

Mladic intended to 'ethnically cleanse Bosnia'

The first day of Ratko Mladic's trial in The Hague for the massacre of 8,000 Muslims at Srebrenica, the first act of genocide on European soil since the Nazi Holocaust, has ended.

By [Bruno Waterfield](#), The Hague

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12.35: Detention camps set up by Bosnian Serbs were "part of the system" of terror and ethnic cleansing, the UN prosecutor has alleged.

"The detention camps were places of great suffering," said Dermot Groome the UN prosecutor.

"Conditions were inhuman, insufficient to sustain farm animals let alone human beings. Inmates were beaten, sometimes to death."

Over 600 people were killed during one single massacre at the Keraterm camp and the UN prosecutors will call inmates as witnesses.

"it was an integrated system of imprisonment and mistreatment to help achieve objectives (of ethnic cleansing)," said Mr Groome.

11.55am: The UN prosecutor has shown video of Mladic boasting about his snipers in Sarajevo.

"Whenever I come by Sarajevo. I kill someone in passing...I go kick the hell out the Turks... I f*** them," Mladic says.

The Mladic policy "was about creating insecurity, about creating terror", say prosecutors. Earlier he had nodded approvingly, with a smile, when he was quoted as promising: "Sarajevo will shake".

11am: His notebooks show that he drew up plan of military conquest and ethnic separation with Karadzic. Including objective number five of six: "Sarajevo must either be divided or razed to the ground". Prosecutor is showing horrific scenes from the sniping and shelling of the Bosnian capital.

10.40am: UN prosecutor said that "crimes of sexual violence were an integral part of taking over territory and ethnic cleansing".

People, men and women, were raped and forced "to carry out sex acts on others including relatives".

He read out a witness statement: "The world should seek to look in our eyes. They had killed my mother, they had killed my brother. I had been raped by 50 of them."

10.05am: Mladic made throat-cutting gestures to Munira Subasic, a woman who lost 22 relatives to Bosnian Serb military forces when the enclave of Srebrenica was overrun in July 1995, as she watched the trial from the glassed off public gallery.

The UN judge warned Mladic that he would screen off his view of the public gallery after he responded with the provocative gesture to Mrs Subasic, after she had shaken her finger at him.

"This is the biggest butcher of the Balkans and the world," she said earlier. "I'll look into his eyes and ask him if he repents."

9am: The former commander of the Bosnian Serb army appeared in court wearing a dark grey suit and tie. Looking fit and alert, Gen Mladic gave a thumbs-up to family and Serbian supporters in the public gallery.

UN prosecutors are setting out their case for his indictment on 11 counts of genocide, and war crimes allegedly carried out in the Bosnia's brutal 1992-95 civil war that killed 100,000 and left 2.2 million others homeless.

"Four days ago marked the 20th anniversary since Mladic became commander in chief of the Bosnian Serb army," said Dermot Groome, the UN prosecutor. "On that day, he assumed the mantle of the criminal goal of ethnically cleansing Bosnia. On that day he began his involvement in serious crimes."

"By the time Mladic and his troops murdered thousands in Srebrenica ... they were well-rehearsed in the craft of murder."

Prosecutors said that personal notebooks seized by police from Mladic's hiding place would be an important source of evidence in the trial.

Excerpts shown in the court noted "war objectives, relationship to non-Serbian inhabitants" and the Bosnian Serb campaign "to separate from the Muslims and Croats forever".

Hand written notes, in Mladic's hand, also noted plans to turn Sarajevo into a Serb city, with a small Muslim quarter.

Two days ahead of the trial, his lawyers filed a request for a six month adjournment of the hearing, saying they did not have enough time to prepare for the defence. The UN judge criticised prosecutors for failing to disclose evidence to the defence but allowed the trial to proceed.

Gen. Mladic, 70, is appearing in the International Criminal Court of the former Yugoslavia where Radovan Karadzic, the former Bosnian Serb leader and commander in chief, is also on trial. He was arrested a year ago after 16 years on the run in Serbia.

Both men are held to be responsible for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity in a campaign of ethnic cleansing to rid multi-ethnic Bosnia of Croats and Muslims.

Nicknamed the "Butcher of Bosnia", Mladic is infamous for his commanding and swaggering presence at Srebrenica in July 1995, when almost 8,000 Muslim men and boys were systematically murdered as UN peacekeeping troops stood by and watched.

UN prosecutors also hold him responsible for the 44-month siege of Sarajevo where his Bosnian Serb forces waged a "terror campaign" of sniping and shelling that left 10,000 civilians dead.

Mladic is accused of ordering his troops to "cleanse" Bosnian towns, driving out Croats, Muslims and other non-Serb residents to create a "Greater Serbia".

After the war, Mladic continued his military career in Serbia but went into hiding in 2000 after the government of Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian president fell.

Milosevic died in detention on March 11, 2006, a few months before a verdict in his trial for genocide and other war crimes in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. Karadzic is still on trial.

An indicted war criminal, Mladic was on the run until May 2011 when [Serbian](#) forces arrested him at a relative's house in Lazarevo, north eastern Serbia and flown to a prison in The Hague a few days later.

He is a diminished figure from the 20 year old news footage showing him as a strutting commander in military fatigues but has retained his defiance and allegiance to extreme Serbian nationalism.

"The whole world knows who I am... I defended my country and my people," he said on his first appearance in the UN tribunal last June.

"I am very old man and I am close to my end as far as my health is concerned. It matters what kind of legacy I will leave behind, among my people."

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