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Statement by Ms. Alice Wairimu Nderitu, Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, on Bosnia and Herzegovina

(16 January 2024) The Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide, Alice Wairimu Nderitu, expressed her concern over recent incidents of denial of the Srebrenica genocide against Bosniaks and glorification of convicted war criminals in Bosnia and Herzegovina. “The continued spreading of genocide denial and glorification of its perpetrators is alarming and will continue to hamper sustainable reconciliation and peace in the region. These sentiments were expressed most recently during the “Republika Srpska National Day” which took place despite it being held unconstitutional by the constitutional court of Bosnia and Herzegovina,” The Special Adviser noted.

The negative impact of genocide denial and glorification of war criminals cannot be understated. “Denying and distorting the genocide and other atrocity crimes committed during the conflict, almost 30 years ago, and which have been conclusively proven by courts of law, is unacceptable. It serves only to further fester division and hate, while at the same time setting back efforts aimed at promoting peace, truth and reconciliation. It further negatively impacts victims and survivors, as well as their tireless efforts to keep the memory of those lost to these horrific crimes alive. Societies that do not fully acknowledge and address past genocides and their devastating impact on individuals, families and societies continue to face the risk of such crimes happening again. In my visits to the country, I have met many of the victims and survivors as well as new generations in Bosnia and Herzegovina who are actively working to promote reconciliation and healing, starting with acknowledging the tragic reality of what happened in the past as well as the suffering caused by perpetrators. Their work needs to be commended and supported. I call on all actors, in particular those with influence, to speak out against genocide denial and to promote a future of inclusion and understanding rather than division and hate.” The Special Adviser emphasized.

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