



BEYOND SREBRENICA

LESSONS FROM THE BOSNIAN GENOCIDE



A DECADE OF MEMORY, EDUCATION & ACTION

2016-2026 IMPACT REPORT

OUR MISSION

Beyond Srebrenica leads Scotland's efforts to remember, educate and inspire action in response to the Srebrenica genocide and atrocities committed across wider Bosnia and Herzegovina. We coordinate national awareness campaigns, delegations, support commemorations across the country, and deliver the Scottish Schools Education Programme, ensuring that young people understand the consequences of hatred and the importance of standing up to prejudice.

We also manage the "Lessons of Srebrenica" programme in Scotland, helping individuals and communities translate remembrance into meaningful action today. Our work is proudly supported by the Scottish Government's Connecting Communities Fund.

OUR STORY

In July 2015, Scotland marked the 20th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide. Survivors, including the Mothers of Srebrenica, stood alongside Scotland's First Minister, faith leaders and members of the Bosnian community and together honoured the victims, and reaffirmed a shared commitment to "never again."

Inspired by this moment, our Scottish Board recognised the need for a dedicated national charity. In 2016, Remembering Srebrenica Scotland was established and constituted, creating a platform to expand education, deepen community engagement and strengthen Scotland's role in genocide remembrance.

As our work grew, so too did our vision. In 2024, we broadened our remit to acknowledge atrocities across Bosnia, reflecting a more complete and inclusive narrative, as well as the stories of Bosnian Scots who arrived here during the war.

With this, we became Beyond Srebrenica and renewed our commitment not only to honour the past, but to apply the lessons of the Bosnian War to the challenges of today, building stronger, more compassionate communities for the future.

Beyond Srebrenica is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) No SCO46540.



FOREWORD

Sabina Kadić-Mackenzie,
Chair of Beyond Srebrenica

My first experience of Beyond Srebrenica was in 2015. On a warm, sunlit day in July, I wandered through the cobbled streets of Edinburgh towards St Giles' Cathedral, carrying my baby in one arm and flowers bearing the Bosnian flag in the other. I had not planned to go inside. My intention was simple: to pay my respects quietly and then leave. But as I stood in the square, carefully balancing my precious cargo, I was invited in.

Inside, I was welcomed by volunteers who placed a crocheted Srebrenica flower in my hand; a symbol of remembrance and resilience I still hold dear today. It was there that I first met the Mothers of Srebrenica. I was born and raised in Bosnia but arrived in Scotland in 2002. In that moment, for the first time, something connected my past and present, my homeland and my new home.

It is with immense pride that I now serve as chair of Beyond Srebrenica. As a Bosnian, first and foremost, I feel a deep responsibility to honour and share the story of Bosnia, of her people, her suffering, beauty and her strength. With our incredible board of trustees, I am committed to ensuring that the lessons of our tragic past are understood, particularly here in Scotland, where so many have opened their hearts to learning and remembrance.

Equally, I am proud to be part of a board that has driven remarkable change and impact, both in Scotland and in Bosnia. Through our work, we have taken countless delegations

to Bosnia, built meaningful relationships with communities, and created opportunities for learning that are transformative, and give hope. Before each visit, we tell delegates that the experience will be life-affirming. Without exception, those who return speak not only of affirmation, but of a renewed sense of purpose and responsibility.

As we mark ten years of Beyond Srebrenica, we express our deepest gratitude to our friends and colleagues in Bosnia. Your bravery, your kindness, your generosity of spirit, and your unwavering pursuit of justice continue to inspire us. We stand shoulder to shoulder with you, today and always.

We also extend heartfelt thanks to every individual and organisation that has supported Beyond Srebrenica over the past decade. I wish to recognise the trustees, past and present, whose dedication has shaped and sustained this work. As a volunteer-led organisation, we simply could not exist without your time and commitment. Hvala.

Looking ahead, we hold firmly to hope. By learning the lessons of Srebrenica and sharing them widely, we can contribute to building a better, more compassionate world for future generations.

As Mother Munira Subašić reminds us: "A person without a past has no future. We are not seeking revenge. We are seeking justice because without justice, there can be no peace."

It is our duty to remember, to educate, and to act so that the past informs a more just and peaceful future for all.



PREDGOVOR

Sabina Kadić-Mackenzie,
Predsjednica Organizacije
Beyond Srebrenica

Moje prvo iskustvo sa organizacijom Beyond Srebrenica bilo je 2015. godine. Jednog toplog, sunčanog julskeg dana, šetala sam kaldrmisanim ulicama Edinburgha prema katedrali St Giles, noseći svoju bebu u jednoj ruci, a u drugoj cvijeće s bosanskom zastavom. Nisam planirala ulaziti unutra. Moja namjera bila je jednostavna i lična: tiho odati počast i potom otići. Ali dok sam stajala na trgu, pažljivo balansirajući svoj dragocjeni teret, pozvana sam da uđem.

Unutra su me dočekali volonteri koji su mi u ruku stavili heklani svijet Srebrenice; simbol sjećanja i otpornosti koji i danas s ponosom čuvam. Tamo sam prvi put upoznala Majke Srebrenice. Rođena sam i odrasla u Bosni, ali u tom trenutku, po prvi put, nešto je povezalo moju prošlost i sadašnjost, moju domovinu i moj novi dom.

S velikim ponosom sada obavljam dužnost predsjedavajuće organizacije Beyond Srebrenica. Kao Bosanka, prije svega, osjećam duboku odgovornost da odam počast i podijelim priču o Bosni; o njenim ljudima, njenoj patnji, ljepoti i snazi. Posvećena sam tome da se lekcije iz naše tragične prošlosti razumiju, posebno ovdje u Škotskoj, gdje su mnogi otvorili svoja srca učenju i sjećanju.

