

who did they make it for? A memorial should be built at the very spot where the crime took place, it only takes one square meter, and I hope we can afford it.

Statement: Bledon Jetishi, a student, Faculty of Law, Kosovo, National consultation with students, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, April 15th 2009.

It is necessary to inform victims and civil society on the initiative for RECOM and later on about the activity of the regional commission. Cooperation with regional media outlets will be of great importance.

Facts and arguments are in place, but they exist in silence, they seem to be unable to find a way out. Victims' family members are the determining factor in collecting these facts and they don't even know that this process is underway, that it is going on. In a way, the fact that we can speak openly and have a place to have these debates is a sure step forward, but the cooperation with the media can probably have the most significant impact on the families of victims because they still have a feeling that their stories are just an echo.

Statement: Florentina Hajdari, a student, Faculty of political science, Kosovo, National consultation with students, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, April 15th 2009.

The media are paying more attention to other less important issues instead of trying to shed light on the events from our recent past and inform the general public. Specifically, I think, and I am almost positive that my colleagues also share my opinion, is that our main problem is a lack of cooperation with the media.

Statement: Naim Maxhuni, a student, Faculty of political science, Kosovo, National consultation with students, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, April 15th 2009.

It is necessary to reduce the level of animosity between different ethnic groups in the region and prevent generalization of crime as well as laying the blame for individual criminal acts on the entire nation.

If we tell the Serbian people that they are all criminals, or if they tell us that we, Albanians, are all criminals, I think it will be an ideal breeding ground for hatred between the two ethnic communities. What we need to do is identify perpetrators of each and every crime committed in Kosovo.

Statement: Naser Lajqi, Syri i Visionit Association, Kosovo, National consultation with students, Kosovo, Prishtinë/Priština, April 15th 2009.

How can we achieve something like that when we know that we grew up in an atmosphere that we have enemies? Our enemies, the Serbs, have instilled in us hatred for them. And something else, too: how can we even begin to think that we have no enemies when we are growing up in such an atmosphere?

Statement: Lirie Avdiju, a student, Faculty of political science, Kosovo, National consultation with students, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, April 15th 2009.

In order to cut this revanchist policy short and in order to be able to make space to plant a garden of friendship and not of hatred in our community, we should do the opposite. At this moment we have to forget the past hoping it does not happen again and turn towards the future which is creating conditions for a favourable climate to develop the idea of creating RECOM.

Statement: Shukrie Gashi, Partners Kosova, Kosovo, National consultation with students, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, April 15th 2009.

27. National consultation with young people on the Initiative for RECOM

Belgrade, Serbia,
April 16th 2009

National consultation with young people on the initiative for RECOM was organized by the non-governmental organization Fractal (Serbia) for 31 college and high school students, members of Fractal (Serbia), Civic Initiative (Serbia), and the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (Serbia). They debated the issue in four work groups which created a set of suggestions, conclusions, and recommendations. The consultation was opened by Shukrie Gashi (Partners Kosova, Kosovo), Andrej Nosov (Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Serbia) and Filip Pavlović (Fractal, Serbia).

Participants support the establishment of RECOM. Students, youth, NGO activists ought to have an active role in advocating the establishment of RECOM, and help implementing the activities of the commission.

We believe that this initiative is extremely important and for that reason we intend to give it our best effort both as organizations and as individuals gathered around these organizations and help

implement this idea in order to achieve best results and the success of the initiative. In that respect you can count on us.

Statement: Srđan Vezmar, Youth Dialogue Programme, Serbia, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

RECOM should prevent further denial of war crimes, manipulation of victims and help solve the issue of the missing.

We would like to achieve, i.e. prevent further denial of war crimes which should be recognized as such, we have to achieve recognition of human rights violations over the years, and we also want to prevent manipulation with numbers of victims, we want to clarify the destiny of the missing, of over 16,000 people listed as missing who may be dead or alive. That is what we want to know.

