

**Consultation with Women Victims of War from Rahovec/Orahovac, Hoqa
e Madhe/Velika Hoča and Krusha e Madhe/Velika Kruša
on Initiative for RECOM**

4.12.2010.
Rahovec/Orahovac, Kosovo

Agenda

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 10:00 – 11:00 | Opening session and introduction of participants
Introduction speaker: Dragana Milutović, Forum ZFD |
| 11:00 – 12:00 | Victims and Victim Family Members Expectations and Needs
regarding past
Moderator: Nora Ahmetaj |
| 12:00 – 12:30 | Pauza |
| 12:30 – 15:00 | Why RECOM?
Speaker: Shukrije Gashi, Partners Kosova

Initiative for RECOM Consultation Process
Speaker: Nora Ahmetaj

Discussion |
| 15:00 | Lunch |

List of participants

1. Mandush Bugari – her husband, son and brother-in-law's son have been killed.
2. Bademe Duarku – her husband, brother-in-law, uncle and six other wider family members have been killed.
3. Sendyze Bugari – her son has been killed.
4. Muradije Shehu – representative of a women non-governmental organization; a guest.
5. Habibe Eminaziri – her son (Xhemajl) has been killed.
6. Shyhrete Alisallahu – her husband has been killed.
7. Sheribane Isma – her son has been killed.
8. Emine Shehu – her husband has been killed.
9. Xhemile Sylka – her husband has been killed.
10. Drandafile Avdullahu – was wounded.
11. Hydajete Deliu – her husband has been killed.
12. Behije Hajda – her husband has been killed.
13. Zekeri Eminaze -
14. Luljete Bugari – her husband was killed
15. Nasibe Nurshaba – two of her children and her brother have been killed.
16. Mihrije Zllanoga – her husband has been killed – a martyr.
17. Fahrije Hoti – her husband has been killed and she is a representative of the association for missing persons in Krushë.
18. Avdije Duraku – representative of the association Gratë e Veja (Widowed Women), Krushë.
19. Meradije Ramadani – her husband and twelve other family members have been killed, representative of the association Gratë e Veja (Widowed Women), Krushë.
20. Velikić Svetlana – her brother has been killed.
21. Velikić Pepica – her father-in-law is kidnapped.
22. Majmarević Neda – her brother-in-law is kidnapped and her brother-in-law's son has been killed.
23. Stanojević Jasminka – she was kidnapped and her husband is kidnapped.
24. Kolašinac Tatjana – her father has been killed.
25. Milić Brankica – her father has been killed.
26. Manitašević Vesna – her brother has been killed.
27. Todić Stana – her father and brother are kidnapped.
28. Kazić Vesna – her brother-in-law is kidnapped.
29. Milenković Slavica
30. Nisrete Sakolli -
31. Pranvera Spahiu –
32. Sheribane Ukshini – her son has been killed.

Moderator: Nora Ahmetaj, CRDP

Dragana Milutinović - FORUM ZFD

Shukrije Gashi-Partners Kosova

Panelists: Dragana Milutinović, Shukrije Gashi

Interpreters: Besa Gashi, Ferid Teliqi

CRDP: Nora Ahmetaj, Vera Malazogu, Arbër Hajrizaj

TRANSCRIPT

NORA AHMETAJ: Good day and welcome.

Firstly, I would like to inform you that our work today is being filmed, but it doesn't mean that it will be broadcasted on any public TV station or somewhere else. This is only to record our work today and to make a transcript for us to know what we have discussed, the reason why we have come here. Therefore, although you see a camera, it is not a TV camera and the reason we have audio is us to hear each other better and to record it, because simply we need it for documentation. Hence, it is not about anything else, there is no misuse, it will not be given to the media and it will not be broadcasted.

We have interpreters as well and through the headphones you can follow everybody's discussion by simultaneous interpretation. Chanel number 1 is for Albanian and number 2 for Serbian. Labinot will take care of this (Recording stops).

Before we begin with the discussion I ask you to introduce yourselves. And, now I pass on the floor to Dragana Milutinović, she comes from a German organization "ZFD Forum" and then to my colleague Shukrije Gashi from "Partners Kosova".

