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## **Dutch Court Upholds UN Immunity In Srebrenica Case**

### **Dutch Appeals Judges Rule That Srebrenica Victims' Relatives Cannot Sue UN In Hague Court**

(AP) THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) - Relatives of Bosnian Muslims killed in Europe's worst massacre since World War II lost another round Tuesday in their attempt to sue the United Nations for responsibility.

The Hague Appeals Court upheld a 2008 lower court ruling affirming U.N. immunity from prosecution enshrined in international conventions that established the world body, and said the legal protection is an essential foundation of its peacekeeping operations around the world.

Lawyers for the family members, known as the Mothers of Srebrenica, vowed to take the case to the Dutch Supreme Court and the European Court of Justice if necessary.

"The immunity from prosecution guarantees that the U.N. is not thwarted in the execution of its duties as a result of court cases being instigated against it, possibly for no other reason than to frustrate the U.N.'s work," the court said. "It is in the best public interest that the U.N. can avail itself of its duties untroubled."

Some 8,000 men were murdered in July 1995 by Serb forces who overran Srebrenica, which had been declared a U.N. safe zone for the Muslim civilians in the Bosnian enclave. The Dutch U.N. peacekeepers protecting the enclave were undermanned and outgunned, and failed to intervene.

International courts have ruled the slayings were a genocide.

Lawyers for the Mothers of Srebrenica said the ruling undermines their "fundamental human rights" of access to "effective legal remedies."

"How long can the U.N. retain its credibility, striving to protect human rights but at the same time disregarding them itself?" the lawyers said.

However, the appeals court said the mothers do have legal avenues open to them as they are free to sue both the perpetrators and the Dutch government.

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