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Serbian PM: Massacre in Gorazdevac must not be forgotten, perpetrators must be punished

KosovoCompromise Staff

Serbian Prime Minister Mirko Cvetkovic said on Tuesday that the 2003 crime in Gorazdevac, in Western Kosovo, where two Serb children were killed and four others injured in a machine-gun attack, must not be forgotten and invited the international community to clarify this crime and punish its perpetrators.

"The crime in Gorazdevac must not be forgotten and criminals must be brought to justice," the prime minister said.

The prime minister's office said in a statement that Cvetkovic had stressed that the international mission in Kosovo had the obligation to find the criminals who killed two and injured four children in Gorazdevac five years ago and to clarify thousands of other crimes committed in Serbia's southern province.

"The international peacekeeping mission has the obligation to ensure security, freedom of movement and life in accordance with civilisation norms both to the citizens of Gorazdevac and all citizens of Kosovo. The clarification of all crimes is the foundation of peace in this territory," he said.

Cvetkovic said that the Serbian government would allocate significant funds to initiate the process of return of more than 200,000 IDPs from Kosovo-Metohija.

"We will create conditions for a sustainable return and survival of people at their ancestral homes. This is where we expect greater assistance from the international community in order to solve specific issues, we will promote our cooperation with UNMIK as the only legitimate peacekeeping mission in Kosovo," the prime minister said.

He said that the government's activities were focused on the opening of SMEs which would make it possible for people in Kosovo to live from their work.

The Serbian government will not give up its diplomatic and legal fight for Kosovo and will continue to offer significant economic support to citizens in the province, the prime minister said.

The crime in Gorazdevac occurred on August 13, 2003, when Ivan Jovanovic (19) and Pantelija Dakic (12) were killed while swimming in the Bistrica River.

Djordje Ugrenovic (20), Bogdan Bukumiric (14), Marko Bogicevic (12) and Dragana Srbljak (13) were seriously injured in the attack.