

*institutions, make a better judiciary. If we try to hijack the authority that belongs exclusively to courts, we may end up paving a road for everything that happened to happen again.*

**Statement:** Nenad Popović, Committee for Civic Initiative, Serbia, Local consultation with civil society, Niš, Serbia, April 25th 2009.

*I think that the commission should not deal with potential suspects. The name of the project itself implies 'truth seeking' about crimes, victims, and all that. So, we are dealing with victims and we should agree that victims are victims without first and last names, we should agree that they are all equal and that they all have the same legal status, so to speak.*

**Statement:** Radomir Mladenović, Niš District Court, Serbia, Local consultation with civil society, Niš, Serbia, April 25th 2009.

**Public hearing of victims and witnesses is supported as an important RECOM activity, but it is important that statements are documented by several sources.**

*Victims need to be allowed to say what was said before, but their testimony should not be considered equal with facts about what happened. Victims also have their, so to say, distorted vision, their objectivity. That does not mean that they should not be heard. They should be heard by all means, they should say what they had been through, but that should be kept separately from what I would like to mandate this commission and that is to establish the figures.*

**Statement:** Nenad Popović, Committee for Civic Initiative, Serbia, Local consultation with civil society, Niš, Serbia, April 25th 2009.

**RECOM should have access to the ICTY archives and state institution archives.**

*I was a witness in the case of five generals tried before the ICTY and I learned some things on that occasion. At the ICTY they have a lot of information about possible suspects, enough for example, to mention Petar Petrović as commander of a unit, and that is enough to create a reasonable doubt. Also, the Republic of Serbia, in addition to the War Crimes Trial Chamber in Belgrade, as far as I know, intends to form another War Crimes Trial Chamber in Niš and Novi Sad. So, there will be enough court capacity and enough people trained and ready to process this. Let's not worry about whether our judiciary*

*personnel is qualified or not, we will deal with that.*

**Statement:** Radomir Mladenović, Niš District Court, Serbia, Local consultation with civil society, Niš, Serbia, April 25th 2009.

**RECOM should make recommendations with respect to reparation for victims and their family members in order to satisfy their public recognition. A Memorial Day should be determined to celebrate all victims in all states created on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.**

*Is it possible to organize all former SFRJ states to designate one day to be a memorial day to the victims? To mark it by lighting candles or any other activity, but to make sure it is one day of each month. We have to put pressure on people to understand the idea. Do you think it is possible to show all victims, from all sides, not only our victims, but all victims together? Is it possible?*

**Statement:** Igor Pančić, Pi Kanal Newspaper, Serbia, Local consultation with civil society, Niš, Serbia, April 25th 2009.

*When it comes to reparations, I think the best satisfaction for victims would be to simply recognize them as victims. And I think that the commission can help a lot in that respect.*

**Statement:** Nenad Popović, Committee for Civic Initiative, Serbia, Local consultation with civil society, Niš, Serbia, April 25th 2009.

### **30. Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs on the Initiative for RECOM**

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Srebrenica,  
April 26th 2009

The Citizens' Forum of Tuzla (BiH) organized the second consultation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. A total of 35 representatives of associations of victims and victims' family members, local non-governmental organizations, one representative of youth organizations, one student, and one journalist participated in the work of the consultation. An imam from Srebrenica also participated in the consultation. Participants were mainly from Srebrenica, Bratunac, and Zvornik. One victims' representative came from Vlasenica. Vesna Teršelić (Documenta, Croatia), Bogdan Ivanišević

(International Center for Transitional Justice), and Branko Todorović (Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in the Republic of Srpska, BiH) gave opening statements. Vehid Šehić (Citizens' Forum of Tuzla, BiH) was the moderator. Amir Kulagić (from Srebrenica, BiH) also gave an opening statement. Press, SAN, Dnevni avaz, Oslobođenje, Dnevni list, Nezavisne novine, Tuzlanski list, BHT1, and FTV reported on the event.

