



ISLAMSKA ZAJEDNICA  
U BOSNI I HERCEGOVINI



**Friday Sermon (*khutbah*) of the  
Grand Mufti (*Raisu-l-Ulama*) of  
Bosnia-Herzegovina, Husein  
ef. Kavazović, on the occasion  
of the 25th anniversary of the  
Srebrenica Genocide**

**Sarajevo, 10 July 2020**



**EAST LONDON MOSQUE &  
LONDON MUSLIM CENTRE**

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**FRIDAY SERMON (KHUTBAH)  
OF THE GRAND MUFTI  
(RAISU-L-ULAMA) OF BOSNIA-  
HERZEGOVINA, HUSEIN  
EF. KAVAZOVIĆ, ON THE  
OCCASION OF THE 25TH  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
SREBRENICA GENOCIDE**

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*Gazi Husrev-Bey Mosque, Sarajevo,  
10 July 2020, Islamic Community of  
Bosnia-Herzegovina*

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, in whose name we start every prayer, every speech and every beneficial affair.

Peace and blessings to all his messengers and the last among them, beloved Muhammad, his family and his companions.

Today and every day upon which the sun rises, we ask for forgiveness for our martyrs and our hearts remember the sons and daughters of Srebrenica, both living and deceased. We remember those who were killed by monsters who committed the crime of genocide. Cursed be every criminal and his deed and those who helped him, till the Judgment Day.

Brothers and sisters, Today is Friday, 10 July 2020 and believers pray to Allah piously, earnestly seeking His forgiveness and mercy. We are grateful for the blessings He bestows upon us each and every day. We are here responding to His call, because Friday is the day of our congregational prayer, the day of renewing our oath that we will obey God's word and answer His call.

The strength of one's belief in Allah is shown through his moral behavior and his persistence on the right path. A Muslim whose faith is firm and unshakeable will not give up in times of adversity, even when his own life is at stake. A sincere Muslim will patiently endure all hardships which afflict him as well as helping others who are suffering with compassion and empathy. The foundation of our iman is our belief that the power of our faith in Allah and trust in our Messenger and the Muslim community are sources of strength. Allah says: **And to Allah belongs [all] honor, and to His Messenger, and to the believers, but the hypocrites do not know.** (Al-Munafiqun, 8)

Brothers and sisters, The moral greatness of a Muslim is shown through his commitment

to performing good deeds, even towards those who have wronged him. Forgiveness and repentance are necessary for life in any time and place. Forgiveness is strength and repentance is the courage to admit one's own mistakes. One of the beautiful names of Allah is *The One Who Forgives and The One Who is Merciful*.

He said: **And whoever endures patiently and forgives—surely this is a resolve to aspire to.** (Al-Shura, 43). This *ayat* (verse) of the Qur'an should be written in the heart of every believer, as well as the hadith of the Messenger: *All the sons of Adam are sinners, but the best of sinners are those who repent often.*

The dignity of a Muslim is demonstrated by letting people know that he does not forget the kindness they show him, nor the evil they inflict upon him. Muhammad (*peace be upon him*) taught us that a person who is not grateful for the goodness of others is not a good Muslim because: *The one who is not grateful to people is not grateful to Allah.* He also taught us that a person who allows others to cheat him repeatedly is not a conscientious Muslim, because *a believer is not to be stung twice out of a same hole.*

There is no greater shame than a Muslim living humiliated in his own home. Islam demands we rise up against evil and injustice wherever we find it. Brothers and sisters, do not bow your head down before evil, because wrongdoers and oppressors do not deserve to be bowed down to. Let us always bear in mind the words of Allah: **Fear them not; fear Me, if you are true believers.** (Al-Imran, 175)

The truths and gifts of faith must be received willingly, not through oppression. Faith does not allow one man to be a true slave of another. Our obedience is to our Lord. No matter how long we may live, at the end we will have to face the Secret of Life and testify the truth about ourselves before the Lord of the Worlds. But faith also asks us to face each other in this world and to admit our own faults, in the hope that truth will unite us and set us free.

True submission to God asks us to reject the devilish glorification of crime and its perpetrators - it asks us to reject false heroes and murderers and accept the word of God that has come to us as our savior and the glad tidings delivered by the messengers Musa (Moses), Isa (Jesus) and Muhammad, peace be upon them all.

In these days of commemorating our brothers and sisters, the victims of Genocide in Srebrenica, we reaffirm a religious truth spoken long ago: no man can serve himself only without becoming so obsessed with self-love or the love of his own people that he turns them into a fake deity. Know well, brothers and sisters, that if a person does not obey the One God, then he is building fake gods to justify his own evil. Good and evil are not the same, says the Qur'an, even if we are dazzled by the abundance of evil that surrounds us.

On the face of every victim of a crime, wherever it was committed, are the bloody traces of false religion and sacrilege. We see that everywhere, and we see it in the memorial center of the Genocide in Potočari. The white tombstones in this memorial center are witnesses. Their image will continue to be a warning even when we as living witnesses are long gone, unable to speak of the evil committed by the hands of those in whose hearts that evil was born. Our prayers will preserve the memory of our loved ones and save them from oblivion. We firmly believe in their innocence and immortality.

