

In cases where defendants were acquitted of charges for war crimes, the court did not deny the commitment of a war crime, but instead described the crime in detail. So, in that domain, if there are people who believe that the judgements failed, that something was overlooked or that something was recognized as a war crime which in fact was not a war crime, that is where I see an opportunity for RECOM to step in and revise the judgements.

Statement: Bogdan Ivanišević, International Center for Transitional Justice, Local consultations with civil society, Prijedor, BiH, May 13th 2009.

Most judgement can be amended. Unfortunately, most of these judgements failed to identify by name all victims of a particular crime and they especially failed to process all other facts relevant for the suffering of these victims.

Statement: Edin Ramulić, Association of Women from Prijedor Izvor, Local consultation with civil society, Prijedor, BiH, May 13th 2009.

Special attention should be paid to avoid political instrumentalization of RECOM.

First of all, I think that all of you will agree that the entire project must be free from politics. It doesn't mean that we will not include political institutions because we can't do without them. But when I say free from politics I mean free of manipulation and instrumentalization.

Statement: Nedeljko Mitrović, Republic organizations of the families of the detained, killed, and missing soldiers and civilians of Republika Srpska, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Prijedor, BiH, May 13th 2009.

It is necessary to stress the points of agreement of participants in the consultations process instead of instating on their disagreements.

RECOM is a mechanism which is a motive or an initiative for all of us here today. We should not analyse each and every person's motives, initiative, or willingness to do this and we should not create reasons to disagree but conditions for the verification of our collective will to work and use the methodology which will satisfy everything that does not project dissatisfaction.

Statement: Enes Alibegović, Association of civilian victims of war, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Prijedor, BiH, May 13th 2009.

Some participants believe that reconciliation should be the main goal of RECOM and some believe that reconciliation should be every person's personal decision.

I think it is crucial to achieve reconciliation.

Statement: Nikola Drljača, Municipal organization of detained and killed war veterans of Novi Grad, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Prijedor, BiH, May 13th 2009.

I don't know if the word 'reconciliation' will find its way in the documents we plan to submit to our governments simply because people who have suffered a lot may feel they are being forced to accept it. And I think that a decision to reconcile is a deeply personal decision and that fact-finding will certainly help people make such a decision.

Statement: Vesna Teršelić, Documenta, Croatia, Local consultation with civil society, Prijedor, BiH, May 13th 2009.

Participation of young people in the consultative process is an opportunity for them to develop a feeling of compassion for others.

Since 1992 a new generation of young people has grown in all former Yugoslav nations. They grew up in a ghetto, without much contact with other nationalities. Their participation in gatherings like this one could help them get to know other nationalities and the facing with the past feeling could really do them good. And let's not forget, they are the future.

Statement: Ervin Blažević, Mladost Youth Association, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Prijedor, BiH, May 13th 2009.

Special attention must be given to Bosnia and Herzegovina because of a very deep division between people in the communities where they live.

Special attention must be given to Bosnia and Herzegovina regardless of situation in other parts of former Yugoslavia. Unfortunately, Bosnia and Herzegovina is still very deeply divided.

Statement: Sudbin Musić, Association of concentration camp prisoners Prijedor '92, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Prijedor, BiH, May 13th 2009.

35. National consultation with civil society on the Initiative for RECOM

Podgorica, Montenegro,
May 18th 2009

The consultation was organized by the non-governmental organization Institute Alternative (Montenegro) and attended by 28 representa-

tives of the civil society sector of Montenegro. Tea Gorjanc-Prelević (Human Rights Action, Montenegro), Stevo Muk (Institute Alternative, Montenegro) and Aleksandar Trifunović (Buka Media Project, BiH) opened the gathering. Vijesti and Radio Free Europe reported on the event.

The future commission should have a regional character.

The conflict began in the country we all know as Yugoslavia and it ended in several different states created during the war. The war was not limited to one state within its borders but instead, it often spilled across the border and for that reason we believe that the most efficient way to establish the facts about war crimes is to create such a regional body.

Statement: Tea Gorjanc-Prelević, Action for Human Rights, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

We are going to face all forms of obstruction here in Montenegro. The solution will be that all of us act on the regional level and find mechanisms which will make it possible for this effort to evolve. Without it we cannot have, I don't want to say reconciliation; we cannot have normalization of relations between the nations of the states which were involved in the war conflict.