Također sam ponosna što sam dio upravnog odbora koji je pokrenuo izuzetne promjene i ostvario značajan utjecaj, kako u Škotskoj tako i u Bosni. Kroz naš rad, organizovali smo bezbroj delegacija u Bosnu, izgradili značajne

odnose sa zajednicama i stvorili prilike za znanje koje mijenjaju život. Prije svake posjete, delegatima kažemo da će to iskustvo biti životno potvrđujuće. Bez izuzetka, oni koji se vrate ne govore samo o toj potvrdi, već i o obnovljenom osjećaju svrhe i odgovornosti.

Dok obilježavamo deset godina djelovanja, izražavamo najdublju zahvalnost našim prijateljima i kolegama u Bosni i širom Škotske. Vaša hrabrost, vaša ljubaznost, vaša velikodušnost duha i vaša nepokolebljiva potraga za pravdom nastavljaju nas inspirirati. Stojimo rame uz rame s vama, sada i uvijek.

Također upućujemo iskrenu zahvalnost svakom pojedincu i organizaciji koji su podržali Beyond Srebrenica tokom protekle decenije. Posebno želim odati priznanje povjerenicima — bivšim i sadašnjim — čija je posvećenost oblikovala i održala ovaj rad. Kao organizacija vođena volonterima, jednostavno ne bismo mogli postojati bez vašeg vremena, strasti i predanosti. Hvala.

Gledajući naprijed, čvrsto se nadamo da učeći lekcije iz Srebrenice i dijeleći ih međusobno, možemo doprinijeti izgradnji boljeg i suosjećajnijeg svijeta za buduće generacije Korak po korak.

Kao što nas podsjeća Majka Munira Subašić:
„Čovjek bez prošlosti nema budućnost.“

„Ne tražimo osvetu. Tražimo pravdu, jer bez pravde nema mira.“

Naša je dužnost da pamtimo, da obrazujemo i da djelujemo kako bi prošlost oblikovala pravedniju i mirniju budućnost za sve.



FOREWORD

Very Rev **Dr Lorna Hood OBE,**
Founding Chair of Beyond Srebrenica

airport we had a Board with myself as Chair and David Hamilton as Secretary and Treasurer and Ruth a member.

It soon became evident that to function in Scotland we needed OSCR accreditation. So, the separate charity Remembering Srebrenica Scotland was born.

Our priority was to organise a memorial event for the 20th Anniversary. This took place in St. Giles with the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon speaking, and delegates from the various faiths and charities in Scotland. We were honoured to have the Mothers of Srebrenica lighting a candle and to hear from Nedžad Avdić.

With funding from the Scottish Government, delegations continued at pace. Our strategy was to invite influential people like MSPs, Directors of Education, CEOs, Faith leaders and journalists. Along with yearly memorial events it seemed as if the charity touched every corner of civic life in Scotland.

As founding Chair until 2020, scarcely a day passed without planning another delegation or event. In Srebrenica and places like Prijedor, you confront the depths of human evil and the danger of hatred left unchallenged. Yet you also encounter immense courage. The Mothers of Srebrenica continue to share their stories so justice may prevail, refusing hatred or revenge. I was privileged to know many brave Bosnians, especially the Mothers, whose message calls on us to stand together against intolerance and help build a safer, stronger world.

There is no easy way to reach Srebrenica. You fly to Sarajevo – which has no direct flights from Glasgow or Edinburgh – followed by a three hour bus journey. Since 2014, when I first visited, I have made that journey with ‘Remembering Srebrenica Scotland’ now ‘Beyond Srebrenica’ eleven times taking out over 100 delegates from all walks of life including the First Minister, MSPs, CEOs, educationalists and other influential people from Scottish life.