Brothers and sisters, it's been twenty-five years since members of

the Serbian Army and Police Force massacred over 8,000 innocent people in Srebrenica. All of us, both at home and abroad, still feel the consequences of that evil deed and yet, even today we face the challenge of overcoming that evil taking hold again.

Now it is much clearer to us that the evil behind the Genocide of Srebrenica cannot be destroyed easily and that its poison will continue to circulate this region. The reason for that is that evil cannot be overcome if the community is passive towards it. We must fight against it, otherwise, it will triumph, deceiving us with the lie that it is beneficial for us. We have witnessed this in action in recent years. The evil of the Genocide in Srebrenica is slyly trying to regain its voice among us, to rear its ugly head and justify its existence.

Even today, twenty-five years later, we are taken aback by the fact that, despite all knowledge and confirmed facts about what happened in Srebrenica, we still have to face the shamelessness of those who deny the existence or scale of the atrocities committed. It is not even uncommon for those who do so to be rewarded. One such example is the Swedish Academy. We are confused

by the reluctance of Office of High Representative (OHR) to impose the law banning denial of genocide in Srebrenica and other places.

All this brings us back to the times of aggression, when the Genocide happened because of the hesitance of the UN Security Council. On the other hand, we are pleased that countries such as the UK, the USA and Canada, are standing firmly with the victims and preserving the memory of Srebrenica.

Brothers and sisters, despite all the difficulties, life in Srebrenica is being rebuilt. Like the rays of the sun, the truth of what happened is slowly dispersing the darkness that wants to rule over this beautiful town. People are approaching each other, aware of the burden they've been forced to carry. I believe that Muslims and Christians will find a way to understand each other and help each other. A difficult past can be an opportunity for getting to know each other better and building a better future.

All good people should help Srebrenica, not by keeping silent about what happened, but by explaining where the evil behind the Genocide originated, so that we

can understand it better. Srebrenica should become a place of memory, not only of the Genocide but of everything that happened to us in the 1990s.

Tomorrow [Saturday 11 July] we will gather at the memorial center in Potočari to remember our loved ones through prayer. We believe our martyrs are alive and that they are looking upon us every time we come here and recite *Al-Fatiha* for them. Each of our visits to their place of abode, their memorial center in Potočari, is a conversation that brings peace to souls that yearn for each other. May every visit to Potočari we make be our oath that we will remain true to the values of good and peace. Only those whose souls are restless, who have been wronged against, know the true blessing of peace. And yet, brothers and sisters, we should be aware of Allah's promise that the victim has the last word – the word of *du'a*, and that between the *du'a* of the victim and God Almighty there are no curtains and no obstacles.

Brothers and sisters, let's make *du'a* for us, for our loved ones, those who live and those who were killed, our brothers and sisters who have given their lives so that we may have ours.

Our Lord, we turn our faces to You, asking You for Your help and protection: protect us and others from the evil of our own selves and the evil of our enemies, who hate us and have no mercy. Our Lord, bring glad tidings of your protection, mercy and forgiveness to our martyrs, as You have promised them in Your book.

Our Lord, help us by keeping our hearts clean of hatred and want of revenge and help us always strive for the justice You call for.

Our Lord, accept our prayers and the prayers of those who exceeded us in our faith, strengthen our trust in Your word, and protect us from disbelievers.

Our Lord, give all people Your mercy and Your blessings and guide us in the paths of peace and mercy that You will be pleased with.

Our Lord, give us good in this world and good in the next world, and protect us from the difficult trials of this world, from sickness and from war.

Our Lord, You are peace and from You is peace, exalted You are, O Lord of Majesty and Honor. Ameen.



**Husein ef. Kavazović**  
**Grand Mufti (*Raisu-I-Ulama*)**  
**of Bosnia-Herzegovina**

Friday Sermon (khutbah) of the Grand Mufti (Raisu-I-Ulama) of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Husein ef. Kavazović, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica Genocide



**Friday sermon distributed in the UK and Europe by the Bosnia  
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**For more information contact us at:  
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*Remembering the victims of genocide 25 years on, the single greatest atrocity in Europe since the 2nd World War.*

# SREBRENICA GENOCIDE

## WE SHALL NOT FORGET

Wed 15 July 2020 | 6pm-7.30pm (BST/UK)

### SPEAKERS



**VANJA  
FILIPOVIĆ**

Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the UK



**YASMIN  
QURESHI MP**

Shadow International Development Minister, Chair of Srebrenica APPG since 2012



**SEHIJA  
DEDOVIC**

Founder and President, NAHLA (Centre for Education and Research), Bosnia



**KATHRYNE  
BOMBERGER**

Director-General, Int. Commission for Missing Persons, Netherlands



**HASAN  
NUHANOVIĆ**

Genocide survivor, author; former UN interpreter during the war



**MUHAMMAD  
H. RAHMAN**

Chairman, East London Mosque; visited Bosnia during a truce (1995)

### MODERATOR



**DR ABDULLAH  
FALIQ**

Co-Founder, Bosnia Heritage Foundation



**IMAM ABDUL-  
AZIZ DRKIĆ**

Islamic Faculty, Sarajevo University

### EXHIBITION



**JASMIN  
AGOVIĆ**

Photographed remains of genocide victims

### ARTIST



**ANNOTATE**

FLO Poet, Founder of Just Rhyme

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