Statement: Radan Nikolić, Association of veterans from the wars waged in the 1990s, BiH, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

I personally cannot accept the model which implies having national commissions which have representatives. That is what we've had so far. Montenegro had its own Missing Persons Commission. That commission had its representatives at the regional level. However, they do not participate in any efforts at all and the voice of Montenegro or the voice of the families of the missing are not heard. So, this should definitely be organized at the regional level.

Statement: Radan Nikolić, Association of veterans from the wars waged in the 1990s, BiH, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

It is necessary to create national commissions which will cooperate with the regional commission.

I think that at the very beginning of the process it will be extremely difficult to organize it at a regional level and I think that we should all first deal with our own countries and initiate the creation of

commissions or research centres (...) but in the end, it should all be formed as a regional commission and regional reports.

Statement: Mirsad Rastoder, Forum Magazine, BiH, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

Each state should have its own model because each state is specific in its own way and there can be no universal model for each state involved in the process. It is clear that we should not have a regional commission at the very beginning which would be superior to other commissions, but instead, representatives of national commissions should be representatives in the regional commission.

Statement: Boško Nenezić, Center for Monitoring, Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

It is necessary to include veteran's organizations in the work of the future commission. Those who participated in the commitment of war crimes could help RECOM identify perpetrators.

Veterans and veterans' organizations from all former Yugoslavia republics will be the most insignificant obstruction, I am sure. I must also say that we quickly bonded as if the war had never happened. We are not warriors, we are fighters, and we did what we were supposed to do. The war was waged by politicians who very quickly reconciled after the war.

Statement: Radan Nikolić, Association of veterans from the wars waged in the 1990s, BiH, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

I think that there are people who took part in those crimes, who are either victims or perpetrators, and I believe that they would be willing to share their testimony with someone. RECOM could initiate such contacts, set up a secured telephone line, for example, which is a necessary precondition since it could be a life-threatening situation for those who decide to come forward and testify. They could definitely help us find the missing and tell us I was there and there with my unit. Don't forget how we got to see the video of the execution of Bosniaks by the Scorpions unit members.

Statement: Sonja Radošević, free lance journalist, BiH, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

It is necessary to secure the support of international organizations for the creation of RECOM, primarily the support of the European Commission.

The European Commission is the international factor RECOM needs to plead with for any kind of available support, from financial, which is very important, to a political support in exerting some pressure on those countries in the Western Balkans which are not ready to join the process and act with more transparency with respect to this initiative.

Statement: Momčilo Radulović, European Movement in Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

RECOM should tackle the role of the media in the wars waged in the 1990s. Media outlets should assume responsibility for re-introducing European values in post-Yugoslav societies.

As a citizen, I think it is very important to properly establish criteria for differentiating between those who ordered the crimes and those who executed them, as well as those who influenced the public opinion (...) There is an abundance of materials testifying about the role of the media in the process of introducing a fascist climate in Montenegro. I think that RECOM could dig up a lot of facts in that area.

Statement: Omer Šarkić, citizen of Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

In addition to dealing with victims, I believe that it is also necessary to deal with the media as such, their role in the 1990s, and especially those who are still active (...) Unfortunately, they cannot be held responsible by the law, which is something I would like to see happen RECOM would be an ideal environment to analyse their texts and their reports in the early 1990s in order to categorize them morally and professionally.

Statement: Momčilo Radulović, European Movement in Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, May 18th 2009.

Television stations are responsible in more ways than one. They clearly helped introduce fascist reasoning into the Montenegro society in the 1990s and they should now carry an additional burden in the process of undoing the damages caused in the 1990s and in the effort to establish European values.

Statement: Daliborka Uljarević, Centre for Civic Education, Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

The commission should have its commissioners appointed proportionally according to a national key. It should be gender sensitive. Commissioners should be brave people. The question was raised as to whether commission-

ers should receive a salary or not.

It is important to make sure that if the commission has 100 members, 42 of them should be Montenegrins, male or female, 32 should be Serbs, male or female, 17 male or female Bosniaks, one male or female Croat, and five to seven should definitely be Albanians or percentage equivalent.

Statement: Gojko Raičević, internet portal www.in4s.net, Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

It must be comprised of, first of all, courageous people who will be able to investigate under pressure (...) It would be best if they come from non-governmental organizations which would urge them on and ask them how far they have got and who would publicly disclose what facts and what documentation they collected. I think that is going to be the most difficult part of the job.