DRAGANA MILUTINOVIC: Good day! ... I am from a Government organization, Forum ZFD. Forum ZFD is in Kosovo since 2000 and since 2008 we work on a project called "Facing the past". Except this, that our project, what we do, supports the initiative which is about facing the past... we also initiate some new, such as the Intellectuals Forum and we link the subjects with other factors which faced the past and our quarterly magazine.

The process of facing the past is very difficult. We understand it as a two way process, it is a process where the focus is given to providing help to people which were directly touched by violent conflicts. So, it includes criminal prosecution, determining facts, narration, and work on rights, whilst on the other side the spotlight is on initiating public hearings, how the societies remember the violence in the past. ... stories on victimization, respecting heroes, politicization of history and many others.

So my colleague and I are trying to start an initiative which will be dealing with this subject. We are working in starting some cultural initiatives, one of these we did in a theatre performance; it is a forum theatre, a theatre from Laplje Selo and Art-polis from Prishtina. Unfortunately we did not have the opportunity to come to your region, but I hope we will. Then we organize other activities... So you were? Then I am glad that I hear this, so we will have the opportunity to come to your region as well, with Art-polis and Forum theatre as well.

On the other side we organize some initiatives and some discussions. We want to talk in public about the things which happened. So this is something Forum theatre works on and I am very glad that I was invited here today, to be with you and to hear what you have to say on this topic. Thank you!

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you Dragana! Dear, since the two of us represented ourselves and since we are gathered here to talk about very sensitive topics, topics which affected you and know that some of you find it very difficult to express yourselves, and I am very much aware of this, but I am also aware that this issue is going on for 12 years now, participating at conferences, being interviewed by journalists, foreign investigators, and this has become boring, since the majority of you are expecting information, most of you want to know who kidnapped your bellowed ones or who was the executor which murdered your bellowed ones and this is a very sensitive topic, whilst I for myself don't know how it feels to have someone in your family murdered, however since I am working on these topics for several years then in some way I try to be empathetic, to face what you have experienced.

I ask you, since I already requested you to tell us who are you, where do you come from, who was killed in your family, so I want each of you to introduce yourself in a way, to tell us your first and last name, where do you come from, from which village and who in your family was killed or is missing. If it is hard for you to talk we understand, but it would be nice to know these things and if each of you could present some the facts, although it is difficult, whilst we will understand as well that this will be hard for you.

So, are we going to begin, Shuki, you? Please?

SHUKRIJE GASHI: Good morning! I am Shukrije Gashi. I am an activist for human rights since the early nineties. I am the director of the Centre for Conflict Management – Partners Kosovo and I am involved since the beginning with the initiative for making a Regional Commission RECOM. I hope that today together with Nora and all the others we will succeed in expressing something, which is painful for sure, it is not easy to do this, but it is better to uncover things, to heal them instead of closing them inside and passing them over to other generations.

Later we will talk more. I believe that it will be an atmosphere where we will tend to understand you and feel compassion with you; we should try to understand each other and continue this process slightly easier. Thank you!

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you, Shuki! Please then!

MURADIJE SHEHU: Good day to everybody! I am Muradije Shehu. I am the representative of the Women non-governmental organization and I am here as your guest. I wish you a nice day and good work!!

HABIBE EMINAZIRI: As-salamu alaykum! I am Habibe, Xhemajl's mother. He was killed in Dubrava. Inshallah all of them are martyrs, may God make it so.

SHYHRETE ALISALLAHU: I am Shyhrete Alisallahu and my husband was killed.

SHERIBANE ISMA: I am Sheribane Isma. My son was killed.

EMINE SHEHU: I am Emine Shehu, my husband was killed.

XHEMILE SYLKA: I am Xhemile Sylka from Rahovec; my husband was killed in 1998.

DRANDAFILE AVDULLAHU: I am Drandafile Avdullahu from Rahovec. I was wounded in 1998.

MANDUSH BUGARI: I am Mandush Bugari, my husband is killed together with my son and my brother-in-laws son..., here I take part in this event.

IDAJETE DELIU: I am Hidajete Deliu. My husband was killed at the beginning of the war.

BEHIJE HAJDA: I am Behije Hajda; my husband was killed in 1998.

SINDIZE BUGARI: I am Sindize Bugari. They killed my son.

LULJETA BUGARI: Luljeta Bugari, they killed my husband.

