



Statement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on

Sexual Violence in Conflict Margot Wallström

***VERDICT FOR RAPE AND MURDER IN BOSNIA SENDS STRONG SIGNAL THAT
JUSTICE MUST ULTIMATELY PREVAIL***

(New York, 9 November 2011)

I welcome the conviction today of Sasa Baricanin, who has finally been brought to justice for acts of rape, murder and enslavement. Yet 16 years after the end of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, there is still no justice for the vast majority of the tens of thousands of women who were subject to sexual violence. To date, there have been just 30 convictions in response to an estimated 50,000 rapes during the years of war. While it is a positive step that the War Crimes Court in Sarajevo has reached this verdict, the pace of justice for sexual violence survivors has been painfully slow.

I want to commend the courageous witnesses who have stepped forward to testify in this case. Ultimately, their actions contribute to strengthening the rule of law in Bosnia as a whole. It is crucial that these and other witnesses are afforded full legal protection, and I trust that the relevant authorities will take all possible measures to ensure their safety. This case is yet another testament to the resilience of Bosnian women who have joined forces in their quest for justice, both within and beyond the courtroom.

The verdict is also a signal to all perpetrators that they will not escape punishment according to law and that justice will ultimately prevail.

We will continue to monitor this and other incidents of alleged conflict-related sexual violence, wherever they occur, and stand in solidarity with the survivors.

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