

*invited by all means and if they are not able to show up one time, they will come the next time.*

**Statement:** Mazlum Baraliu, Faculty of Philosophy in Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, National consultation with civil society, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 9th 2009.

**Socio-psychologists should be included in the Coalition for RECOM because the level of serious trauma left as a result of the conflict.**

*The pain is too strong and the trauma is overwhelming. This is an element because of which we sometimes lose track in our effort to build something pragmatic, something we all need (...) For that reason I think it is very important to engage people who can deal with it, socio-psychologists, for example, to help alleviate the pain.*

**Statement:** Eli Krasniqi, a sociologist, Kosovo, National consultation with civil society, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 9th 2009.

**33. National consultation with artists on the Initiative for RECOM**

Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo,  
May 10th 2009

The consultation with artists on the Initiative for RECOM was organized by the Youth Initiative for Human Rights (Kosovo). Ten film and theatre artists took part in the consultation, most of whom are active in the non-governmental sector and as many as 22 monitors, mostly from the YIHR, two from international organizations, and one observer from the Swiss embassy, and a journalist. Nataša Kandić (Humanitarian Law Center, Serbia), Haris Pašović (a theatre director from Sarajevo, BiH) and Salem Čorbo (Povratak i održivi opstanak Association, BiH) gave introductory presentations. Koha Ditore reported on the event.

**It is necessary to first form a national commission of Kosovo which will cooperate with the regional commission.**

*I have no objections to the Initiative for RECOM, if it is created in a realistic context, following the establishment of the Kosovo commission which will cooperate with similar commission or better yet, maybe similar commissions will be formed for other parts of the former Yugoslavia. Then it would be much more efficient with respect to the context in which the war in Kosovo took place. The war was waged here and everybody ignored the fact that the*

*occupation was under way since 1989 in which all former Yugoslav republics took place; federal forces from all parts of the former Yugoslavia (...) We are still in a never-ending war with the opposite side.*

**Statement:** Albert Heta, Stacion Association, Kosovo, National consultation with artists, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 10th 2009.

*That was our job – you are Albanian and you carry heavy things. We can never forget that. We know how collective memory is used. It is still fresh on our mind, the battle for Kosovo and the creation of policies which served as the basis for extinction plans (...) A Kosovo commission or a regional initiative? Why? In reality it will look the same but in people's minds that picture is very important because Kosovo is not a republic, it was simply an autonomous province which was later taken away. After heavy human losses (...) people want to feel that they are their own masters, the masters of their land; they want to know they own it.*

**Statement:** Eli Krasniqi, a sociologist, Kosovo, National consultation with artists, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 10th 2009.

**Regional approach creates opportunities for the clarification of many unsolved crimes as well as their recognition.**

*I live in Bijeljina. On April 1st units from Erdut base came to Bijeljina, attacked the town, and killed a huge number of civilians. A lot of Albanians were killed selectively and that was the largest execution of Albanians in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their bodies were immediately transported to their families in Tetovo and other place. They were buried without prior identification, without forensic findings. Now, only their families know that they were killed in Bijeljina in April 1992. No one else knows about it and there are no trials (...) Some bodies were transported and buried and others were just dumped into the Drina River and buried in various cemeteries from Sremska Mitrovica almost as far as Belgrade. This commission would hopefully be able to help us the civil society sector in their efforts to find the truth about this.*

**Statement:** Salem Čorbo, Povratak i održivi opstanak Association, BiH, National consultation with artists, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 9, 2009.

*War crimes denial is still present in Serbia. We have to do something, we have to insist on the establishment of facts, and once they are established we have to urge institutions to accept them and that will create a significant pressure on the govern-*

ment of Serbia to stop denying war crimes (...) If the entire region is not included in the establishment of facts in order to force the non-democratic parts of the Serbian society to stop denying war crimes, and to start talking about them, what do you think a Kosovo commission can do? You had the best commission ever, the Goldstone Commission which no one ever had anywhere in the world. You have ICTY judgements for highest ranking Serbian Army and police officials. That means that you are officially recognized as victims and there is no dispute about that. But what the non-governmental organizations from Serbia and Croatia want is to make it a public knowledge.

**Statement:** Nataša Kandić, Humanitarian Law Center, Serbia, National consultation with artists, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 10th 2009.

Whether Kosovo wants it or not, it should by all means be a part of this commission simply because if we create national commissions and if there are victims in Serbia, how can we go to Serbia and ask people there to cooperate with us in searching for the victims. (Nora Ahmetaj, human rights activist, Kosovo, National consultation with artists, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 10th 2009.)

I understand the frustration which is fully justified because Kosovo football players cannot play in Belgrade. That is not fair. But I think that a way to have a football match between representations of Serbia and Kosovo is an initiative like this (...) You should be aware of the danger that you, victims of the Kosovo battle myth may create a new myth about the Albanian Kosovo battle which will in the future harm other people.

**Statement:** Haris Pašović, a theatre director from Sarajevo, BiH, National consultation with artists, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 10th 2009.

There are people here who claim that there were no Serbian victims, not a single one. That is why I think it is very important to have a commission like this which will enable the truth to be heard on the regional level so that a farmer in Šumadija will know what happened to a victim in the Dubravë/Dubrava prison, where Serbian forces killed prisoners.

**Statement:** Bekim Blakaj, Humanitarian Law Center, Kosovo, National consultation with artists, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 10th 2009.

**Artists have hard time finding motives to deal with war themes and it is necessary to help them get involved in this initiative.**

There was some kind of negative influence on artists if they chose to tackle war topics. That was politics. I don't want to say most, but some artists who dealt with war themes got involved or involved themselves in politics so that it is really discouraging for us.

**Statement:** Zana Hoxha Krasniqi, a film director, Kosovo, National consultation with artists, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 10th 2009.

Maybe there are ways for artists to get involved and help people open up and speak because that is for their own good, that is their right, that is how they will ease their suffering, and maybe later, even obtain some financial compensation. In this case I think we should be getting more money for artistic performances, plays, films, and so on.

**Statement:** Visar Krusha, a screen writer, Kosovo, National consultation with artists, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 10th 2009.

**It is necessary to exert pressure on the public through the media and through the international community on the governments in the region to help create RECOM.**

I think that the media should pressure the public to understand our efforts, and on the other hand The European union, the Office of the United States of America [in Kosovo] should exert pressure on our governments to help create a commission like this (...) These issues cannot be solved without a government decision and the western powers should use a little arm-twisting and tell Tadić, for example, well, we are not going to give you the money or you can't go to Europe until you do this, and they will have to do it. That's the way things are done.

**Statement:** Petrit Çarkayhiu, Oxygen, Kosovo, National consultation with artists, Prishtinë/Priština, Kosovo, May 10th 2009.

### **34. Local consultation with civil society on the Initiative for RECOM**

Prijedor, BiH,  
May 13th 2009

The consultation was organized by Association of Women from Prijedor Izvor (BiH) and was attended by 21 representative of the local community in Prijedor and surrounding villages and five OSCE observers. Edin Ramulić (Association of Women from Prijedor Izvor, BiH), Vesna