

Administration of Barack Obama, 2011

Statement on the Arrest of Ratko Mladic

May 26, 2011

Fifteen years ago, Ratko Mladic ordered the systematic execution of some 8,000 unarmed men and boys in Srebrenica. Today he is behind bars. I applaud President Tadic and the Government of Serbia on their determined efforts to ensure that Mladic was found and that he faces justice. We look forward to his expeditious transfer to The Hague.

Today is an important day for the families of Mladic's many victims, for Serbia, for Bosnia, for the United States, and for international justice. While we will never be able to bring back those who were murdered, Mladic will now have to answer to his victims and the world in a court of law. From Nuremberg to the present, the United States has long viewed justice for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide as both a moral imperative and an essential element of stability and peace. In Bosnia, the United States—our troops and our diplomats—led the international effort to end ethnic cleansing and bring a lasting peace. On this important day, we recommit ourselves to supporting ongoing reconciliation efforts in the Balkans and to working to prevent future atrocities. Those who have committed crimes against humanity and genocide will not escape judgment.

May the families of Mladic's victims find some solace in today's arrest, and may this deepen the ties among the people of the region.

Categories: Statements by the President : Mladic, Ratko, arrest.

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