Statement: Ljiljana Raičević, Women's Safe House, Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

The question is how to motivate the best people to get involved? Does it have to be comprised of professionals? Because these people, whom we refer to as 'prominent public persons' are not accidentally what they are, and their involvement would require them to neglect their jobs and devote their time to this activity, which is not necessarily less significant than their jobs but it definitely is a new, different job.

Statement: Boško Nenezić, Center for Monitoring, Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

Public hearings are crucial for the work of RECOM.

I think that public hearings are of huge importance. I know that people who would hear it on public TV in Montenegro would probably also want to come forward and give their accounts of the horrors of war which they cannot tell anyone and who cannot go to neighbouring countries (...) It is still early, but it would be efficient and it would motivate and encourage other people to do the same in the if-he-can-do-it-I-can-do-it-too manner".

Statement: Ljiljana Raičević, Women's Safe House, Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

It is important to establish the fate of all missing persons.

I would like to stress the importance of the issue of missing persons. There is really nothing more human and nothing more necessary than to find the grave of absolutely each and every victim of war atrocities. So, all victims are victims and they have no nationality.

Statement: Radan Nikolić, Association of veterans from the wars waged in the 1990s, Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

It is necessary to support memorial parks for victims.

I expect you to support the initiative to build a memorial park for the victims of crimes committed in the period from 1991 to 2001 and according to a proposal of the Bosniak Forum that would be in the Pobrežje Park, in order to pay respect to all victims and give an opportunity to the families to re-examine their conscience with respect to the victims in such a place.

Statement: Mirsad Rastoder, Forum Magazine, Montenegro, National consultation with civil society, Podgorica, Montenegro, May 18th 2009.

36. National consultation with women's groups, women academics, and women politicians on the Initiative for RECOM

Zagreb, Croatia,
May 21st 2009

The consultation with women groups, scientists, and politicians was organized by women organizations: members of the Coalition for RECOM in Croatia, B.A.B.E. Association, Centre for Women War Victims ROSA, Coordination of Women Groups SEKA, Lesbian Group KONTRA, Poreč Centre for Civic Initiative, Womens Room, Cesi, Delfin Pakrac. Domine Split and Documenta. The consultation was preceded by a press conference where Vesna Teršelić from Documenta, Marica Šeatović, wife of the killed Mihajlo Šeatović from Novska and Rada Borić from the Centre for Womens Studies, Zagreb gave statements. HRT and Novi List reported on the event. Nela Pamuković (Centre for Women War Victims Rosa, Croatia), Paula Zore, Suzana Kunac (B.A.B.E Association, Croatia), Staša Zajović (Women in Black, Serbia) and Vesna Teršelić (Documenta, Croatia) opened the gathering. The consultation also contained a

lecture called the importance of the gender dimension in the process of dealing with the past held by Vesna Kesić (a journalist and feminist, Croatia) and Rada Borić (Centre for Women Studies and a feminist, Croatia). During the course of the programme Marica Šeatović, the wife of the killed Mihajlo Šeatović from Novska, and Marija Lovrić, the wife of the killed Branko Lovrić in Osijek, gave their testimonies and once more drew the attention of the participants to the need of establishing new mechanisms of dealing with the painful sides of the past. A total of 39 women participated in the work of the consultation. Novi list and HRT1 reported on the event.

The role of RECOM is to develop a clear and efficient process of dealing with the facts and thus bring divided communities closer together and prevent new conflict.

Commissions should use its structure, its committees, emissaries, and members to establish the truth about war crimes which will subsequently become a part of the collective memory of these communities. From the impression I have got visiting different communities throughout Croatia I have a feeling that the peace process hasn't even begun yet and that this commission has a lot to do in presenting the facts, the truth, and the justice for victims because without it I think that potentially, there is plenty of room for a new conflict.

Statement: Suzana Kunac, B.A.B.E Association, Croatia, National Consultation with Women's Groups, Zagreb, Croatia, 21 May 2009.

Women, victims of rape, must be provided access to mechanisms of transitional justice.

We need to find out how many rape cases were processed before national war crimes chambers (...) We need to find out how much accessible transitional justice mechanisms are for women who were victims of rape. Some cases of mass rape had even attracted the attention of the media all over the world, but somehow, it still got neglected and forgotten by transitional justice mechanisms.

Statement: Vesna Kesić, a journalist and feminist, National Consultation with Women's Groups, Zagreb, Croatia, May 21st 2009.

RECOM should have a special committee tasked with dealing with rape cases.

I liked the experience from Japan Rada Borić told