NASIBE NURSHABA: My brother is killed whilst my daughter and son were wounded at the beginning of the war in Rahovec.

MIHRIJE ZLLANOGA: My name is Mehrije Zllanoga, my husband is a martyr. He was imprisoned during the war, they killed him in Nish prison and they brought him back two years later. They took him in 1998 and in 2000 they returned him dead, he is a martyr.

ADVIJE DURAKU: I am Advije Duraku, from Krusha e Madhe. I represent the Organization of Widowed Women.

FAHRIJE HOTI: Good day! Greetings to everybody! I am Fahrije Hoti. My husband is killed and missing, since 1999. I also represent the Organization for Missing Persons in Krushë.

MERADIJE RAMADANI: I am Miradije Ramadani, from the village of Krushë e Madhe. 12 members of my family and my husband were killed in the war. I am a member of the Organization of Widowed Women from Krushë.

VELIKIĆ SVETLANA: I am Svetlana Velikić from Rahovec. My brother was killed in 1999.

VELIKIĆ PEPICA: I am Velikić Pepica; my father-in-law was kidnapped in 2000.

MAJMAREVIĆ NEDA: I am Neda from Rahovec, my brother-in-law was kidnapped in 1999, and he is still missing. His son was killed in 1998 as well.

STANOJEVIĆ JASMINKA: I am Stanojević Jasminka, kidnapped in the polyclinic in 1998 and then released, while my husband was kidnapped in 1998, mother of two kids, from Rahovec.

KOLAŠINAC TATJANA: I am Tatjana Kolašinac, from Rahovec. My father was killed in august 1999.

MILIĆ BRANKICA: I am Brankica Milić from Velika Hoča. My father was kidnapped in 1998 and murdered. He was found in 2006.

MANITAŠEVIĆ VESNA: I am Vesna Militašević from Velika Hoča. My brother was kidnapped on 19 October. He was found dead in 2003.

TODIĆ STANICA: I am Todić Slavica; my husband was kidnapped in 1999. My father was kidnapped as well.

KAZIĆ VESNA: I am Kazić Vesna from Rahovec. My brother-in-law was kidnapped in 1999 and is still missing.

SHAIP SHALA: No names will be published in the newspapers, due to sensitivity.

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you! Honorable ladies and women! I have to tell you something, and to be honest about this, because I have a lot of experience since I worked a lot with the victims, not only in the countries of former Yugoslavia and not only with conflicts and wars which happened here, but also at other crisis places in the world. The moment I decided to come to Rahovec to talk to victim wives, victim family members and missing person relatives of Albanian, Serbian, Roma, Bosnian and all other possible nationalities it was very difficult for me. Even now I am stressed, with all the experience I have and with all the preparations, I have worked with victims, and let me tell you last night I was restless and couldn't sleep all night, so I will try to make it as easy as possible for you to talk and I ask you to feel free and simply tell us about your grief, since the reason we invited you here is to

hear and see what are your needs. It means, even I myself feel great discomfort because it is not easy to hear that even 12 years after the war you don't know the destiny of your missing family members, whilst on the other side you whose family members have been killed want to know what is the name of the perpetrator.

I have to tell you it is very hard to work with your community, the one you work with, and it is very easy emotionally when you work for example with some other crisis, some other conflict, i.e. such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and when you go to interview victims from other nations, since you are less charged emotionally. Here it is different since it is my country and in a way I was here and we all know what happened and now the question is if we can overcome this and find the truth, so we can face the past in an easier way and continue the coexistence again. Yes, the truth, truth which bothers us and the truth we want to research and know, it is the truth which forced us and a great number of non-governmental organizations throughout the region, respectively civil society, to search for another way, another mechanism how to look once again on the war crimes and find out the truth who did what, and to find the missing as well. What we have been doing for the past 3 – 4 years during the consultations throughout the region and in Kosovo since 2008, and at the same time we will try to explain why we are here today. It means when we invited the members of the civil society, we invited all parts of the civil society in Kosovo and asked them regarding the creation of Regional Commission for Truth, and among them were family members, war victims associations, associations for the missing. We have talked to the Women Groups, Women Network; we talked to the youth, philosophers, intellectuals, artists, psychologists and everybody else who is a part of the civil society, except the politicians. So simply put, we invited everybody to hear their opinion regarding war crimes and what are the needs and what we could do so the truth on what happened here would be uncovered.

