

YOUTH OUTREACH

“The ICTY Info centre tour was one of the highlights of Sarajevo for me. Ismena was the best instructor one could have asked for. Her storytelling process not only captivated me but kept me engrossed throughout the visit. When we started the tour, her narration starting with the history of the city and the hall, coupled with us reading the actual victim testimonies, what they faced, brought many of us to tears. Further, the attention to detail and the hard work which had gone into putting everything together in the Centre could be seen through the re-imagination of the ICTY courtroom, and the list of the people who were prosecuted - the reasons for their prosecution - all compiled in books for us to go through. However, my most memorable part remains the hall in which the actual door - which survived the burning of the city hall - is preserved. I remember vividly, sitting on the floor listening to Ismena telling us about the burning of the City Hall, the millions of books which burnt, and Vedran Smailović playing his cello. I can still hear the haunting music of the cello; it still brings me to tears. One of the best experiences I had in Sarajevo.” – Anvita Choudhury student at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.

“I have really enjoyed my visit at the ICTY Information Centre, where I could finally see with my own eyes the premises where the most important cases I have studied during my LLM at the Geneva Academy were decided. Located in the beautiful Sarajevo City Hall, Ismena guided me and my classmates through the history of the prosecution of international crimes in the former Yugoslavia by the ICTY and could explore the very room the ICTY cases were decided and where justice was served. I appreciated her knowledge and insight on the functioning and historical background of the ICTY and her expertise and delicacy in her presentation of the real evidence which was brought before the tribunal.” – Ottavia Soldini student at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

“Having studied the history of the conflict and the work of the ICTY in books, visiting the Information Centre in Sarajevo was a profoundly different and chilling experience. Seeing the Tribunal’s records, testimonies and legacy in the place where many of these events unfolded made their human impact feel much more immediate. The visit led me to reflect further on the importance of genuine accountability, not only for those directly responsible for international crimes, but also for the societies affected by them. It also highlighted how essential the preservation of historical memory is in confronting denial, honouring victims and preventing past atrocities from being forgotten or distorted. The building itself also added to the experience: despite having been burned during the war, it has been restored and is today worth visiting both for its beauty and for the history it embodies.” – Paolo Sovran student at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

“The visit to ICTY Information Centre was truly an eye-opening experience. Details shared about victims by Ismena were both harrowing and deeply humbling. The chamber, pictures, stories, relics, and enthusiasm with which Ms. Čaušević explained the history of Bosnian war were truly profound and impactful. It was an immense pleasure to be at the Historic City Hall and have an opportunity to experience history in its purest form.” – Shaksham Shahi student at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights “

As a student, I think learning IHL is very important but if it only stays in the classrooms and readings, we risk distancing ourselves from the core objectives it pursues and what it really is designed to protect. Hearing about the atrocities committed in war at the ICTY Information Centre pushed me to remember better these objectives and why I chose to study IHL, also why we should always remember to stay loyal to its protective spirit.” – Eva Phajishvili student at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights

“What impressed me most was how the tour humanizes the legal process. By showing photographs and providing historical context, it reminds visitors of the horrors of war and that it is ultimately about the victims, survivors, witnesses, and the communities affected by unimaginable atrocities.” – JP Leo, student at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights
