

## Working Group for Bosnia and Herzegovina

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Dr. Gene C. Crume Jr.  
President  
Judson University  
1151 N. State St.  
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Dear President Crume,

We are writing to express our concern about your plan to welcome Mr. Milorad Dodik as the featured guest of your 2026 World Leaders Forum, “Standing Up For Democracy,” on Thursday, April 30, 2026, to your university. As we understand it, Mr. Dodik will receive the inaugural “Leadership and Standing Up for Democracy Award.”

We would respectfully like to raise a number of concerns about the planned program. Mr. Dodik’s public political positions, which have been extensively documented, have been focused on undermining the sovereign state of Bosnia and Herzegovina rather than on fostering democracy. Mr. Dodik has consistently claimed that Bosnia is a “failed “ or “impossible state” or a “failed experiment” and has threatened that the Republika Srpska entity would secede.

Respect for the rule of law is essential to a stable democracy but Mr. Dodik has worked to undermine the rule of law by regularly denying the Srebrenica Genocide. The war crimes committed at Srebrenica have been judged to be Genocide. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia has convicted individuals of the Srebrenica Genocide and the International Court of Justice found that genocide was committed at Srebrenica. When the world was collectively remembering the victims of the Srebrenica genocide with the United National General Assembly adoption of a Resolution designating July 11 as the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 genocide in Srebrenica, Mr. Dodik escalated his own denial of the genocide at public events. Mr. Dodik also routinely rejects rulings of the country’s Constitutional Court.

Democracies benefit from stability, but Mr. Dodik has sought to destabilize Bosnia and the region by speaking against Euro-Atlantic Integration. He opposes Bosnia's membership in the EU and NATO. He has rather established a very public alliance with Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation.

As a result of these and other statements and actions Mr. Dodik was condemned and sanctioned by the US government. As a result of resisting the leadership of the Office of the High Representative in Sarajevo, an Office created to oversee and preserve the peace in Bosnia, Mr. Dodik was convicted by a Bosnian Court, sentenced to one year in prison, and banned from serving as President of Republika Srpska.

The culture of denial that Mr. Dodik has engendered in Republika Srpska prevents genocide survivors from installing memorials at sites where the atrocities were judged to be war crimes including genocide. While memorials for the victims are prohibited, memorials have been installed that glorify convicted war criminals and even celebrate the crimes that were committed. Such policies are cruel and divisive.

In addition to denying genocide Mr. Dodik has consistently engaged in anti-Muslim rhetoric that is inflammatory and inhumane. This is a time when we believe we should be encouraging interreligious dialogue rather than making such divisive and hateful statements.

President Crume, Mr. Dodik's denial of the Srebrenica Genocide and hate speech have been painfully re-traumatizing for survivors of the genocide, some of whom are still waiting for the human remains of their loved ones, who were victims, to be located and identified. We submit that Mr. Dodik has been neither a model of leadership nor a champion of democracy and we encourage you to reconsider his invitation to Judson University.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

The Working Group for Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Board of Directors  
[www.wgbih.org](http://www.wgbih.org)