

**It is necessary to establish a common denominator for all people in BiH because without it is not possible to discuss the past and have a future together.**

*If we want to discuss the past and the future it is crucial to understand why we want to talk about it. If we try to talk to people who have absolutely nothing in common and who have no interest in building a better state for themselves and they have nothing in common and who are trying to be as different as possible, then it is impossible to have a discussion.*

**Statement:** Edin Čolić, Young Liberals of BiH, National consultation with young people, Sarajevo, BiH, June 27th 2007.

**Trips to places where crimes were committed are a good way to help the young deal with the past.**

*I believe that trips are a good idea, to visit memorial centres, places where crimes were committed.*

**Statement:** Jelena Kuzmanović, TERCA Association, BiH, National consultation with young people, Sarajevo, BiH, June 27th 2007.

**Regional debates between representatives from different social groups can be very useful in the dealing with the past process.**

*When speaking about the dealing with the past process it is important to organize regional debates and to include as many speakers from different backgrounds.*

**Statement:** Jelena Kuzmanović, TERCA Association, BiH, National consultation with young people, Sarajevo, BiH, June 27th 2007.

## **5. National consultation with young people on dealing with the past mechanisms**

Belgrade, Serbia,  
July 8th 2007

The consultation was organized by the Humanitarian Law Center (Serbia). It was attended by 25 youth organization activists from all over Serbia and was opened by Nataša Kandić (Humanitarian Law Center, Serbia) and Andrej Nosov (Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Serbia) while Marijana Toma (Humanitarian Law Center,

Serbia) moderated the discussion. There were three discussion topics: the role of young people in the dealing with the past process in the former Yugoslavia, the importance of establishing the facts about war crimes for post-conflict generations, and the role of young people in truth-seeking and truth-telling in combating denial and relativizing crimes.

**It is necessary to create a regional connection of young people and encourage discussion among them about the past and the crimes committed in the past.**

*I believe that young people should start from the very beginning, meaning young people from non-governmental organizations in one state should get to know their counter-parts in non-governmental organizations in other states in the region so that they can initiate the exchange process idea. There is a big problem not just in terms of what people know about what happened in the past, but they also don't know what's going on now. Maybe it's necessary to start from the beginning, to build a new kind of communication.*

**Statement:** Ana Batočanin, My Initiative – Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Serbia, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, July 8th 2007.

*We need to develop a method which will create a clear picture for young people in the region portraying our past and the past of our politicians who were in power in those critical years. I am talking about the events in the former Yugoslavia from the 1991 onward.*

**Statement:** Mile Novaković, Sigo ando Them, Serbia, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, July 8th 2007.

**Convincing the media to stop blocking war crime topics is an indispensable condition for the public to change its opinion on these issues.**

*Putting economic and social topics in the forefront as important topics while dealing with the past is left to the margins is common practice, and our task should be to push it to the forefront. It's the work of every organization. We have to use every opportunity to promote this topic.*

**Statement:** Hajrija Bogujevci, Intergra Association, Kosovo, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, July 8th 2007.

*I really think that once we break through the media blockade, we will be able to talk about everything*

*publicly, and only then we will be able to talk about how to change the opinion of members and followers of the Serbian Radical Party. Until then, we have to focus on smaller groups which will be able to adopt our way of thinking. Also, each organization should follow its strategic plan and be able to present its results to possible donors for other perhaps more ambitious plans.*

**Statement:** Miloš Simić, Democratic Initiative Center, Serbia, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, July 8th 2007.

**Dealing with the past should become a part of the institutional discourse and institutions should legitimize the entire process.**

*How can we make this whole thing a part of the institutional discourse, who will institutionalize the entire dealing with the past process? We have to urge our governments to instruct two or three institutions to back this process and give it the much-needed legitimacy to distinguish it from underground initiatives. If the state fails to do that, we have a big problem. Perhaps civil society initiatives should become stronger in that respect.*

**Statement:** Darko Soković, a film director from Serbia, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, July 8th 2007.

**The role of the civil society is crucial for the creation of an atmosphere allowing societies to deal with the crimes committed in the past.**

*This makes the government even more responsible because if it does not accept it on an institutional level, all NGOs and everybody else doing things in this direction will be labelled traitors. I think that the NGOs have a role in creating a positive atmosphere so that when Boris Tadić apologizes to the Croatian people, he does not have to worry about what kind of a reaction it will provoke back home because we prepared the people in Serbia to expect something like that.*

**Statement:** Maja Stojanović, Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Serbia, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, July 8th 2007.

**A cultural platform can offer ways to make the public more sensitive to victims of war crimes and assist the public to deal with the crimes themselves. Young people must actively combat the denial of war crimes by using every opportunity to discuss them.**

*I think that the cultural platform in Serbia is not being used enough (...) because the values we discuss*

*here can be promoted through artistic creations and we need to figure out how to use it (...) I think that people want more cultural manifestations and that's where we need to see our role.*

**Statement:** Maja Stojanović, Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Serbia, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, July 8th 2007.

*We need to fight together against oblivion as an official state policy and to continue insisting on solving the crimes committed in our name, to discuss them publicly and force them into domains where they are being denied by the official discourse. Furthermore, we need to visit locations where crimes were committed in our name and build a sense of solidarity with victims, to try to understand the dignity of the victims and beg forgiveness.*

**Statement:** Časlav Lazić, Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Serbia, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, July 8th 2007.

*It would be a good idea to get public personalities, pop-culture or music stars, and artists, to start talking about these topics. I believe there are many who are aware of these issues but they haven't had an opportunity to be active.*

**Statement:** Ana Batočanin, My Initiative – Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Serbia, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, July 8th 2007.

## 6. National consultation with young people on dealing with the past

Zagreb, Croatia,  
July 20th 2007

The consultation was organized by Documenta (Croatia) and the Croatian Youth Network. The participants were comprised of 18 young human rights activists. Vesna Teršelić (Documenta, Croatia), Emina Bužinkić (The Youth Network of Croatia), Marijana Toma (Humanitarian Law Center, Serbia), Srđan Antić (Nansen Dialogue Centre Osijek, Croatia) and Helena Bučko (Danube Youth Peace Group, Croatia) opened the gathering. Nenad Vukosavljević's *Everyone would gladly throw a rock*, produced by the Centre for Nonviolent Action (2007.) and Davor Konjikušić's *Video footage of personal feelings about the war*, produced by *Documenta* (2006.) were both aired at the consultation.

**While the youth of today do not bear responsi-**