

Göttingen/Sarajevo/Srebrenica, 7.5.2012

To

San Jose Peace and Justice Center
San Jose, CA
United States

By e-mail:

coordinator@sanjosepeace.org

Request not to proceed with the invitation of Mr. Michael Parenti (supporter of Milosevic and genocide denier) as guest speaker for the Peace Center's 31 May fundraising event.

Dear Sir/Madam,

We have heard about your decision to host Michael Parenti as guest speaker for your 31 May fundraiser. Mr. Parenti is the leader of a campaign to defend Slobodan Milosevic, who was charged and tried with war crimes in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995) but died before his victims were able to see justice achieved.

On behalf of many Bosnian war victims' and survivors' organisations in Bosnia and Europe we urge you to end all contact and co-operation with Mr. Parenti without delay or hesitation.

Michael Parenti is a man who publicly denies the substance and the scope of genocide and other crimes perpetrated in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the 1992-1995 war. He undermines efforts to bring reconciliation and achieve closure for the victims of the crimes committed during the war.

In his article "The Demonization of Slobodan Milosevic", Mr. Parenti describes the genocide at Srebrenica as a media-hyped story of how the Serbs allegedly killed 7,000 Muslims when the most thorough investigations had uncovered no more than 2,000 bodies of undetermined nationality. His claims and "observations" are entirely unsustainable. The International War Crimes Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) found that the killing of over 8,000 Bosniak men and boys by Serb execution squads at Srebrenica in 1995 constituted an act of genocide. To date 5,137 victims have been interred in the cemetery at Potocari and more bodies continue to be found. The ICTY's finding has subsequently been confirmed by the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Gesellschaft für
bedrohte Völker (GfbV)
Associazione per i popoli
minacciati
Société pour les peuples
menacés
Asociación para los
Pueblos Amenazados
Общество защиты
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Društvo za ugrozene narode
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In his book "To Kill a Nation" (pp. 88-89, "Demonizing the Serbs"), Mr. Parenti also questions the notion that Serb Nationalist concentration camps were death camps. He makes wilfully misleading references to the International Red Cross and Western media visits, alleging that the camps were "hyped" by media and public relation companies. In his article "The Media and their Atrocities" he suggests that reports of the systematic use of rape as a weapon of war by the Serb forces in Bosnia were a total fabrication. Parenti's "doubts" and "suggestions" have been conclusively refuted by the International Tribunal in The Hague.

From the very start of the Yugoslav wars our United Nations-accredited international human rights organisation, Gesellschaft für bedrohte Völker/Society for Threatened Peoples, was involved in campaigning on behalf of the victims of expulsion, genocide and other war crimes. We continue today to work closely with the Mothers of Srebrenica and many other victims' organisations.

We appreciate the importance of your fund-raising efforts but we cannot help but find it scandalous that your *Center for Peace and Justice* is proposing to offer Mr. Parenti a platform for his views despite the fact that his claims and insinuations have been dismissed as frivolous and unsubstantiated.

Our protest is supported by Bosniaks worldwide who are appalled that Parenti is still able to do so much damage to the process of reconciliation and hopes for a new, better future for all the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We take the liberty of drawing your attention to some background information about the genocidal crimes perpetrated in Bosnia and Herzegovina between 1992 and 1995:

- More than 100 concentration, internment and rape camps existed in which over 200,000 civilians were held prisoner.
- Many thousands of prisoners were murdered in concentration/death camps including Omarska, Manjaca, Keraterm, Trnopolje, Luka Brcko, Sušica and Foca.
- Members of intellectual, commercial and political elites were systematically detained and murdered (the phenomenon of "eliticide").
- Approximately 2.2 million Bosnians fled or were expelled from their homes and dispersed around the world.
- There were many thousands of unrecorded and unacknowledged deaths among children, the elderly and the sick, who were injured or their health severely impaired during and as a result of their flight and expulsion.
- 500,000 Bosnians were besieged, shelled, starved and partially exterminated in the UN "safe areas" of Tuzla, Goražde, Srebrenica, Žepa and Bihac over the course of nearly four years.
- The sixth UN "safe area" of the Bosnian capital Sarajevo was besieged and bombarded for nearly four years, with the loss of 11,000 lives including 1,500 children.

