



Bosnia jails soldiers for 142 years over massacre

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Fri, Jun 15 2012

SARAJEVO (Reuters) - Four former Bosnian Serb soldiers were jailed for a total of 142 years on Friday for their roles in the mass execution of hundreds of Bosnian Muslims from Srebrenica during Europe's worst atrocity since World War Two.

The killings of about 800 people, including children, at a farm were part of the systematic slaughter of 8,000 Muslim men and boys after Bosnian Serb forces captured the U.N.-protected enclave in July 1995.

The jail terms given to the four soldiers for crimes against humanity were the longest ever handed down by the Bosnian war crimes court.

"On July 16, 1995, they executed summarily around 800 male civilians, of whom some were under 16 years old and some over 80 years old, from 10 a.m to 4 p.m. at the Branjevo farm," judge Mira Smajlovic said, reading the verdict.

Stanko Kojic was jailed for 43 years, Franc Kos and Zoran Goronja for 40 years each, and Vlastimir Golijan for 19 years because he was under 21 at the time.

The men all shot their victims but the judge said Kojic had carried out the slaughter in a crueller manner than the others and then boasted about the number of people he had killed.

The men served with the Bosnian Serb army's 10th commando unit. Kos led the unit's First Bijeljina Platoon, and the other three were regular soldiers.

They were acquitted of genocide charges due to lack of evidence about their intention to commit genocide.

The massacre took place during the 1992-1995 Bosnian War. Bosnian Serb troops, commanded by General Ratko Mladic, attacked Srebrenica and separated men and boys from women.

Many of the men and boys tried to escape through woods but were hunted down, captured and slaughtered at several locations near Srebrenica.

Mladic is being tried at the U.N. war crimes tribunal in The Hague on genocide charges over Srebrenica and the siege of Sarajevo.

The Bosnian war crimes court has jailed dozens of former Bosnian Serb soldiers over the Srebrenica massacre. In May, two were jailed for 35 and 30 years, previously the longest terms handed down.