

September 23, 2014

The participants of the first European workshop on dealing with violence burdened past in Bosnia and Herzegovina, coming from the Islamic Community, Serb Orthodox Church, Catholic Church and Jewish Community, together with the participants from European countries (Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Albania, Slovenia, Ukraine and Ireland) in the period September 19 to 22, 2014 visited the sites of suffering of Bosniacs (Tomašica, Prijedor municipality), Serbs (Prebilovci, Čapljina municipality), Croats (Uzdol, Prozor-Rama municipality) and Jews (Donja Gradina, Kozarska Dubica municipality). The sites of suffering were identified by religious communities and churches. The workshop was organized by the Interreligious Council, Maximilian Kolbe Foundation and Renovabis with the support of the EVZ Foundation (Erinnerung Verantwortung Zukunft). After having visited these sites and talked to survivors, workshop participants issued the following

Statement

1. The common value of our religions is the respect for the dignity of every human being. The fundamental right to live is a right that must be respected irrespectively of the religious or ethnic affiliation.
2. It is necessary to stop negating war crimes and publicly condemn all war crimes irrespectively of the ethnic or religious affiliation of victims and perpetrators.
3. The position of survived civilian victims and the relationship towards civilian victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina, irrespectively of their ethnic or religious affiliation is at a devastatingly low level and it is necessary to develop the culture of dialog and listening to information on war crimes and suffering of civilians. The survived victims have to be enabled to make them heard.

4. It is necessary to render possible visits and dignified marking of sites of suffering of civilians such as putting up memorial plates and memorial gatherings. Also, we invite local authorities to demonstrate a better understanding for the needs of dignified marking of sites of suffering in terms of protection of sites of suffering, cemeteries, construction of memorials and holding of memorial gatherings.
5. We kindly ask all those persons that have any information about missing persons to demonstrate compassion and deliver such information to the competent institutions in order for the murdered to be buried in a dignified way and in order for their families to find peace.
6. We invite the competent authorities to carry on their activities related to the search for missing persons and punishment of perpetrators of war crimes. That is the only way to serve justice and build a safe future.
7. We also invite the NGO sector and individuals to make their contributions for the purpose of restoring the dignity of all victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That is the only way leading to a stable reconciliation. Let us build a future together, irrespectively of the religion and ethnicity.
8. We acknowledge and greatly thank the religious communities and churches in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially: the Islamic Community, Serb Orthodox Church, Catholic Church, Jewish Community and all other organizations and individuals that have helped us in implementing this workshop.