However, to be more precise, when we invited the Kosovo Women's Network some other organizations and victims associations were invited as well, but there were only a few victims family members, or to say none. There were maximum two or three. And seeing that we had suggestions from women, respectively, how we should cope with the past, I thought it is important to get out into the field, that we ourselves should come to the victim families, we should go to those areas where there was war and ask them door by door or like this to have you all together here and to listen to your needs. In other words it didn't seem logical to me that the Women Network or those women that were there and talked that they talked about your solicitude, about your grief, since they were not the voice of the all victim families throughout Kosovo, regardless of the fact that it was an NGO Network. Therefore we decided to come once again to the places where there was war, places where are the most numbers of killed in Kosovo, places where are the most of kidnapped and to ask you once more what are your needs, your concerns, your requests. But why are we asking you about your concerns and your needs? Because, as I said earlier, there was an idea from a group of non-governmental organizations in the region: Serbia, Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Slovenia to create a Regional Commission which would be fully independent, but a commission to be created by states/governments only. The states have the mandate to create this commission. To be able to create this commission, I will try to confine myself in using this word, because maybe it looks to you as unclear, we were out in the field asking victims' families, associations for the missing and other organizations which cover human rights why do we need such a commission and why in the whole Balkans, in the former Yugoslavia region state relations are still tense. Why are they tense? Or, why are the

relations so bad? Because nothing was said about the past and nobody was dealing with the past, since out of 36,000 missing persons in entire Yugoslavia, most of the number is in Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo, still nothing is known about 16,800 persons. 16,800 persons are still missing in entire former Yugoslavia. Most of them are in Bosnia and as you can see every day there are new mass graves, there are in Croatia, in Kosovo. In Kosovo we have 1,840 missing. Out of 1,840 missing 1,440 is Albanian, 500 Serb and Bosnian or Roma. The smallest number is of Roma but they are not registered or very few of them are registered.

This means, how we can have good relations with each other, neighbor with the neighbor when we still don't know where are our beloved ones that are missing, are lost or are killed. It means that we still didn't find the truth. Yes there are countries in the world that went through the same process and those countries concluded that these commissions had to be formed so the unbiased truth could be determined. These commissions and the commissioners that are going to work in these commissions will be elected by you only. You are going to propose people with credibility and they will be the ones to search for the truth once again, but not politicians.

Not to be too long and not to go into details, the thing I will bother you later about, and we want to give you more information I would like to show a film to you, a film about Morocco. Morocco is a country in North Africa where a lot of murders and kidnappings took place. The film is only 20 minutes but the reason why we will talk about this commission is when it was decided to be created the king of this country decided to create this commission and to find the victims and their remainings, and they were found, they were found and there was a lot of success about this. We want to explain you once again and to see it in the film how painful the process is, but this commission, when it becomes operational, is much unbiased and the victims or their family members are invited to testify again. But this commission, I have to stress, is neither a court, nor the people in it are government people, or lawyers, they are not policemen, nor prosecutors. This commission is fully independent and the commissioners and the people to be selected for it will be chosen by the civil society. Later we will explain you the mandate of this commission and how can this commission force the country to find the truth. To not bother you longer let us see the film and then we will continue with the debate and other information.

I apologize for not stressing it earlier. The film is in Croatian but below you have the subtitles, you can read them (the film is played).

NORA AHMETAJ: I apologize but it seems it is too cold in here. Believe me, not once but many times we asked to warm this area properly and sadly these are the conditions in Kosovo. Arbër, can you please take care of this with the staff!

I don't know how much you could understand the film...I mentioned it several times, you could see the witnesses, victims, how they testified and what happened to them. You saw how it is done. As you could see the commissions don't take the role of the courts, but are fully independent. Several words about which we are going to talk today were mentioned. Reparations were mentioned, and as well the truth and research of crimes. The question rises and I believe that most of you are wandering why you have gathered us here today, what is the job of this commission, why should we now give our opinion on the commission, governments form this commission, is our opinion as an opinion of the civil society, as women and victim families taken into account. This is the reason why we invited you. Exactly, since your needs, your problems should be reviewed by this commission when it will be formed, and we hope it will. We hope that the governments in the region will find a

joint language and form this commission. And now if they are going to do it by will or by force is another question, but believe me the pressure of the international community to form this commission will be very high.

