



**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MIROSLAVA BEHAM,
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SERBIA,
UNDER CURRENT ISSUES
AT THE 805th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL,
IN RESPONSE TO THE EU STATEMENT ON THE DECLARATION
ON SREBRENICA BY THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

15 April 2010

Mr. Chairman,

Let me thank the European Union for its statement. And let me add a few considerations regarding this issue.

Since the restoration of our democracy in the year 2000, Serbian authorities worked hard to break the vicious circle of violence and hatred in our part of the world. This has been a driving force of our dedication to reforming our country and the entire region. Integral to these efforts is reconciliation, a core European value we have wholeheartedly embraced.

In furtherance of this strategic goal, the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia passed the Declaration on Srebrenica on 30 March this year, that unequivocally and in the strongest possible terms condemns the war crime committed against the Bosniak population in the Bosnian town of Srebrenica in July 1995 and extends condolences and apologies to the families of the victims.

The Declaration adopted was guided by the goals of securing lasting peace and stability in the Western Balkans, as well as by the wish of further improving relations among states of the former Yugoslavia based on the respect of international law as well as the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all member States of the United Nations, including Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was adopted in a very sensitive and complex moment for our region, and it is the expression of a moral need of the Serbian people and not the result of any pressure from outside.

The Srebrenica-Declaration of the Serbian Assembly and the earlier visit of President Boris Tadić to Srebrenica are unprecedented in the Western Balkans.

These gestures unambiguously demonstrate Serbia's attitude towards the war crimes of the past, as well as towards our common responsibility for the future. We believe that similar acts of good will by others would significantly contribute to regional reconciliation, having in mind that atrocities were committed by all sides in our recent history. We take positive note in this regard of yesterday's address to the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina by the Croatian President Ivo Josipović.

Mr. Chairman,

The Serbian Parliament and our highest authorities repeatedly demonstrated their strong commitment to the respect of international law in their bilateral and multilateral relations with other states. This is why the National Assembly in its Declaration reaffirms its respect of the Judgment issued by the International Court of Justice on Srebrenica and extends its full support to the work of all state organs responsible for processing war crimes. It attaches special importance to locating and arresting Ratko Mladic for the purpose of being tried before the ICTY, which would bring Serbia to a successful conclusion of our cooperation with the Tribunal.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.