

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO  
H.E. VUK DRASKOVIC

OSCE Conference on Anti-Semitism and on Other Forms of Intolerance  
Cordoba, 8 June 2005

Prime minister,  
Excellencies,  
Dear friends,

It is my honor to address this important Conference on behalf of Serbia and Montenegro – a gathering which has been convened in the right place at the right time.

The whole world recently observed the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the victory over Nazism and Fascism. However, the alarming spread of anti-Semitism and other forms of hatred rooted in religion, ethnicity or race shows that we are celebrating a hollow victory, as evil has not been defeated.

The entrance to the notorious Buchenwald concentration camp bears a timely warning *It will happen again if we forget.*

Unfortunately, many have forgotten places like Auschwitz, Mauthausen, Buchenwald and Jasenovac, the biggest factories of death for people whose only crime was their birth. We owe a debt of gratitude to Jewish organisations all over the world, because without their constant and unrelenting reminders of the Magnum Crimen that is the Holocaust, our generation's awareness of it would be weaker and thereby more dangerous.

The country I was born in right after World War II, a country that was broken apart in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, provides compelling evidence of the crime of ignoring a crime. Serbs, Jews and Romas were the victims of biological annihilation, but the post-war Communist rulers, who pompously celebrated the victory over Nazism, did not take the trouble to take the final toll of the victims of Nazism, which was provided to us by the Yad Vashem in Israel.

Efforts to conceal the crime, or to misrepresent it as an ideological confrontation, has traumatized descendants and fed the spiritual sources of evil. As a result, we faced the revival and repetition of a horror we thought we had buried in May 1945 when the great Allied forced the Nazis into capitulation. Serbs and Montengrins, together with Jews, Russians and Poles were the greatest victims of the warped of idea born in the times of Adolf Hitler and his henchmen. An exceptional tragedy befell us, Serbs and

Montenegrins – crimes against our neighbors and brothers of different faiths, crimes unworthy of our history and tradition, were committed in the name of our people and under the pretext of old and new crimes by others against us. This is something that deeply distresses me.

Our condemnation of these crimes and those who perpetrated them is as strong and lasting as the works of Servantes and Lorca.

Bowing to the victims of the Srebrenica massacre, I also bow to the victims of Jasenovac, Aushwitz, Mautausen. Buchenwald, the Warsaw ghetto... I bow to the victims in New York, Madrid, Moscow, Beslam, Kosovo and Metohija Dar-es-Salaam, Jerusalem and throughout this world of ours.

I wish to pay tribute to the organizers and participants of this Conference, especially Prime Minister of Spain Mr. Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain Mr. Miguel Angel Moratinos and the Chairman of the OSCE Mr. Dimitrij Rupel. Contemporary issues of development and economic and social problems should not diminish the significance of moral values because both the individual and mankind need more than just bread and technology. That is why I believe that this and similar thematic gatherings will lend people throughout the world spiritual strength and courage to rise against anti-Semitism, anti-Islam, anti-Christianity, and every form of hatred and intolerance, as they are the main causes of wars, terrorism and all other crimes.

It is my hope that gatherings of this kind will prompt the leaders and institutions of the international community as well as the Albanian leaders of Kosovo and Metohija to voice their strong and unreserved condemnation of the crimes perpetrated against Serbs, Montenegrins, Jews and other non-Albanians in the past five years in plain sight and in the presence of the military and civilian organs of the United Nations. The expulsion of more than 200 thousand Serbs, the murder of hundreds of civilians, many children among them, torching of 150 centuries-old churches and monasteries are telling examples of crimes based on national and religious hatred.

I spearheaded the Serbian people's protests and profound condemnation of Slobodan Milosevic's ethnically motivated crimes against Albanians.

We must first defeat the evil and sin within ourselves.

Thank you.