Why? I said earlier that we still have 16,000+ missing persons. Victims, everywhere, not only in Kosovo, the victims are numbers. They are still not registered properly by first and last name in governments, governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations; they are not registered properly, although there are many attempts to register them. In other words, it is being manipulated with the victims very often. It is manipulated at political or party elections. They are manipulated whenever they need something, governments, political parties or when somebody else needs something they feel very easy to go to the victims and ask what they are in need for. And as I said relations between the governments are not so good. But this commission doesn't deal with state relations. But the courts in these countries do not cooperate. The courts between Kosovo and Serbia, Serbia and Croatia, Croatia and Bosnia do not cooperate. There are Kosovars who cannot go to Serbia. There are Croats which cannot go to Serbia. There are Serbs that cannot go to Bosnia and Croatia and until these relations don't ease, don't slacken this issue cannot be overcome. These relations will be regulated when they are enlightened, when the truth comes out.

Why should victims first and last name be known? Why should penetrators first and last name be known? When we say my son was kidnapped we still don't know who kidnapped him. We are talking with incorrect parameters. I know. I've heard that it was John Doe, but very often their first and last name is not known.

Few days ago I had the opportunity to talk to a EULEX official and I thought that the international community has all the information, or at least we think so. And she is a EULEX official working with missing persons for 13 years in Kosovo. Consequently, she knows the country very well she even speaks local languages. She gave me one interesting detail which surprised me. Well I told her that I consider myself a bit more informed that she was since I am in a place where I can have more information, she responded that it is not only the governments of Kosovo and Serbia that do not cooperate in regard to taking information on missing persons or about mass grave locations. There are even international organizations which don't offer such information. It is UNMIK, NATO, the Hague Tribunal who possesses the information or, for different reasons do not cooperate. In other words, it is not the fault of one or the other party, but almost all sides have information and this information is not coming out. I was thinking that governments were mainly to be blamed for the lack of information.

Here you heard a word – reparation. And when we translate this word – reparation, to a more simple language it means compensations to be given to the victim families, for the killed, martyrs, or the missing. These commissions when they are formed will also have to deal with giving the possibility to the victims, in financial or symbolic compensation

What is financial compensation? I believe that the majority of you, when we start the debate and each of you start talking about your concerns and I believe that you will get symbolic amounts from the state for the killed or missing. I would like to know what is the symbolic amount you get, but we can talk about this later. However when this commission achieves to independently research the crimes once again, and issues the name and surname of the perpetrator and where the crime was committed and forces the governments to give information on the missing, then the government or the party being accused for committing a crime is – obliged to compensate the damaged party, in other words, financial compensation.

What is symbolic compensation? Except this compensation or the financial reparation we have symbolic compensation. With the word symbolic we mean when the victim faces the perpetrator – the criminal, or sometimes when the governments take over the duty of apologizing to the victims, saying: we apologize for the crimes and damage we caused to you. And sometimes, for the victim it is a lot more meaningful when the perpetrator apologizes than receiving financial compensation. It happened that with the victim families, at the last consultations we had with the religions community, the representatives from all religions in Prizren were there, even the Jewish community and there was a victim family member, from Suhareka, who had 5 members of his family missing and he said something, and we are learning a lot from these consultations, he said: “When you talk about financial reparations or these financial compensations, then”, he said: “you offend me!”, “But why we asked him”, and he said: “because to tell me that I won’t give you your beloved ones bones and instead I will pay you for the damage”, according to him, “is horrible, is offensive”. He said: “For me it is important to know the grave to know where the bones of my beloved ones are, or where my killed family is.” So, this is the reason. You know what you want, and much better than we do. Victims need their dignity back, the dignity they don’t have at the moment. Victims are not just a part thrown here and there – just to leave you there discriminated and nobody has the time to take care of you! Victim families are a part of the society which should be treated not only by the government but every citizen of a normal, modern and democratic country.