### **Some associations supported the establishment of RECOM.**

*I am here to endure all this and to say that RECOM should be established firstly because its list would also include all the crimes and the missing and the killed from the Serb nation and I will be satisfied at least with this part if I did not have the satisfaction of seeing members of the Bosniak nations be held accountable.*

**Statement:** Radojka Filipović, Bratunac municipal organization of the detained and killed soldiers and missing civilians, BiH, Local Consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

*The initiative itself is surely needed and if we bear in mind the definition that an initiative means the noticing of a problem and the approach to this problem. The problem solving has its shape and form. Here I can say only one more thing, Medicine is a pill that is sometimes in the beginning bitter, but the results of these pills can bring to healing.*

**Statement:** Dževad Bektašević, Association Families of War Victims Vlasenica 92 - 95, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

### **RECOM should be supported only if it deals with causes of the armed conflicts as well.**

*If we could work on this, which I still doubt, could we establish a commission, which would really seek the truth? (...) We want to start with the leadership, from the causes of war, who advocated for the war.*

**Statement:** Kada Hotić, Association Mothers of Srebrenica and Žepa Enclaves Movement, BiH, Local Consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

*It is necessary to chronologically list events so that we can all together come to the real truth, to make a list of events until 1995. We usually know the part about 1995. We all know, but we should know the beginning, August 1991, and if we work in this direction, I can give my support.*

**Statement:** Hiba Ramić, Mezarje Foundation, BiH, Local Consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

*We only had to survive all these years and we want responsibility. We want responsibility from the first date, the first crime, I do not care at all about the nationality. Every person should be held accountable for his bad deeds, regardless of nationality. But we will not in any moment miss any date, any killing, any crime committed, regardless of who was the victim.*

**Statement:** Raza Hrvčić, Organization of Šehids and Killed Soldiers of the Srebrenica Municipality, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

### **RECOM should establish facts about crimes in BiH**

*All these dates, all these events, killings should be supported by facts so that courts and investigators could make appropriate judgements. That is why I personally believe that it is never too late to put facts on the table and discuss them, so that we all can eventually live more peacefully.*

**Statement:** Mevludin Lupić, Association of family members of the detained and missing persons from Zvornik Municipality, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

### **It is necessary to create a database and identify all masterminds and perpetrators besides all victims**

*Besides identification of victims, we lack identification of perpetrators. We identify victims, so let's also identify perpetrators. Let's leave these prefixes and let's identify perpetrators.*

**Statement:** Dževad Bektašević, Association Families of War Victims Vlasenica '92 - '95, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

*To give full support to criminal justice to work, to have full names of all perpetrators, to make a database, to have a number, not just the number, but the full names of our children. All children who were born have names and social security number. By doing this we would prevent this competition or date how many persons were killed and where, and not the denial, like victims of the genocide in Srebrenica are usually denied.*

**Statement:** Munira Subašić, Associations Mothers of the Srebrenica and Žepa Enclaves Movement, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

### **RECOM should collect information on places of executions in order to find concealed mass gravesites and investigate events that lead to**

**transfers from primary into secondary and tertiary mass gravesites.**

*Besides information on events, we also need information on places where crimes and executions were committed, - information on locations of primary gravesites, then information on events that caused this and that caused the disturbance of these primary locations of mass gravesites where victims were buried or individual graves. I don't undermine the importance of individual graves in any event in relation to mass graves, and information on locations of these secondary and tertiary mass graves.*

**Statement:** Dževad Bektašević, Association Families of War Victims Vlasenica 92 - 95, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

**The search for the missing should be a major priority of the commission.**

*Since we survived, and all these tortures, and all that we are going through today, I wonder if we will live to find our closest family members. Looking at the material that we received for today's meeting, for today's consultation, and looking at this number of 16,252 victims, who are still lying maybe in hundreds of mass gravesites, and if it was up to me, I would say that the first priority is to find all the missing, to find the ones included in this number.*

**Statement:** Mevludin Lupić, Association of family members of the detained and missing persons in the Zvornik Municipality, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

**RECOM must investigate allegations on human organ trafficking during the armed conflict in BiH.**

*We have information that approximately 200 young men were taken somewhere where their organs and blood were taken away, and there were special crews and equipment, who took these parts from these young men. It should be investigated if it is true or false. Because this hurts us, I mean that my child was skinned alive somewhere, that his organs were taken out.*

**Statement:** Kada Hotić, Association Mother of the Srebrenica and Žepa Enclaves Movement, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

**Civilian and military victims of armed conflicts should not be made equal in investigations.**

*Persecution of civilian population can't be compared to the persecution of those who bore rifles and were members of a military formation. Today, these numbers are being made equal. It is impossible to make a balance in this war: they are trying to make it up with the previous war (...) This means that civilian is a civilian, a soldier should not be mentioned because after all he was a member of the army, those are separate issues. However, here we exclusively speak about civilians, people who were taken and killed at their doorsteps or a bit further depending on where one was killed.*

