

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

Tuzla, BiH), Eugen Jakovčić (Documenta, Croatia) and Aleksandar Trifunović (Buka Media Project, BiH) gave introductory presentations. Dnevni list published an article on the event.

Participants support the initiative to create RECOM.

I salute this Initiative and the creation of such a body, but it shouldn't be dragged on indefinitely.

Statement: Himzo Zlatarević, Glamoč Association of detained persons, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

This is a moment when the victims get together: they are the category that suffered the most. When more victims join them, because a crime committed against a child is a crime regardless of who committed it, then we will have a chance to bring those who committed it to justice. And it is important to encourage those who suffered the most to endure as long as it takes to end the process.

Statement: Ale Kamber, Avaz daily paper, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

It is necessary to choose the best people to be RECOM commissioners.

Only honest people should be elected members of this commission. Scientists and historians; not fighters because they all have their perspective, they just defend themselves. And it has been said a long time ago that those who fought in wars cannot be leaders in peace. BiH is the best example of that because most of the former soldiers have bloody hands and they can be found everywhere, from municipal authorities to the government and the Parliament.

Statement: Hajro Gromilić, Oslobođenje daily paper, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

Victims no longer believe in justice.

None of these people were ever invited to testify in court and they refuse to talk about it now. And what do we do now? How do we wake them up, their consciousness, and make them repeat what they told so many times before? Their statements have never been recorded. I don't know if they are being kept at the Prosecutor's Office and I would not even know how to contact that office in Livno and ask whether they have the documents.

Statement: Himzo Zlatarević, Glamoč Association of detained persons, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

There is no justice for perpetrators, not in this war or in the other war, which means there is no justice. There will never be justice and it may happen again that your next door neighbour with whom you got on well and shared bread comes to slit your throat. And I think that is something people in the region have finally accepted as a fact.

Statement: Nurka Bašić, Teledom Associations Glamoč, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

Victims should be encouraged as much as possible to endure this process.

It is very important to encourage the victims who suffered the most to endure and unite in this process, which I think they have already. For an average person a moral punishment is a lot worse than the legal one.

Statement: Ale Kamber, Avaz daily paper, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

It is necessary to make recordings of victims' testimony lest we forget.

We need to make sure that the witnesses know that their testimony will at least be recorded and preserved (...) and because of that I support this.

Statement: Nurka Bašić, Teledom Associations Glamoč, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

It is the task of all of you, for all who will be trained to investigate the facts, the families of the killed, the families of the missing, victims of crimes, prisoners, known and unknown raped women, abused children, and all those who have to say something to say that, to give your testimonies to activists trained to take your statements. Once you start telling your story, you will have some kind of moral satisfaction (...) When a victim dies, the story dies, too. In order to prevent the death of the story, we have started this very tough job.

Statement: Željka Mihaljević, local radio station, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

RECOM should be authorized to interview any person who can help collect evidence of war crimes.

This commission should at the same time represent an investigative body authorized to interview any persons possessing relevant information on war crimes and which can also collect information on institutions and individuals and their role in the recent wars and everything else that happened.

Statement: Eugen Jakovčić, Documenta, Croatia, Local consul-

tation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

A collective memorial for all victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina should be built.

Why not a collective memorial for all victims in BiH, on a neutral terrain, even if separate memorials to civilian victims already exist?

Statement: Ale Kamber, Avaz daily paper, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

One participant was doubtful about the possibility to come up with one truth for all victims in BiH.

I am sceptical about the creation of this commission because it will be of mixed composition and we'll have three truths in BiH. What I am telling you here now is that someone may want to analyse and split in three different truths and ask me how I came up with it.

Statement: Sead Delalić, Livno Association of detained persons, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

Victims and perpetrators should not be labelled by their national background because each victim has their own name and identity.

Victims and perpetrators have first and last names and ID numbers and they should not be identified by a national prefix. Perpetrators should only be identified as criminals (...) Perpetrators, just like victims, should be identified by first and last name if they are available.

Statement: Jozo Vidović, Association of the families of killed homeland defenders of the Livno municipality, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

We should all be tasked with preventing the transfer of hatred to new generations in the region.

It is our task, not only those who are teachers by vocation, but all of us to teach our children not to sing hate songs. That is a task for all of us because the children to not sing hate songs because their hearts are infested with hatred, they are not aware of it, they know nothing, and we should not wage a war on them because if we do, we are going to lose our future.

Statement: Anto Mišković, Center for Civic Cooperation, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

It is necessary to identify all criminals because it will offer a moral satisfaction to victims.

The crucial thing is to identify criminals and give that moral satisfaction to victims (...) There are no small and big victims. All victims are equal and we are all equal before God, especially if victims are civilians, old people, or children.

Statement: Mirsad Cero, Medzlis of the Livno Islamic Community, BiH, Local consultation with civil society, Livno, BiH, May 9th 2009.

32. National consultations with civil society on the Initiative for RECOM

Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo,
May 9th 2009

The consultation was organised by Partners-Kosova (Kosovo) and was attended by 22 participants mostly representing the non-governmental sector and victims associations. There were two representatives of the government of Kosovo (Missing Persons' Commission), an imam and a journalist. Four representatives of different international organizations took part in the discussion. Shukrie Gashi (Partners Kosova, Kosovo), Nataša Kandić (Humanitarian Law Center, Serbia), Salem Čorbo (Povratak i održivi opstanak Association, BiH) and Avni Melenica (22 May Association, Kosovo).

Participants had different opinions on whether it is more important to establish a national truth commission which will cooperate with RECOM once it is created or to opt for RECOM only.

A national commission will be legalized and we will soon send a letter to the president and prime minister and the justice minister to ask them to form the commission here and that commission should then discuss things with founders, the Humanitarian Law Center, the people in Croatia and those in Bosnia. They should discuss with them what problems we are supposed to solve. If things differ from this, then we, the associations, will not cooperate.

Statement: Halit Berisha, Shpresimi Association, Kosovo, National consultation with civil society, Prishtinë/Priština, May 9th 2009.

We are not going to obstruct it but we have our reservations about the composition and the creation of this commission. We know that there were many such commissions in different countries where conflicts occurred, and we know that they came into being or disappeared overnight. But Kosovo is quite