And we hope that when we saw it in Kosovo, and I talk about Kosovo mainly, although we know the situation in the region, in Vukovar, Sarajevo, even in Serbia and Slovenia, in Macedonia and Montenegro and in all these consultations we have participated and we see that victim families have almost the same needs, the same problems. But, to see that we are not the only ones in this world we have invited a lot of people who have suffered similar violence in other countries and other continents. There were people from Argentina, from the Latin America, South Africa, and other countries, people that have undergone similar trauma like we did, to tell us how we should overcome them. And seeing that we still don’t have information on 1,800 missing persons there is still no cooperation between the members of the civil society, seeing that the victims are afraid, there is no place for them to ask for solitude, they are tired out with the humanitarian organizations, they are tired out with journalists... this initiative has started the initiative for which we are giving our best for 4 years now with the civil society, it seems to us like to say that it is the last chance where we can ask for accountability from all governments and tell them: “Do you know where the mass graves are, where we can find the missing or the killed”, we should pressure them and we hope that this commission will somehow push them to give these information, not only in Kosovo but in other countries as well. And if the countries in the region do not agree to create such a commission then there is nothing for us to do. It is up to us to suggest it to them and if they accept it then to pressurize the governments and parliaments to accept the creation of such commission and then we shall monitor their work and we will observe if they are committed to do this thing properly

So the simple reason why we have invited you here is, first, if you already understood the essence of forming such commission on a regional level – will it be able to benefit us and does it look to you that it offers some hope, or you have entirely lost all your hopes of finding your missing, your family members, or you lost hope of regaining the dignity you had before, or you are going to gain a feeling or empathy you lost the moment you or your family

members were subject to violence. If you think that absolutely nothing will shed light on to you, even this commission, because you believe the truth will never come to light, there are so many good experiences in the world that were successful, as for example in South Africa, like the one you saw in Morocco, or in Latin America, however the circumstances in the Balkans were a bit different, the conflict or the wars took place in many places, not just only on one territory and if you think that there is absolutely no hope or you believe that something can be done still, I would like to open a debate and do not hesitate on this, to tell us about your thoughts or express your concerns, your needs, what you expect and what you don't expect. You can maybe be optimistic or even skeptical and to be absolute, we live our lives as long as we live, but we do not hope that something will come to life. However I believe that hope dies the last and we, as the members of the civil society should have tried all possible ways to come to the revelation of that truth and in some way even overcome it ... We cannot return the dead and make them live again, but to overcome it easier, to communicate with each other and when you know the truth it is a lot easier in a way for victim families to overcome it ...if you still believe that there is no chance or that Kosovo is a very small country or that the wars in the Balkans were a lot more brutal and complicated, I would still like to hear your thoughts and please talk without hesitation, and if it is hard for you to talk about the creation of this commission and it seems like something very abstract to you then start talking only what you would like to be done if you have missing persons in your families and what would you like to know if your family members have been killed, and again what would you like to know, how to react, or should the country have done something more for you, should the institutions have done something more for you, or even the population and therefore I ask you to share your thoughts with us.

I ask you to first present yourself!

FAHRIJE HOTI: Yes! Fahrije Hoti, missing persons' representative. It is a big plus for the region of Rahovec Municipality to have such a meeting since we honestly don't know the exact numbers of missing and killed persons in Rahovec Municipality. There is no proper office for war crimes research. I was at the Sarajevo meeting, where the missing persons issue was discussed, and where we had several commissions from different countries. It is only Municipality of Rahovec, whom I represented and I am from Krusha, Rahovec does not have any adequate information on war crimes in Rahovec and in the municipality of Rahovec. Nothing at the municipal level, at the NGOs level, or families.

Statistics show that there are 900 missing persons in the Municipality of Rahovec. I asked the municipality officials for the exact numbers, they don't have them.

In our village there are 226 killed persons and 68 are missing, not found yet...

NORA AHMETAJ: Two hundred and ?

FAHRIJE HOTI: 226 killed and 68 missing, unidentified. The ones who should work with these families are NGOs of course, not only for their personal benefit only, but for the people who lost a lot more, in Rahovec Municipality almost nothing was done about this.

I would only like to commend your work. I am invited for the conference in Prishtina on the 15th, where we will talk about this once more. I feel bad for the family members present here, that nobody has covered their statistics as to when their husband was killed, at what time, who kidnapped him, and to ask for answers from the people in their surroundings. Normally, truth should be established. What happened happened, it happened in 1999 for us as well as for the Serbian side. Regardless of that, we should sit again around the table and identify our problems and the persons who we really miss every single day.

