

Statement of Commemoration on Srebrenica Memorial Day 2023

This year marks the 28th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, in which over 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys were murdered in the worst atrocity on European soil since the Second World War because of their identity. The lessons from Srebrenica are that hatred and intolerance can flourish if left unchallenged which underlines the importance of why we must never forget about the tragic events that took place and remain resolute in our commitment to tackling hatred, intolerance, prejudice and discrimination in all forms.

The theme for 2023 is 'Together We Are One'. The aim of the theme for 2023 will be to highlight the fact that the conditions for genocide are built on a climate and culture which allows hatred and extremism to breed resulting in the dividing and fracturing of communities. The flourishing of such hatred and extremism can gradually escalate from inflammatory rhetoric to attacks, persecution and even extermination as seen in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The theme will underline why we must combat such divisive rhetoric by focusing on the things which unite us together as one. As one former MP Jo Cox who was murdered by a far-right extremist famously said: "We are far more united and have far more in common with each other than things that divide us."

The theme will remind us of the importance of remaining vigilant against the forces of hatred that seeks to "other" groups as being negatively different by using the first steps of Gregory Stanton's ten stages to genocide model to illustrate this.

We therefore remember and honour the memory of the victims and pledge to work towards building a more cohesive, stronger and safer society free from hatred, discrimination and prejudice.