**Lessons from Bosnia — the Changes to the Project**

And your chance to get involved

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As some of you might know, I’ve been working on a project called Lessons from Bosnia for a over a year now. The main aim of the project was to tell the people of the UK that we are worried about what the UK is turning into. We describe it as ‘*Balkanisation of Britain’*.

I’ve explained how we hoped Balkan would learn from Britain, and become more like Britain — sensible politicians (at least to some degree), strong economy, reliable welfare and social benefits, equal opportunities for all, and a legal system that provides security in the Rule of Law. While many people in Britain might complain how Britain was never any of these, compared to the Balkan, it really was. Sure, we could see there was room for improvement, but we thought if we could reach the level that Britain was at, we’d be happy.

Instead of us reaching the level that Britain was on, Britain is going down to the level we’re at. This is not good. So, we thought that perhaps by sharing the reality from Bosnia it would be like a wake-up call to the people of Britain to get their act together and fight for their country before it gets so bad, it’s hard to find a way forward.

Just before I had published the last article, the lesson 10 about how the whole situation affects community and human-to-human relationships, the genocide in Gaza started. Protests against this genocide were held (and are still being held) all over the world. Despite these protests, our politicians have continued to assist the genocide.

Hence, the first change is for me to introduce another lesson: Genocide. The first protest for Palestine I attended in London, in November 2023, someone held a sign ‘I can’t believe I have to protest against genocide’.

That sentence says it all. Genocide is the one issue that we all agree is off limits. Even if there’s a threat of a genocide, we’re not allowed to assist in any way. Yet, there we were on the streets to raise our voices against genocide. Even if we assume that our government officials were unclear if it was a genocide, since then, ICJ has clearly said that it could very well be. That should have meant that our government officials will automatically withdraw all support for Israel until further notice.

That’s not what happened. It seems even genocide, as the worst social issue, the worst crime against humanity, cannot get any more vicious, has lost its place and we do not consider it as such a bad thing.

Writing this extra article is a minor change. Much greater change is turning this project into a multi-cultural set of events. The full title of the project now is **Revival of Democracy: Lessons from Bosnia and Around the World with Love from London**.

Instead of talking just about Bosnia, and then comparing it to how the UK has been changing, we would like to give people from various countries living in the UK the chance to talk about their own country. This way, the objective we initially had to show the people in the UK what it could be like, would be covered even better because it wouldn’t be just one country. The message will be much stronger coming from a number of different countries. But also, this event could be used to fight back against racism.

Obviously, this event is not as easy to organise as the event we had initially planned. I will need support. TANGO team has made me the general coordinator for the project, which makes sense since they all live in Bosnia, however, that means I have the huge task of finding volunteers who’d be willing to:

1. Help find speakers for the events

2. Help with invites to the events; tickets, Eventbrite page, etc.

3. Help find a venue in London for the events

4. Help during the events

5. Help with financial reporting — though this shouldn’t be too hard as we aim to have the project run by volunteers completely, and self-financed. Hence, it is a case of showing how much came through the sales of tickets, and then showing how much was spent. Financial reporting doesn’t get easier than this.

6. Gather all the information for the book

7. Create the book — from typing it all, to editing, formatting, proofreading, sending out copies to speakers and others who expressed interest, and then uploading it online and making it available for others to download.

If you are interested in volunteering to make this event as great as possible, please let me know. Get in touch. I will be creating a ‘managerial team’. In terms of your time, it shouldn’t take more than 4 hours a week on average. The events are planned to be held one per month, however, once everything is set up we should have a much easier time communicating issues that always come up, so that we can sort those out.

If you would like to speak at an event, you’ll need to be able to talk for about 3 minutes about one or more (or even all) of the topics that we’ve planned from the perspective of your country. The topics are:

1. Agreements — Peace and otherwise — what kind of document governs; virtues, faults etc. Is there an agreement that would bring peace and security to your country?  
2. Power of Citizens — Is the power of citizens down to voting? Or is there something more?  
3. Citizen Activism vs Political Lobby — are some views more represented than others? Why?  
4. Citizens Awareness — how much do citizens know about the issues, how to fix them, etc.  
5. International Relations — How much power can international community exercise in your country?  
6. Religion — what religions? How do they work? What effect do they have?  
7. Accountability — when things go wrong, is there anyone held to account?  
8. Rule of Law — Are there faults in the legal system, or is there is a lack of respecting the Law equally for all?  
9. Community and human-to-human relationships — How do all the previous topic affect the community, the people, how they behave, decisions they make?  
10. Free Choice — each country is different, and we want to give everyone a chance to say something that might be unique or an important lesson from their own country. From Bosnia, we will talk about genocide. It is not a unique topic, however, as a small country in Europe that has just had a genocide, we feel we must shed more light on the importance of the greatest crime against humanity.