Statement: Morocco Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

RECOM will contribute to the establishment of cooperation and friendship between young people in the region and it will help restore the confidence of citizens with respect to state institutions.

We want to establish cooperation and friendship between young people living in these seven countries, young people from the entire region, to organize cultural exchanges, study trips, exchange programmes for college students and high school or elementary school students, to help establish the culture of the rule of law and consequently to help democratic processes in our respective countries: in other words, willingness to respect the law, to involve more people in political processes.

Statement: Morocco Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

Participants of the consultation recommended promoting RECOM, through street performances, media campaigns and figures of public interest.

In order to raise awareness about the need to initiate RECOM, it is necessary to engage all available media outlets and organize persistent and aggressive media campaigns.

Statement: Morocco Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

Media personalities, also, why not, we've seen that in the United States, persons of public interest,

celebrities, play a significant role in supporting presidential and other candidates, and I am sure that would create a significant impact.

Statement: Morocco Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

Also, we should insist on organizing all sorts of campaigns in order to mobilize young people – media campaigns, street performances etc. Media campaigns should include young, active, and recognizable public personalities whose job will be to try to explain what RECOM is and why it is so important. Also, we should organize TV discussions, debate, or TV programmes for young people.

Statement: Peru Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

In order to strengthen the support for the initiative for RECOM it is important to use peer-to-peer education programs through youth organizations activities, Internet groups, music, cartoons, movies, etc.

That is something we call the face-to-face approach, or peer-to-peer education. There were many suggestions in our group to, let's say, organize public educational programmes offered in schools. That may or may not be accepted as an idea, but that is a way to do it (...) All other forms of advertisement such as the Internet, facebook, myspace, forum, are a good idea.

Statement: Morocco Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

We should also engage our young people who will collect signatures of supports. All those who participate in these consultations should also spread the word, tell our friends about it face-to-face, tell them where we were, what we learned, and motivate them to start collecting signatures, too. It is also very important to include student and youth organizations, such as Youth Offices which can be found all over Serbia.

Statement: Peru Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

Participants of the consultations proposed the creation of a Youth Forum for the creation of RECOM.

A very useful move is to form a separate forum for young people who will conduct activities which will shadow the activity of the commission.

Statement: South Africa Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

To organize regional consultations with young people in an attempt to sum up all proposals made during national consultations.

We would like to suggest that after all regional and local consultations with young people, a conference for all participants of these consultations should be organized in order to specify and adopt joint recommendations. In other words, we would like to sum up one unique platform and a set of proposals made by youth groups.

Statement: South Africa Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

Representatives of human rights organizations, lawyers, psychologists, social workers, members of various religious communities, and representatives of youth groups should be involved in all activities concerning RECOM.

So far we have not discussed the number of members RECOM should have or the appropriate selection criteria, we have only talked about who should participate in RECOM activities. So, young people, non-governmental organizations activists, and representatives of human rights non-governmental organizations which are most experienced in dealing with human rights should be included. Similarly, it is very important to include legal experts, psychologists, and sociologists. We have also talked about possible involvement of clergy representatives. Their influence should be monitored and they should be included in the consultation process only, without actually taking part in the work of the commission.

Statement: Peru Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

It is important to include representatives of religious communities in victim support programmes.

What is important to know is that the rural population are generally less educated: the influence of the church is more significant. For that reason, I believe that it is important to make sure that rural citizens have confidence in their religious leaders who may actually motivate them to come out and publicly testify about their experiences.

Statement: Peru Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

RECOM should consist of seven members, each coming from one of the countries formed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. Their

selection should be verified by their respective parliaments.

One of suggestions was that the commission should be made up of 7 members based on the number of countries participating in its activities (...) Each country's parliament should verify the selection of these persons in accordance with a predetermined procedure valid for respective parliaments and we believe that it would empower the entire process.

Statement: South Africa Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

Future members of the Commission should adopt universal criteria for all countries, allowing each country to select its members independently.