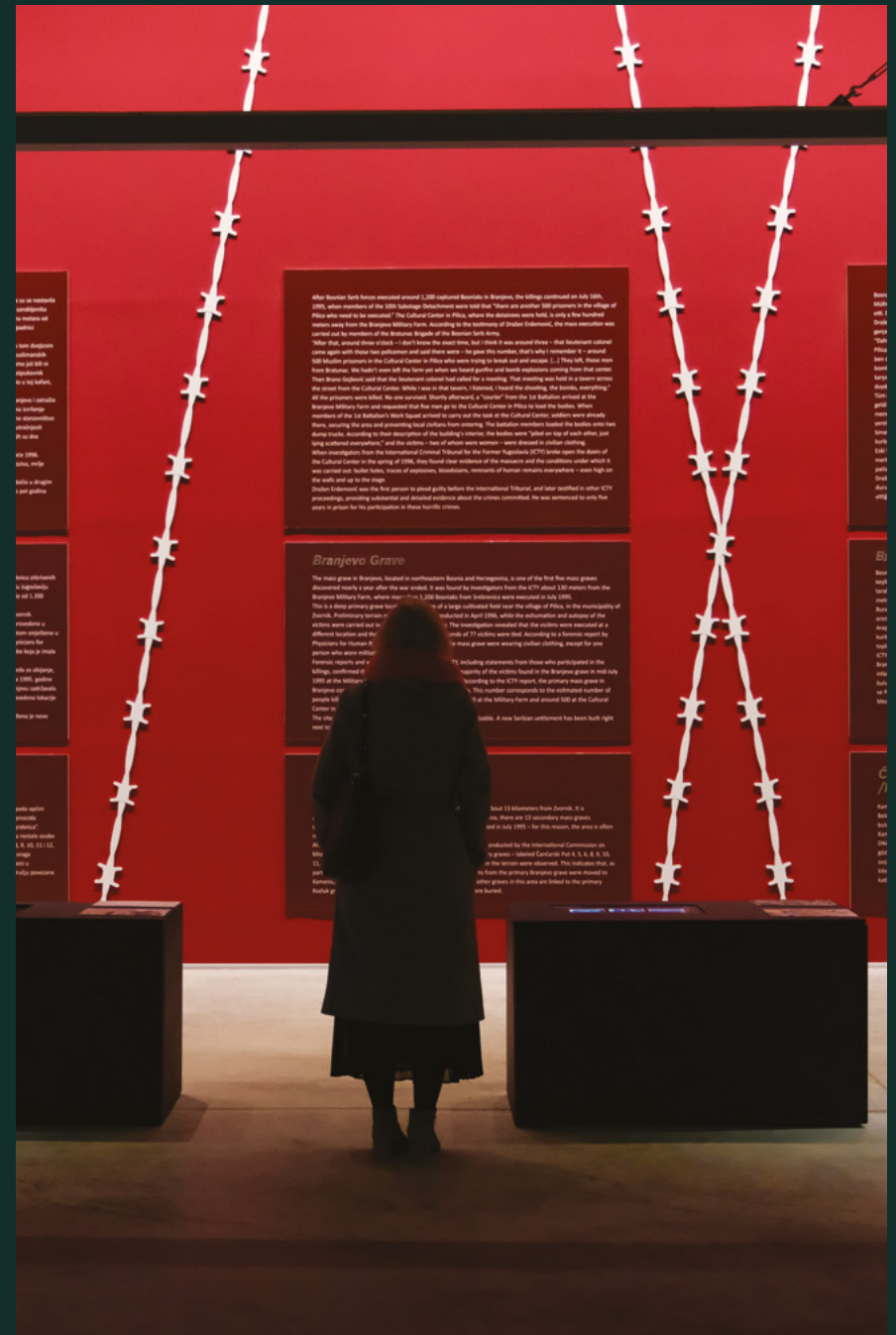
My journey with the charity began when I was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on a visit led by Angus Robertson MP. As you fly into Sarajevo you are immediately caught by the beauty of the surrounding countryside. Mountains circle the valley below of red bricked houses and green countryside almost like protecting arms. But nothing could be further from the truth. Rather than protection they offered the Bosnian Serb forces a vantage point to rain down bullets and incendiaries on the besieged town, which had been home to the winter Olympics of 1984, just four years prior.

This introduction to Bosnia and its history prepares you - but only a little - for the visit to Srebrenica, the place of the worst atrocity in European soil since WWII.

My first delegation included Ruth Davidson, now Baroness Davidson, and the late Lord Jim Wallace. With a long wait at Heathrow, Ruth and I discussed the possibility of setting up a Scottish Board and by the time we left the

“Hate speech is an alarm bell – the louder it rings, the greater the threat of genocide. It precedes and promotes violence”

United Nations Secretary-General,
António Guterres



THE GENOCIDE IN SREBRENICA

The Srebrenica genocide was a mass killing of more than 8,300 Bosniak Muslim men and boys in and around the town of Srebrenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina in July 1995.

In 1992, Bosnia and Herzegovina declared its independence from Yugoslavia, sparking a three-year war that resulted in an estimated 100,000 deaths. In July 1995, Srebrenica had been declared a UN “safe area” and was under the protection of Dutch UN peacekeeping troops. However, Bosnian Serb forces launched an offensive against the town, which fell on July 11, 1995.

In the days that followed, Bosnian Serb forces carried out a systematic killing spree, targeting Bosniak men and boys in and around the town. Many of them were captured and taken to nearby fields and forests where they were executed and buried in mass graves.

In addition to the killings, women were raped and thousands of Bosniak civilians were forcibly displaced.

The genocide was declared by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in 2001, as the worst atrocity committed on European soil since World War II. The Bosnian Serb leaders, including Ratko Mladić and Radovan Karadžić, were charged with war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide for their roles in the Srebrenica massacre. In 2017, Mladić was convicted and sentenced to life in prison for his role in the genocide, among other crimes.

UNDERSTANDING THE BOSNIAN WAR

The Bosnian War (1992–1995) followed the breakup of Yugoslavia and was marked by violent nationalism, ethnic cleansing, and widespread human rights abuses. Bosnia and Herzegovina, a diverse society of Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims), Serbs, and Croats, became the centre of a brutal conflict. Civilians were deliberately targeted, communities were divided, and thousands were displaced or killed. The war exposed the devastating consequences of hatred, propaganda, and political division when left unchallenged.

The genocide at Srebrenica stands as a stark reminder of how quickly dehumanisation can lead to unimaginable violence when the international community fails to act decisively.

Today, this history matters deeply. Beyond Srebrenica works to ensure that the lessons of Bosnia are not forgotten or denied. Genocide denial, misinformation, and rising intolerance across the world make this education more urgent than ever. By sharing survivor testimonies and encouraging critical thinking, we empower young people to recognise prejudice, challenge hate, and stand up for human rights.

Remembering what happened in Bosnia is not only about honouring those who were lost; it is about building a future where such atrocities cannot happen again.

“I am clear that hatred has no place in Scotland, and it is important to recognise and address the devastating consequences of unchecked hatred and prejudice. That is why the Scottish Government shares Beyond Srebrenica’s mission to learn from the atrocities of the past and why we are committed to working with you and other organisations to ensure our actions can be informed by such learning.”



John Swinney,
First Minister of Scotland



THE MOTHERS OF SREBRENICA

In the quiet aftermath of unimaginable loss, a group of women in Bosnia and Herzegovina refused to let silence take root.