If you can talk about Power of Citizens (for example) in (*insert the country of your choice*) for 3 to 5 minutes to show the reality of what is happening (for inspiration you can read the articles I wrote about Bosnia), please fill in this form:

<https://forms.gle/FE6rtpkeVTrU4P4F7>

As speakers, you will shape this event. You will be free to say whatever you feel could help. Perhaps there is something good in your country that could be copied in the UK — bring it up. In the case of Bosnia, the UK played a major role in creating a very bad situation. Now, the bad is spreading to the UK, leaving us without a hope. As long as the UK showed some level of accountability, at least to their own citizens, we felt hopeful. So for someone like me, living in the UK, and being a citizens of Bosnia as well, this change is twice as scary; once for my life in the UK, and also for the sake of justice in Bosnia.

We plan to start these events in March 2025. So for anyone who wants to volunteer this means you will gain more than a year of experience in event-planning, working as a team, and contributing to the*greater good*.

Even if you are not interested in volunteering to make this happen, we hope for your support to spread the word. Someone out there is hoping and praying for a chance like this. Don’t let them miss out because you didn’t share.

And if you have any questions, anything at all, please ask. I am available and this project is now my priority.

As always, thank you for reading and I hope to hear from you soon.

For more information, feel free to read the official invitation to the events sent from the TANGO team:

Respected fellow citizen,

We would like to invite you to speak at one or more of the events we are planning to hold in London.

We are organising a set of 10 events called ‘Revival of Democracy: Lessons from Bosnia and Around the World with Love from London’, to fight back racism and show the benefits of a multicultural society.

The idea is to invite about 15 speakers from different countries who are represented in the UK. Each speaker will have 3–5 minutes to talk about the topic from their own perspective, and with lessons from their own country. Since these events will be ‘listening events’, no one will have the right to reply. However, everyone present will have the right to write to the organiser anything they wish. All the notes and speeches will be brought together into a book, but only after the whole project is finished. That way, the lessons we share will be available to the public without any worries that the speakers will be confronted. In fact, the book will focus on what was said rather than who said it, hence, everyone will have an opportunity to remove their name from the book IF they wish to do so.

Each of the events will be organised on a different topic:  
1. Agreements — Peace and otherwise — what kind of document governs; virtues, faults etc. Is there an agreement that would bring peace and security to your country?  
2. Power of Citizens — Is the power of citizens down to voting? Or is there something more?  
3. Citizen Activism vs Political Lobby — are some views more represented than others? Why?  
4. Citizens Awareness — how much do citizens know about the issues, how to fix them, etc.  
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The events will not be online, they will be in person only.

We plan to hold one event per month, starting in March 2025, in central London. There are many venues available, so we will determine the venue in January 2025 when we have a better idea how many people wish to attend. To clarify, there will be 15 speakers from different countries, but the number of listeners is yet to be determined. Everyone, including MPs and various officials will be invited as listeners.

Since the number of speakers is very limited, we will work on the first come first serve basis. We hope this way we will give the opportunity to be heard to those most in need to be heard, and those most passionate about getting their message out there. Of course, we will also pay attention to the additional information each applicant provides.

We want this project to be self-financed. Hence, we will ask each person who attends (speakers and/or listeners) to pay £10 for the ticket. The money will be used to pay for the venue, equipment, and any other additional cost of the event, and all the finances will be completely transparent. This way, we hope to avoid any accusations that the project is anything but a simple grassroots initiative from the people, by the people, for the people.

This project was initially planned as Lessons from Bosnia. Articles on these topics have been done, however, Bosnia will no longer have more of a say than any other country. The main reason for the change is that the project was never intended to promote Bosnia, but to promote a reality without democracy, a world where political leaders are not accountable to citizens, a world where citizens do not take action. Considering the latest developments in the UK with the Far Right, we feel that this project would serve the society of the UK better if it was multicultural.

The author of the articles will speak on behalf of Bosnia, but she will have to cut the lessons down to 3–5 minutes. If you wish to read the articles, you can find the links to them on her website <https://www.meliha.uk/talks-activism> However, please use them only as inspiration. The important thing is for speakers to bring in their unique views and knowledge, to share the good, the bad, and the ugly.

Speakers can choose which topics they wish to talk about. It can be one, or all, or some.

Democracy is about the individuals, and so is this project. However, you are free to promote your organisation should you wish to. We are contacting you as an organisation because we believe that people who have something to say might be already connected to your organisation. So if you’re unsure who could speak, share this email with your members and let’s see what comes up. You are also free to work as a team on the speech(s). However, we ask that only one person speaks. Others are welcome to attend and leave as many notes as they wish.

If you wish to take part as a speaker, please fill in the form:

<https://forms.gle/esDWJjRrJ47GzqXc7>

The main coordinator for the project is Meliha Avdic since she will be speaking about Bosnia, and she is the author of the articles and the event. That way, you will have only one person you need to speak to about everything. She will keep us informed so that we can address any issue that might arise.

Thank you and we hope to hear from you soon.

Best wishes,

TANGO team