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Srebrenica officer gets 17 years

A former Bosnian Serb army commander has been jailed for 17 years for his role in the 1995 Srebrenica massacre.

Obrenovic was the second Bosnian Serb to admit to Srebrenica crimes

Dragan Obrenovic, 40, had pleaded guilty to persecution over the massacre, which left more than 7,000 Muslim men and boys dead.

Prosecutors had recommended a prison term of between 15 and 20 years for the offence.

Obrenovic was the second Bosnian Serb officer to enter into a plea agreement with prosecutors over Srebrenica.

Guilty plea

He was the chief of staff of the Bosnian Serb army brigade that operated in Srebrenica at the time of the massacre, seen as Europe's worst single atrocity since World War II.

In May this year he pleaded guilty to persecution.

In return, prosecutors dropped charges against him of genocide, extermination and murder.

Obrenovic was the second Bosnian Serb officer to plead guilty to crimes at Srebrenica.

> **"The mass-murder or forcible transfer of the Muslim population... in slightly over one week was committed with a level of brutality and depravity not seen previously in the conflict"**
> Judge Liu Daqun

The first, Momir Nikolic, was sentenced to 27 years in prison last week - a far longer sentence than that demanded by prosecutors.

The testimonies of both men were used in other trials - including that of former General Radislav Krstic.

Krstic is appealing against a 46-year jail term for genocide at Srebrenica.

Fugitive war crimes suspects, Bosnian Serb army commander Ratko Mladic and the Bosnian Serb wartime leader Radovan Karadzic, have also been indicted for genocide over Srebrenica.

Presiding judge Liu Daqun said: "Without diminishing the criminal responsibility of Dragan Obrenovic, the trial chamber recalls that he is not alone in bearing criminal responsibility for the massive crimes committed against the Bosnian Muslim population.

"Others, who should one day face judgement before this tribunal, will accordingly by judged and sentenced for their role."

He said Obrenovic's guilty plea, remorse and co-operation with the prosecution had led to a reduced sentence.

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