The organisation, the Mothers of Srebrenica, was founded in the years following the 1995 genocide, as mothers, wives, and daughters gathered their grief and transformed it into a relentless pursuit of truth and justice. What began as shared mourning became a powerful collective voice; one that would echo far beyond Srebrenica.

The Mothers have spent decades demanding accountability for the atrocities committed, challenging denial, and ensuring that the memory of their loved ones is neither erased nor distorted. Through legal action, advocacy, and commemoration, they have helped bring perpetrators to justice and have played a crucial role in preserving the historical truth of what happened. Their courage has reshaped international conversations about genocide, responsibility, and remembrance.

Yet their work is not only about the past, but also about dignity in the present and hope for the future. Each name they honour, each story they tell, is an act of resistance against forgetting.

Beyond Srebrenica holds close and meaningful ties with these remarkable women and with the survivors who continue to rebuild their lives in Srebrenica. We value this relationship deeply. It is rooted in respect, trust, and a shared commitment to justice and remembrance.

We stand shoulder to shoulder with them in their grief, in their resilience, and in their unwavering fight for truth.



“We buried our sons, but we cannot bury the truth.”

The Mothers of Srebrenica



BEYOND SREBRENICA: OUR WORK

Beyond Srebrenica is dedicated to advancing education about the Srebrenica genocide and wider atrocities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while promoting tolerance, inclusion, and the rejection of hatred in society. Our work is delivered through a range of programmes that connect remembrance with learning and action in communities across Scotland and beyond.



Delegations

The charity organises visits to Bosnia, bringing together civic leaders, educators, young people, and community representatives. These delegations meet survivors, visit memorial sites, and return with a commitment to share lessons and deepen understanding of the genocide in their own communities.



Community engagement

Through talks, workshops, and partnerships, the charity works with schools, youth groups, community organisations, and workplaces to challenge prejudice and build understanding.



Education Accreditation Programme

Schools can be formally recognised for sustained engagement with genocide education and inclusive practice, demonstrating commitment to learning and values-based education. In 2025 and 2026 we were pleased to grow the number of accredited schools from across Scotland.



Commemorations

Beyond Srebrenica coordinates and supports commemorative events, including White Armband Day and annual remembrance activities, ensuring that the victims are honoured and that the memory of the genocide remains present in public consciousness.



National Schools' Competition

The competition invites young people to creatively explore themes of justice, remembrance, and human rights, encouraging reflection on the lessons of Srebrenica for today.



Theatre in Education

Through its powerful production *Inseparable: Lessons from a Nation Divided*, Beyond Srebrenica uses theatre to engage pupils with survivor stories and the consequences of hatred, followed by workshops and teaching resources. Across all its work, Beyond Srebrenica focuses on ensuring the lessons of the past are not only remembered but actively used to build a more just and compassionate future.

OUR WORK MATTERS

As an aid worker in Bosnia during the war, I was constantly frustrated by how little attention the conflict received in the UK. This was a brutal war in the heart of Europe, marked by ethnic cleansing and genocide. It was unfolding barely fifty years after the world had vowed "never again".

My first visit to Srebrenica left an indelible mark. Its impact inspired those visiting to establish the charity. Over the last ten years a diverse group of trustees has worked to develop the organisation and to raise awareness of what had happened in Bosnia.

The lessons of Srebrenica became a template, adapted and applied to domestic issues, encouraging people to stand up to hate and intolerance and to recognise the consequences of failing to do so.

When we began, few people in Scotland had even heard of Srebrenica. That has changed. Today, the charity is one of the principal organisations challenging hate and intolerance in Scotland. Through dozens of delegations, educational programmes, resources, engagement with the arts sector, and the regular commemoration of what happened in Bosnia, we have made a tangible impact.

When I first met the Mothers of Srebrenica, I was struck by their courage and by the pain with which they recounted their experiences. I pledged then to take their stories to a wider audience. It has been a privilege to fulfil that promise, and a source of deep pride to know that thirty years on, Srebrenica is known, discussed, and remembered across Scotland.



David Hamilton is a founding trustee of Beyond Srebrenica and served on the board from 2016-2025.

INSEPARABLE: LESSONS FROM A NATION DIVIDED

More than 10,000 pupils across Scotland have engaged with a powerful and free theatre-in-education programme about the Bosnian genocide since its launch - a significant milestone as the world marks 30 years since the Srebrenica genocide in Bosnia.

Written and produced in partnership with theatre-in-education specialists Collingwood Learning, and funded by the Gordon Cook Foundation, Inseparable is entirely free for Scottish schools and includes workshops and classroom resources to deepen learning and support teachers. The play has now also been developed into a digital resource, available for free to every school, and is accompanied by lesson plans created by Beyond Srebrenica in partnership with educators.

The story follows Azra, Adnan, and Novak, three young people whose friendship is fractured by the rise of hate and division. As their world changes, the production invites pupils to reflect on how similar patterns of extremism can take root anywhere - and what role they can play in stopping it.

The powerful production, performed in schools and supported by workshops and teaching resources, aims to raise awareness of the Bosnian genocide in Srebrenica and promote tolerance, understanding, and action to combat hate speech in Scotland and beyond. Since its launch, the play has been performed across Scotland, including at the Scottish Parliament.

“We don’t hold back in the play. We knew we had to honour the experiences of survivors, most of whom are still fighting for justice for their loved ones. The play depicts difficult and at times harrowing details which are based on true events, including scenes from concentration camps and sexual violence against women and girls. It’s not easy to watch but is so important that our young people have an honest account of what happens when hate takes hold.

We have been amazed at the resilience and thoughtfulness of young people who have seen it. They are the same age as the characters and can really relate to the experiences being portrayed.”