**Statement:** Hakija Smajlović, Association of family members and detained persons in the Zvornik Municipality, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

*Not all of the killed in this war can be victims. Victims with arms are the killed soldiers and they are not victims, and the ones who had no arms, who were helpless, they are victims. First of all, the World also marked us as victims when they lifted weapons embargo, the World forbade us to defend ourselves against the fourth armed force in Europe, we fought them with our bare arms.*

**Statement:** Kada Hotić, Association Mothers of the Srebrenica and Žepa Enclaves Movement, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

**National prefixes are unacceptable for victims and for perpetrators.**

*It is unacceptable to apply these national prefixes towards victims when bodies are being identified or towards identified bodies. We need an equal approach to victims. Victims all have names and last names, everybody should accept victims.*

**Statement:** Dževad Bektašević, Association Families of War Victims Vlasenica 92 - 95, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

*We always listen to the same definitions and the same notions during these gatherings, but why are we victims at all? Has any one of us decided to be a victim? I don't think so. In order to become a victim, there must have been a crime. In order for a crime to exist, there has to be a perpetrator. There is no victim without this. Please, it hurts me a lot to hear the prefix Serb, Croat, Bosniak perpetrator.*

**Statement:** Amir Kulagić from Srebrenica, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

**The Commission has to prevent lies from being**

**presented in public hearings and must determine mechanisms to prevent false accusations of individuals.**

*The fact is that lately many people have been accused on the basis of spoken words: it is then discovered two or three years later that the accusations derived from a certain interest and were not supported by any factual evidence. How can we prevent these things? I personally know several people from various nations who spent two or three years in detention for being falsely accused. Satisfaction cannot be gained for such things: public hearings deal with very sensitive issues and can often counteract the problem.*

**Statement:** Nedeljko Simić, Srebrenica Council of Youth, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

*It is said that in this country people are being punished for telling the truth and lies are rewarded. Unfortunately, we live in an environment like this. This commission and these consultations should encourage people to speak freely, again with full responsibility for what they are saying, about their views of the past.*

**Statement:** Vehid Šehić, Citizens' Forum of Tuzla, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

**It is necessary to remove persons directly or indirectly involved in commission of war crimes from positions within state services.**

*A disappointing and underlining issue was addressed by the Helsinki Committee last year: certain individuals within certain institutions who participated in the gravest breaches of international humanitarian law still remain in power. Many have very high ranking positions in the police force, the army, parliaments and local authorities: they conceal information on mass gravesites and other relevant information about crimes committed during the war, thus demonstrating the support to the ideology based on ethnic cleansing and persecution of people because of their ethnic or religious background.*

**Statement:** Branko Todorović, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Republika Srpska, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

**State archives are important for the work of RECOM. The concern was expressed regarding the way RECOM would come to these documents.**

*In order to prove the truth, present authorities have to take an active part and contribute. We cannot make a study about what was happening during the war: it is all written somewhere. The one who wrote these things down should show this to us.*

**Statement:** Senad Avdić, Organizations of the demobilized war veterans of the Bratunac Municipality, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

*We know the killed, we know that there are more gravesites, we know that identifications are happening, all of this is happening, but these very important facts from the top about why this all has happened to us. That is still concealed. Who will give this to us so that we can know it? How can we force people: these are secrets and they are concealed.*

**Statement:** Kada Hotić, Association Mothers of the Srebrenica and Žepa Enclaves Movement, BiH, Local consultations with Victims' Associations and other civil society organizations, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

**It is necessary to mark sites where civilians were executed.**

*[We have] To mark sites where crimes were committed, regardless of where they are and what crimes were committed. We have to learn to have [these sites marked], to know [where they are]: I was in Croatia and I saw a site and I liked it very much. Nobody can deny something if it is marked. If it is not marked one can still say that this or that number of people were killed.*

**Statement:** Munira Subašić, Association Mothers of the Srebrenica and Žepa Enclaves Movement, BiH, Local consultation with associations of victims and NGOs, Srebrenica, BiH, April 26th 2009.

### **31. Local consultation with civil society, associations of victims and media on the Initiative for RECOM**

Livno, BiH,  
May 9th 2009

The consultation organized by the Center for Civic Cooperation (BiH) and was attended by 16 participants from Livno, Glamoč, and Grahovo, representatives of non-governmental organizations, media, and victims' associations, as well as a representative of the Islamic community from Livno. Vehid Šehić (Citizens' Forum of