- Massacres and mass killings took place in many towns and municipalities across the strategic area of northern, western and eastern Bosnia (the Posavina, the Prijedor area and the Drina valley).
- Hundreds of towns and villages were systematically destroyed.
- The comprehensive destruction of Islamic cultural monuments and extensive destruction of Catholic cultural monuments included the demolition of 1189 mosques and medresas and up to 500 Catholic churches and religious establishments, together with 38 Orthodox churches.
- Ongoing investigations continue into the whereabouts of approximately 15,000 missing persons and unmarked and concealed remains are still being exhumed and identified.
- 284 UN soldiers were kidnapped, mistreated and used as human shields.
- More than 20,000 Bosnian Muslim women were raped in the "rape camps" and elsewhere.
- 8372 Bosniaks from the town of Srebrenica, mostly men and boys but also including 560 women, were murdered and their bodies disposed of in concealed mass graves

Please withdraw this invitation to Mr. Parenti and cancel his lecture on 31 May 2012

Yours sincerely



Tilman Zülch

Secretary General of the Society for Threatened Peoples, Germany

I append below a list of co-signatory victims' associations who have authorized us to send this letter with their support and on their behalf:

1. Mothers of Srebrenica (Srebrenica)
2. Women of Srebrenica (Tuzla)
3. Srebrenica Citizens' Forum (Srebrenica / Tuzla)
4. Srebrenica 99 (Tuzla)
5. Srebrenica Intellectuals' Club (Srebrenica)
6. Society for the Prevention of Genocide (Srebrenica)
7. Students' Association (Srebrenica)
8. Bosfam Women's Union (Srebrenica / Tuzla)
9. Association of Former BiH Concentration Camp Detainees (Sarajevo)

10. Women's Section of the Association of Former Camp Detainees (Canton of Sarajevo)
11. Women - Victims of War (Sarajevo)
12. Izvor - Union in Search of the Missing of Prijedor
13. With the Heart Towards Peace (Kozarac, Prijedor)
14. Return - Union of Returnees to Bijeljina
15. Mostovi - Union of Families of the Missing (Bosanska Krupa)
16. Union in Search of the Missing (Brcko)
17. Union of Camp Inmates (Brcko)
18. Union of Families of Prisoners and Missing Persons from the Prozor Area (Prozor)
19. Union of Families of Victims and the Missing (Hadzici)
20. Union of Families of Victims and the Missing (Kladanj)
21. Union of Families of Victims and the Missing (Kljuc)
22. Union of Families of Prisoners and Missing Persons from Neretva Canton, Herzegovina (Mostar)
23. Union for the Missing (Mostar)
24. Mostovi Prijateljstva Union for the Missing (Prijedor)
25. Zepa Union of Returnees (Zepa)
26. Vrbanja Union of Families of the Missing (Kotor Varos, Travnik)
27. Union of Families of the Missing from Zvornik (Tuzla)
28. Kotorsko Union of Returnees (Kotorsko - Doboj)
29. BiH Roma Union (Sarajevo/Lukavac)
30. Sae Roma Roma Union (Tuzla)
31. Zenica Roma Union (Zenica)
32. Roma Union (Kalesija)
33. The Future Roma Union (Sarajevo)
34. Roma Women's Union (Tuzla)
35. Association of Drina Valley Unions
36. Women of the Drina Valley (Bratunac)
37. Women of the Drina Valley (Vlasenica)
38. Women of the Drina Valley (Sarajevo)
39. Vrbanja Union of Returnees (Banja Luka)
40. Coalition for Return (Banja Luka)
41. Visegrad 92 Union of Families of the Missing from Visegrad (Sarajevo)
42. Women's Strength Women's Union (Tuzla)
43. Council of the Congress of Bosniak Intellectuals (Sarajevo)
44. Institute for the Recording of War Crimes (Sarajevo)
45. Serb Citizens' Council (Sarajevo)
46. Serb Citizens' Council (Tuzla)
47. Serb Citizens' Council (Zenica)
48. Serb Citizens' Council (Mostar)
49. Croat People's Council (Sarajevo)
50. Justice for Bosnia and Herzegovina Foundation (Sarajevo)
51. Obrazovanje gradi BiH [Education Builds BiH] Citizens' Union (Sarajevo)
52. Jewish Community (Sarajevo)
53. Jewish Community (Mostar)
54. Democratic Council of Bosniaks (Bijeljina)
55. Terra Citizens' Union (Sarajevo)
56. Mak-Bosanka Women's Union (Sarajevo)
57. Merhamet Humanitarian Union (Sarajevo)

58. Visegrad 92 Citizens' Union (Sarajevo)
59. Children of Sarajevo Union of Parents of Murdered Children (Sarajevo)
60. FOKUS-BiH Association of Women's Organisations from Bosnia and Herzegovina
61. Medica (Zenica / Visoko)
62. Eho Union (Ljubuski)
63. Women of BiH Women's Union (Mostar)
64. Youth Forum Citizens' Union (Stolac)
65. Return and the Right of Residence Returnees' Union (Bijeljina)
66. Astra Women's Union (Bijeljina)
67. Republika Srpska Helsinki Committee (Bijeljina)
68. Woman's Future Women's Union (Kalesija)
69. "For The Missing" Union of Families of the Missing (Hadzici)
70. Trebinje Returnees' Union (Trebinje)
71. Deblokada Citizens' Union (Sarajevo)
72. Foundation for Return and Reconstruction in Prijedor (Prijedor)
73. Youth Initiative for Human Rights (Sarajevo)