Sabina Kadić-Mackenzie,
Chair of Beyond Srebrenica



“You leave me now and they’ll kill me. A bullet in my head. If I’m lucky. I’ve heard that others are tortured before they’re killed. The guards take turns to kick the prisoner. See how long they’ll last. They film it. One guy lasted five hours. He got half an hour respite because they had to go out and get a new battery for the camera. They’ve killed my dad and brother. If they kill me, my mum won’t ever know what happened to me. Please, I’m begging you.”

Concentration camp scene in
Inseparable: Lessons from a Nation Divided





DELEGATIONS

“I have had the enormous privilege to visit Srebrenica and meet survivors of the genocide as well as bereaved friends and family members who continue to this day to fight to preserve the memory of their loved ones.

The pain and suffering they have endured is unimaginable but their determination and perseverance to carry on and create a better world, free from injustice and brutality, is nothing short of remarkable.

Atrocities like the Srebrenica genocide do not occur overnight. When hatred and bigotry are allowed to seep into any part of society we are all at risk of a less peaceful and tolerant world.

Although many years have passed since more than 8,000 men and boys had their lives taken from them – and many women and girls suffered appalling crimes of sexual violence – it is still vital that we remember and reflect on one of Europe’s darkest chapters.

The Srebrenica genocide must never be forgotten, and we must never allow the prejudice and intolerance that led to such brutality to infiltrate our society ever again.”

Former First Minister **Nicola Sturgeon**
following a delegation to Srebrenica

A DECADE OF IMPACT

Beyond Srebrenica brings survivors' experiences into schools and communities, it challenges denial and promotes understanding, tolerance, and reconciliation. This helps ensure that the lessons of the past are not forgotten and are used to build a more inclusive future.



We have taken **over 600 delegates** to Bosnia, each leaving with a greater knowledge of the genocide and greatly moved by survivor's testimonies to inspire them to take social action in the UK.



500,000 people reached through documentaries, podcasts, print media and online platforms.



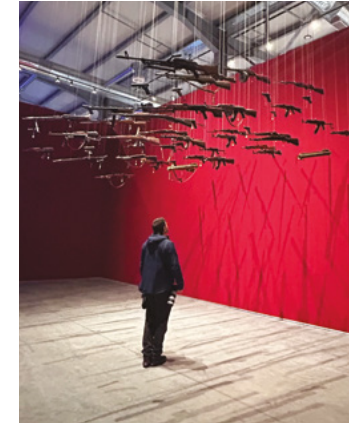
We have contributed over **20,000 hours in voluntary time** from our expert board.



Since 2023, **over 10,000** young people have accessed our powerful theatre-in-education programme, Inseparable: Lessons from a nation divided.



100+ commemoration events, schools and community talks have been held, including the 20th and 30th anniversary events, and commemorations for White Armband Day.





DELEGATE REFLECTIONS

Carole Ferguson

An experienced Scottish solicitor/legal counsel

In October 2024, Carole Ferguson Walker, joined a Beyond Srebrenica delegation to Bosnia. Here she writes of her experience.

Since I came back, people have asked me how it was. I've found it difficult to answer that question, and indeed to set my thoughts down. One reason is that there were, for me, two very different aspects to the trip.

The first was the beautiful, bustling city of Sarajevo. I loved the old town, and I really liked the Bosnian people I met. They're very no-nonsense and sensible. While they want to educate others about the genocide, they are also keen to share their country and culture. The buildings were wonderful, the food was amazing, and the smells in the old town; Bosnian coffee, spices, and smoke from cooking – were completely captivating.

On the other hand, our day in Srebrenica was nothing short of heartbreaking. It was one of those moments where you really question humanity and the depths of horror people can inflict on each other.

We visited the Memorial Centre, where local young people give tours and tell of the unimaginable events of July 1995, when over 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were systematically killed by Serb forces. Many had gathered there seeking safety at a UN base. They were separated from the women and girls, loaded onto buses and trucks, and, after being moved between locations and subjected to inhuman treatment, were killed and buried in mass graves. Later, those graves were dug up and redistributed to conceal the crime, leaving families to bury, in some cases, only fragments of remains identified through DNA.

One moment that stayed with me was seeing a display of a digger, complete with technical specifications. A machine used to exhume mass graves.

“I tried to make sense of it, but I couldn’t.”

The lack of humanity in all of this is staggering. It left me wondering what leads people to treat others this way, though we know from daily news that such actions are never far away.

One of those responsible was Radovan Karadžić, a trained psychiatrist who later became a political leader and was convicted of genocide and other crimes. It is difficult to fathom how someone with that background came to lead such brutality. It also raises questions about the role of the UN at the time, which, from what I learned, was not effective.

At the cemetery, we met some of the Mothers of Srebrenica, who spoke first-hand about their loss. It was heartbreaking, but they are resolute in telling their story. Even now, they told us, acts of hostility continue; reminders that hatred has not fully disappeared.

We also heard from survivors, including Nedžad Avdić, who described surviving a mass execution. Hearing his story was an incredible privilege. He continues to share his experience, so others understand what happened.

We saw footage of men being taken to a field, some shot, others forced to move bodies before being killed themselves. School pupils visiting the centre that day had to leave the room, sobbing.

I tried to make sense of it, but I couldn't. I later read a quote from Holocaust survivor Irene Weiss: “Man can turn into an animal in no time. All he needs is permission.” Perhaps that permission, from leaders like Karadžić, was enough. Ordinary people carried out these acts. Others stood by.

I haven't said much about the women and girls. Not because there is nothing to say, but because there is too much. Rape was used as a weapon of war. Many were killed; others were forced to carry children conceived through violence. Some later died by suicide.

