

Rector Arben Hajrullahu's Speech at the Conference
"The Scale, Legacy, Documentation, and Adjudication of Crimes Committed in
Kosova"

Prishtina, February 17, 2025

Honourable Prime Minister of the Republic of Kosova, Albin Kurti,

Distinguished Director of the Institute for Crimes Committed During the War in
Kosova, Atdhe Hetemi,

Esteemed representatives of academic and scientific institutions, honoured guests
and attendees,

Whenever war crimes are mentioned, we are transported back a quarter of a century,
to those lifeless bodies, to lives cut short, to the individuals that the war took away
and are left graveless, to those who endured sexual violence as a weapon of war and
survived, that spoke their truth or decided to remain in silence.

Honoured attendees, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a distinct honour and privilege to be a part of this academic conference, which
addresses one of the most fundamental issues of remembrance, justice, and the
consequences of crimes committed during the war in Kosova. Because science
examines with precision, fairness, objectivity, and facts, it provides the necessary
foundation for drawing lessons from the past and moving forward. We need this
approach now more than ever to move forward without being held back by the past.
The University of Prishtina, as the country's leading academic institution, aspires to
play a central role in researching and analyzing the critical periods of our history. In
this regard, our collaboration with the Institute for Crimes Committed During the War
in Kosova (IKKL) holds special significance. Through the cooperation agreement
signed between the University of Prishtina and IKKL, we have opened new horizons
for comprehensive scientific research and the documentation of war crimes. This
work, among other things, will contribute to raising awareness among younger
generations about the importance of historical truth and fostering a more sustainable
peace.

The war in Kosova was not only a struggle for freedom but also a pivotal historical and
political moment that left profound impacts on our society. It is, therefore, the
responsibility of our academic institutions to engage in the objective documentation
of facts, the uncovering of truth, and the strengthening of a historical narrative
grounded in evidence and scholarly analysis.

At this conference, we are honoured to welcome dozens of scholars from Kosova and prestigious international universities who will present their findings on the documentation of war crimes, transitional justice processes, and the societal consequences of these crimes in Kosova. These studies will be part of a significant academic publication, serving as a reference for researchers in the field as well as for policymakers at both the local and international levels.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Institute for Crimes Committed During the War in Kosova for their dedication to this important mission and for organizing this scientific conference. Additionally, I thank the researchers and all participants for their contributions in enriching the academic discourse on this highly sensitive and crucial topic, not only for our future but for the future of humanity as a whole.

The University of Prishtina remains committed to supporting this process and promoting research that strengthens historical truth, shared remembrance and justice for the victims of war in Kosova and beyond.

Thank you, and I wish you a successful conference!