
SERBIA'S DEFENCE MINISTRY SLAMMED FOR PROMOTING REVISIONISM

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Book titled, Tuzla Gate: a staged tragedy, condemned as an attempt to deny war crimes by Serb forces in Bosnia.

Serbia's defence ministry was sharply rebuked by human rights activists for promoting books that deny war crimes committed by Serb forces in former Yugoslavia.

This week the ministry promoted a new book titled, Tuzla Gate: a staged tragedy, that denies the fact that on May 25, 1995, Bosnian Serb forces fired an artillery round that hit an area of Tuzla's city centre known as the "Gate", killing 71 civilians - mostly young people averaging 23 years of age.

Another 240 people were wounded.

The book, written by Ilija Brankovic, a former general of the Serb-dominated Yugoslav People's Army, was promoted on Tuesday at the Central Military Club in Belgrade, owned by Media Centar Odbrana, the publishing and press centre of Serbia's defence ministry.

On Wednesday, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights Dunja Mijatovic criticised the ministry, calling the book's promotion "an attempt to deny" war crimes already established as such by the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and in national war crimes tribunals.

"Propagating falsehoods and disinformation in a post-war context is dangerous exercise, one that seriously undermines all efforts towards durable peace and reconciliation," Mijatovic wrote on Facebook.

"Instead of providing a public platform to propagate views that deny war crimes, political leaders and government representatives in Serbia must step up their work on fighting impunity for war-related crimes, provide civilian war victims with effective reparations, and support reconciliation efforts in the region."

Brankovic, the author of the book, wrote the Gate area of Tuzla was not shelled, rather it was destroyed by an explosive device pre-planted by others.

According to the Balkan Insight news website, the book's aim is to prove that Novak Djukic - wartime commander of the Bosnian Serb Army's Tactical Group who was convicted of the attack -

wasn't responsible for ordering Tuzla to be shelled.

In 2014, Bosnia's state court sentenced Djukic to 20 years in prison for orchestrating the attack against civilians.

However, a few days later Djukic's defence lawyer informed the court he travelled to Serbia for medical treatment where he remains. Bosnia issued an arrest warrant but Serbia does not share an extradition treaty with its neighbour.

Read more at: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/11/serbia-defence-ministry-slammed-promoting-revisionism-191107102642649.html>

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