Organisations like Beyond Srebrenica are doing important work to help Bosnians tell their stories, so that others may learn.

So, how was my trip? It's a difficult question. I'm very glad I went. I am different because of it.





DELEGATE REFLECTIONS

Stephen McCranor
CEO of Frame agency

Stephen McCranor visited Srebrenica with a delegation in April 2026. He shares his reflections on what he saw and heard.

'How was your trip, what were you doing again, isn't that the place where something really bad happened?'

I struggled with how to answer very reasonable, polite and normal questions from my colleagues to the point I just said, 'it was a bit heavy, will fill you in later'.

That must've sounded pathetic, but it's not that I couldn't speak about it, I just didn't know how to address the atrocities I learned about in a 90 second exchange.

I met a Bakira Hasečić who, in April 1992 answered a knock on her door to her neighbour, a local police officer, accompanied by 15 Serb soldiers who entered her home, placed her family under house arrest, and raped her daughter in front of her and raped her in front of her daughter, before robbing their belongings.

I met a Nedžad Avdić, a softly spoken gentle man of my age, who while I was navigating high school, he was crawling away from a pile of dead bodies having miraculously survived an execution, after being starved of food and water and tortured.

So, aye, Bosnia was a bit heavy.

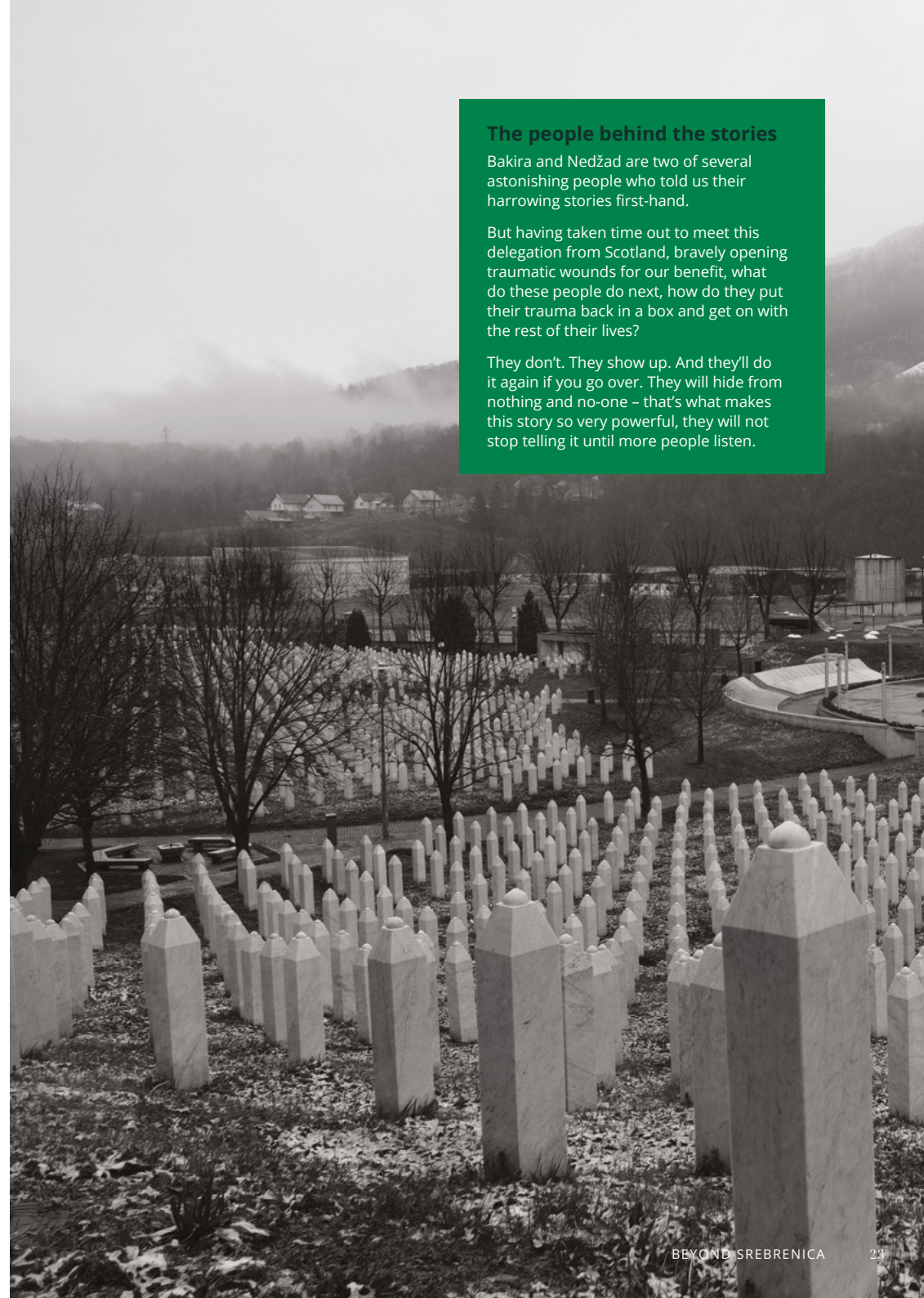
“Being face to face with this level of trauma and seeing how they handle it, gives you a faith in humankind.”

The people behind the stories

Bakira and Nedžad are two of several astonishing people who told us their harrowing stories first-hand.

But having taken time out to meet this delegation from Scotland, bravely opening traumatic wounds for our benefit, what do these people do next, how do they put their trauma back in a box and get on with the rest of their lives?