Statement: Morocco Work Group, National consultation with young people on the initiative for RECOM, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

Members of the Commission should be non-partisan persons of public importance enjoying credibility and respect throughout the region.

It is absolutely necessary that future members of the commission enjoy credibility, and respect, and that they are known for their impartiality. In other words, future members of the commission should be persons who are, for lack of a better word, free of a negative public perception and who do not participate ho are not members of any political parties, but of course, no person can ever be perfect.

Statement: Peru Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

Choose one representative from Serbia and the entire region will like that person, but we are not going to like him or her. For that reason I believe that these should be intellectuals, persons not discredited by being associated with a political option or idea.

Statement: Argentina Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

RECOM should be mandated to deal with the period from 1991 to 2008 when the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia ended by Kosovo's declaration of independence.

The time period which should be covered by RECOM's activities should be from 1991 when Slovenia broke away from the rest of Yugoslavia (SFRJ), until 2008 when Kosovo declared its independence. This is the entire period the commission must include in its activity.

Statement: South Africa Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

RECOM should focus on establishing the facts which can help get a better understanding of the reasons that led to the conflict.

It is of vital interest for all in the region to establish objective facts on war crimes and the responsibility of perpetrators, including the responsibility of the international community. Also, it is important to determine the role of each ethnic community that participated in the conflict as well as the role of the international community in preventing or fuelling the conflict.

Statement: Morocco Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

The Commission should not deal with what caused some of the events but be more focused on facts, because when we know the facts we can reach our own conclusions and realize why things happened the way they did.

Statement: Peru Work Group, National consultation with young people on the initiative for RECOM, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

It is necessary to adopt a witness and victim protection programme that can guarantee identity protection.

We should organize public testimonies with possible witness/victim identification protection for those who do not want to disclose their identity.

Statement: Morocco Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

RECOM should establish a Memorial Day dedicated to all victims and advocate the plan to build a memorial with the names of all the victims fallen in that particular place.

[It is necessary] to mark a Joint Memorial Day dedicated to all victims, regardless of their origin. It should be a neutral day, for example the day of the formal creation of RECOM or some other date. Memorials should be built at the places where people lost their lives containing the names of all the victims fallen there.

Statement: Morocco Work Group, National consultation with young people on the initiative for RECOM, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

It is important to set up a joint, inter-state scholarship fund for the children of the killed and missing.

The idea to create a joint, regional scholarship fund for the children of the killed or missing is an excellent idea. The problem in our region is that the governments do not have funds to that, but it is important to plea with good-will people and hope for donations or even the financial support from the European Union to establish such a fund in order to help the victims or their families.

Statement: Morocco Work Group, National consultation with young people, Belgrade, Serbia, April 16th 2009.

28. National consultation with associations of victims on the Initiative for RECOM

Belgrade, Serbia,
April 25th 2009

The consultation was organized by the Association of the families of the kidnapped and murdered in Kosovo and Metohija (Serbia) and attended by 29 participants, mostly members of associations of the families of the killed and missing from Kosovo and several victims' associations from Croatia. Participants came from Montenegro (11), Kosovo (3), and from different parts of Serbia (14). Nataša Kandić (Humanitarian Law Center, Serbia), Milosav Stojković (Association of the families of the kidnapped and murdered in Kosovo and Metohija, Serbia) and Maja Stojanović (Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Serbia) opened the gathering. Media Agency FoNet reported on the event.

Participants National Consultations supported the initiative to create RECOM.

I have given it a lot of thought, obviously, considering the seriousness of the problem and experiencing it for ten long years and I decided to support this idea and I do thank Ms. Nataša Kandić for devoting her best energy to making things happen.

Statement: Desanka Pejčinović, Association of the families of the kidnapped and murdered in Kosovo and Metohija, Serbia, National consultation with associations of victims, Belgrade, Serbia, April 25th 2009.

Why RECOM? Because all we hear in this region are lies. And refuting these lies, of course, is one of our goals (...) With RECOM we will build a public platform for the voice of the victims to be heard and through public hearings of victims we will be able