionist](#) and [anti-Western](#) rhetoric began after a joint conference with [Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic](#) in 2023. Dodik called for the [“unification”](#) of Serbs in Bosnia and Serbia. In 2024, while speaking at the [“Srpska is calling you”](#) rally protesting [UN Resolution 78/282](#), which designated July 11 as an International Day of Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica, Dodik said [“We do not want to live in the same state with you \(Bosniaks\) and we will not live in the same state with you \[...\] We will do it \(split\) when the conditions are right.”](#)

Dodik denies the [Srebrenica Genocide](#), which he calls a [“fabricated myth.”](#) Genocide denial is outlawed as [incitement](#) to genocide in Bosnia. On May 22, 2025, [a Bosnian court sentenced Vojin Pavlovic](#), head of a Bosnian Serb NGO, to two-and-a-half years in prison for inciting hatred by denying the Srebrenica genocide and glorifying Ratko Mladic.

On February 26, 2025, Dodik was [convicted](#) of defying prohibitions on calling for separation from Bosnia by [High Representative Christian Schmidt](#), a position created by the [Dayton peace agreement](#) to oversee its implementation. He was given a one-year prison sentence and a six-year ban from holding public office. Dodik dismissed the case as [“purely political,”](#) driven by [“racial and national hatred \[against Serbs\].”](#) Dodik has vowed to defy the sentence. Dodik has the support of Serbia's [Vucic](#), Russia's [Putin](#), and [Hungarian President Viktor Orban](#)

The trial and subsequent conviction of Dodik led to secessionist legislation in the RS parliament. The day after Dodik's conviction, Republika Srpska's parliament passed [laws](#) rejecting the authority of BiH's prosecutors, judiciary, and other Bosnian agencies. On March 7, 2025, Bosnia-Herzegovina's national police service [was asked to leave](#) Banja Luka, RS's administrative center. On March 12, 2025, The Prosecutor's Office of Bosnia-Herzegovina issued an [arrest warrant](#) for Dodik. He has [defied it](#). On March 14, 2025, Republika Srpska's parliament adopted a [new draft constitution](#) that would give RS a standing army and a separate judiciary. The new constitution includes provisions for self-determination to permit RS to secede from Bosnia. Dodik has ordered RS to form its own [border patrol](#).

Dodik has a deep hatred for [Bosniak Muslims](#). In June 2024, [The Jerusalem Post](#) interviewed Dodik. He said that Israel can never live with Muslims. He said, [“If we look back at history, there has never been a peaceful coexistence between Palestinians and Jews, in the same way that coexistence is not possible here, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, between Muslims and Serbs.”](#)

After a meeting with Vucic in April 2025, Dodik blamed Bosniaks for the escalation of tensions in Bosnia-Herzegovina, stating, [“Bosniaks from Sarajevo want an armed conflict in BiH. Their motivation comes from their decades-long efforts to take revenge on Serbs, believing they must eliminate every Serb who does not fit into their projections.”](#) Such genocidal “mirroring” – accusing the adversary of planning genocide – is a significant early warning sign of intent to commit genocide in “self-defense.”

Dodik denies Bosniaks' ethnic and religious identity. In April 2025, he claimed that the only way Bosnia-Herzegovina could function is if Bosniaks [“return to the Orthodox faith.”](#) He predicted, [“BiH is not what it claims to be. It will disintegrate. I am also glad about that.”](#)

Genocide Watch considers [Bosnia-Herzegovina](#) to be at **Stage 1: Classification, Stage 3: Discrimination, Stage 4: Dehumanization, Stage 5: Organization, Stage 6: Polarization, Stage 7: Preparation, and Stage 10: Denial.**

Genocide Watch Recommends:

- Dodik must be imprisoned and replaced as President of Republika Srpska.
- The new President of Republika Srpska must support remaining part of Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- Republika Srpska must accept the decisions of The Constitutional Court of Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- NATO should prepare for renewed civil war in Bosnia and offer full support to the Bosnian government.