They don't. They show up. And they'll do it again if you go over. They will hide from nothing and no-one – that's what makes this story so very powerful, they will not stop telling it until more people listen.



Nedžad Avdić

In a small hotel in Srebrenica, we sat round a table with Nedžad.

He was executed as a 17-year-old boy and survived! But he didn't want to. He wanted to die.

Having survived three years of displacement, famine and shelling, he was separated from his dad in a crowd of over 20,000 people at the so-called UN safe zone where they were told by Serb soldiers with megaphones that they would be taken to safety and treated in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

Barefooted, starving and thirsty, Nedžad and thousands of men and boys were loaded onto lorries and taken to their death. Tortured, stripped, shot and left for dead face down in a pile of bodies, his face stuck to the gravel beneath him. Surviving and suffering was his greatest fear.

Nedžad displays a lovely but nervous smile as he tells his story, no doubt a coping mechanism each time he rips the plaster off this traumatic wound. Which he does for a greater good when it would be much easier to lock it and pack it away.

The Bosnia I visited is full of the spirit of Bakira and Nedžad.

Take Almasa Salihović, who led us round the brilliantly curated Srebrenica Memorial Centre.

“I’m not afraid of those who killed my brother, I’m afraid of their children.”

Almasa Salihović

As she introduces one of the most harrowing pieces of film I've ever seen, she looks at us empathetically knowing how uncomfortable we may feel, giving no indication that she is currently standing in a place she should never wish to return to.

Her place of work - this former UN Base turned genocide museum - is the same place whereas a small child she watched her brother Abdulah being ripped from the arms of her mother and taken to his death.

You cannot not cry when she says, “I now realise I'll always be older than my older brother”.

This amazing young woman turns up to work every day, at site her brother was taken away and executed, because she refuses to be beaten.

Then there's Fadila Efendić, one of the Mothers of Srebrenica whose husband, Hamed, and son Fejzo were murdered in the genocide. “They cannot put into 100 films what I saw in those two days”.

Rather than run from this trauma, Fadila runs the flower shop across from the memorial centre, at the entrance to the graveyard where her family was finally laid to rest. Her warm eyes dance and her smile is real as she recounts stories of life in pre-war Bosnia in a room above the memorial centre.

Throughout the trip, we're looked after by no ordinary tour guide, Suvad Cibra.

The same tour guide who diligently educates you on the war and subsequent genocide, is the same man who lost his dad to it and grew up not remembering him.

We must not turn away

Being face to face with this level of trauma and seeing how they handle it, gives you a faith in humankind that the perpetrators of the crimes can never take away.

There may be peace in Bosnia, and Serbs and Bosnians still live side by side, but there is no closure and will never be while genocide denial is so prevalent and worsening.

It creates a palpable feeling of tension and unease in the area despite the peace. It is another form of cruelty.



DELEGATE PLEDGE

Beyond Srebrenica developed the delegate pledge to ensure that our impact and reach continues long after delegates return to Scotland.

The 11/7 pledge

Make the pledge to meaningfully engage 11 people over 7 days in the week of your return, starting conversations and directing people to survivor testimony, films and other materials provided in your delegation resource pack.

Ensure truth prevails

We're a small team of volunteers, so we need your help. Take the lessons of the Bosnian Genocide into your workplaces, schools, universities, faith spaces, and communities across Scotland. Beyond Srebrenica can provide talk templates and resources to help you.

Make it impossible to look away

Share what you witnessed and learned by writing a blog, article, or social media post. Use your platforms to explain why the lessons of Srebrenica are urgent, relevant, and necessary today. If your professional skills could help us to ensure this, let us know.

Show up

Honour the victims and survivors you met by attending Beyond Srebrenica's commemoration events, and help ensure key dates are marked across Scotland, including White Armband Day in May and Srebrenica Memorial Day in July.

Stay engaged after the delegation

Continue to support the charity's work by attending events, promoting our material and online content, and commit to using what you have learned to create change in your communities.

LAYING ROOTS IN SCOTLAND

A partnership between the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and Beyond Srebrenica has brought renewed focus to our work, and to the conservation of *Picea omorika*, a rare and ancient conifer native to the Drina River valley. During the Bosnian War, this relic spruce faced a severe threat as its habitat was damaged by the conflict, including land mines, deforestation, and wider environmental destruction.

In response, botanists from the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh undertook a conservation initiative under extremely challenging conditions, working alongside local partners to collect seed material and propagate the species in secure environments. This intervention ensured the survival of *Picea omorika* within botanical collections and established a foundation for ongoing conservation, including future reintroduction and habitat restoration efforts.

The species' survival is closely intertwined with the experiences of communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Both the spruce and the people of Bosnia endured profound disruption during the war, facing threats not only to life and landscape but also to continuity, identity, and heritage. As a species that has persisted since the Ice Age, *Picea omorika* has come to symbolise endurance in the face of catastrophic change.

Building on this shared history, the partnership between the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and Beyond Srebrenica has also supported the planting of further trees, strengthening living links between Scotland and Bosnia. These planting initiatives extend the conservation legacy of the project, while also fostering remembrance, connection, and resilience across communities.

As part of this ongoing collaboration, a commemorative event was held on 11 July at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh to mark the 30th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide.



THE FUTURE

The entries to the Beyond Srebrenica Schools' Competition continue to demonstrate the determination of our future generations to create a better world. Their creativity and reflection honour those who were killed and displaced and remind us all why remembrance matters. We are equally grateful to all the schools and communities across Scotland, whose support helps nurture such powerful voices for justice and understanding.

These are a series of the reflections from the 2026 entries, responding to the theme of "justice".

1.

"By remembering, we honour those who lost their lives in Srebrenica and help prevent similar injustice in the future. Although justice cannot change the past, it can help create a more fair and responsible future."e.

2.

I have learned about the horrific events of the Second World War and the Holocaust in such excruciating detail, to the point that I feel physically ill...so then why, I began to ask myself, do I not experience the same unpleasant physical reaction when I hear the name "Srebrenica". That doesn't seem right. That's not fair. That's not justice. Why does one genocide instantly bring quiet to a room, yet the other could just drift right through it, without a single person's ear picking it up. The lessons that can be learned from such an event, around acceptance and tolerance, are integral to creating a world that will never allow anything like this to happen again. The lessons we all thought that we'd learned after 1945."

3.

"Justice cannot exist where the truth itself is still contested, and until there is widespread acceptance of what happened in Srebrenica, any claim that justice has been achieved remains fundamentally flawed."

4.

Storytelling - return to Bosnia

... Still, it felt shorter this time than at seven years old, holding my mother's hand as we trudged in silence to the trucks of people. I saw my house in the distance, looking at me with tired eyes whilst I was speeding up, then at the door. I reached for the doorknob, holding it for a minute. Was this a mistake? I twisted it and the door groaned open. The smell hit me like a truck.

"Come!" Mama hisses, dragging me as I cling to anything I can.

"I'm not going without them!" I scream, clenching the doorframe tighter.

"We must leave. I'm sorry." She pulls me and I watch as my precious doll hits the ground, but there's no time. My dolly is lying there, and I am walking away and Mama said earlier that we will never come back. I hope she's wrong, but I think she's right.

... I looked around - it was all there: the kitchen, Mama and Tata's room, my and Edin's room. In the kitchen still sat those shattered plates from when we moved, but they were dusty now. In the corner of my eye, on the table, sat the shiny coffee cup at Tata's place.

The garden was overgrown with tangled vines that snagged at memories. By the fence was a tree that we had planted when we buried Tata. Mama thought with death should come new life.



5.

Finlay Cleland, a pupil from Banff Academy, was named the overall Senior Phase winner of the inaugural 2025 Beyond Srebrenica National Schools' Competition. He won for his powerful writing on the Bosnian Genocide. His prize included a visit to Sarajevo and to Srebrenica. He wrote his moving poem, "The Cost of Silence" after visiting the Srebrenica Memorial Centre and cemetery at Potočari.

The Cost of Silence

By Finlay Cleland, Banff Academy student

A story of war and of atrocities
One hidden during inquiry
School children hear of the monstrosities
And some have no hope of recovery

Franz Ferdinand once so strong
Shot dead on the corner
An act to start a war so long
One that seeded so much disorder

Sun glimmering across the Miljacka's flow
A library once stood so grand
Vijećnica only a shell now though
Instead, a place for governors of the land

A hot shower, breakfast before we see
War child stories, soldiers they can't forgive
None of them had such luxury
Forced to live in conditions not fit to live

Winter Olympics roll around
A city so thriving, flying high
Yet politicians finding no common ground
Causing a horrible war to be nigh

A beautiful city, a beautiful country
Srebrenica and Bosnia tarnished by genocide
It is such a pity
These actions left many terrified

UN safe zones an unkept promise
A tunnels mouth, a saving artery
Words without action provide no solace
Through the dark mines they rush to be free

A museum to commemorate
Those we have lost
Lives we must celebrate
So many saved, but at such a cost

A victim's mother, a victim's wife
A young Bosnian boys words cut like a knife
"The genocide is still happening today"
"They must first ask for forgiveness"

Their stories are still told
And still bring back so much pain
These are memories we must hold
To make sure it doesn't happen again



BEYOND SREBRENICA TRUSTEES

Beyond Srebrenica is a volunteer-led charity with no paid staff, working entirely in our own time and bringing together expertise from across civil society to support remembrance, education, and community engagement.

- Sabina Kadić-Mackenzie, Chair
- Julie Adair, Vice-Chair
- Mike Strang, Treasurer
- Barry Fisher, Secretary
- Robyn Barclay, Trustee
- Hana Đuherić, Trustee
- Stephanie Morrison, Trustee

Our former trustees include:

- Almira Delibegović-Broome
- John Corrigan
- Stuart Cosgrove
- Ruth Davidson
- Marsaili Fraser
- Jackie Halawi
- David Hamilton
- Tariq Ishaq
- Very Rev Lorna Hood
- Johann Lamont
- Sally Loudon
- Seonag MacKinnon
- Robin Macpherson
- Fiona Malcolm
- Robert McNeill
- Amra Mujkanović
- David Plews
- Gail Ross

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Beyond Srebrenica is a volunteer-led charity with no paid staff, working entirely in our own time and bringing together expertise from across civil society to support remembrance, education, and community engagement.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Scottish Government and The Gordon Cook Foundation for their generous support, which has made this work possible. We are also thankful to our partners at the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, the Beyond Srebrenica Education Advisory Group, The Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Interfaith and our former delegates for their continued commitment and invaluable contributions.

Our appreciation extends to our trustees, past and present, for their guidance and dedication.

Thank you to the contributors of this report, Frame Agency and the young people across Scotland who took part in the Schools' competition.

Above all, we pay heartfelt tribute to the survivors of Bosnia for their enduring grace, strength, and generosity in sharing their experiences, which continue to inspire and educate us all.

Hvala!



“Zakopali su nas,
ali nisu znali da
smo sjeme.”

“They buried us,
but they didn’t know
we were seeds.”



BEYOND SREBRENICA
LESSONS FROM THE BOSNIAN GENOCIDE

srebrenica.scot

Beyond Srebrenica is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated
Organisation (SCIO) No SCO46540.