Let me talk about my family a bit. At that time I was only 28, my husband went missing. I was with two small kids; I was also the same victim, a live victim. But I survived the war and lost my husband; I gathered my strength and started working for the sake of my kids. What hurts me is that 12 years after the war we want the people to be identified and their graves to be known. Let us leave indemnities aside because money means nothing for a dead human being. It would be a big merit for us if our children knew the whereabouts of their fathers, mothers or their relatives. This would be as an appeal for the municipality as well. I know that most of the invited – women from Rahovec, you didn't include so many villages, we have missing persons and victims in all villages of Rahovec Municipality. I have the full number – 900 missing persons in the Municipality of Rahovec, not Rahovec alone.

NORA AHMETAJ: What did you say, how many?

FAHRIJE HOTI: 900 in the Municipality of Rahovec. We don't have for the Hoqa municipality; we don't have for Brestovc, we don't have for Celina. We don't have for Bellacërka. All those mothers are faced with the difficulties of their killed and their missing. Who takes this responsibility? This should be the responsibility of the Municipal Assembly, NGO's to enlighten the missing persons' fate, and we shouldn't fall asleep and work for personal gain. To work with these people those we in great numbers work with. We can mention, we are 160 widows in Krusha, they await results from me, and they expect information from me, to bring this information to their families. Let us not represent the NGOs, let us not represent the Municipal Assembly just for their interest. Let us truly work since this is a sacrifice which we face every day. I greet you! Maybe I stretched it a bit, but this is what I had in mind to say.

NORA AHMETAJ: Fahrije, thank you very much! Firstly, we will organize consultations with women from other villages as well. Secondly, your words were mostly for municipal bodies. And if this commission is formed it will be at a state level and it will deal without prejudice in finding the victims and determining the truth for all victims, regardless of their ethnic background. So, since the accent was on the municipal bodies, almost similarly this commission should deal with this and should have a centre somewhere to deal with all victims, exactly because the municipalities didn't do their work properly, and even the NGOs didn't have the opportunity to do their job zealously due to lack of facts, so we believe that this commission will offer an answer. However, I gave myself the right to convert your request from the municipality level to the state level, but at the bottom line we address this request to the governments since it was them who should have dealt with this issue more zealously. Shuki, please!

SHUKRIJE GASHI: Once again I will introduce myself, so you will understand why I have come here. I am Shukrije Gashi, Director of the Conflict Management Centre, Partners Kosova. I listened to Mrs. Fahrije discussion and I believe it is a big contribution. Every word of yours, every detail you offer means a lot in determining facts and arguments which will contribute in creating this commission.

You have mentioned several times the municipal bodies, the municipality, but you also mention the civil society... I am pretty sure that there are weaknesses in the civil society, but there are great misunderstandings as well.

Civil society in Kosovo and the region, now I will talk about Kosovo, was given a great burden, a burden it carries in Kosovo even since before the war years. It is that the civil society was doing almost parallel jobs, being a civil society and the role of the state and the government as well. It was not easy, when I say civil society I think of Nora, Shuki, this lady

here and all the rest of us, to take on a burden which is not easy, it is not easy to get burden of these processes, absolutely not. Especially not for an issue like this one, transitional justice, facing the past, finding the missing persons, research. We are aware that being a victim is a great discomfort, it is something special, and it is undesirable, but we are also aware that with you coming here – all of you, regardless from which community you come from, is a great step, a success in understanding similar concerns, mostly mutual, for the fact that a victim is a victim, there is no other name for them, they cannot be defined differently. Therefore by only being here at this round table another step forward is made.

And believe me that for four years now we have felt the same as we feel today. It is very clear that whatever we do, however we act, we will never be able to get in your position, and we will not experience it in the same manner.

So, even though we know it is very hard, we ask you to give your best by helping us and yourselves we will achieve in helping to create the commission whose main tasks will be to put the issues on the horizon in a structured manner, to put them out.

I am very sure, and we are humans, we have our egos, our sensitivity, often it is a normal thing, it is a normal reaction to say – well the weight of my case is heavier.

I am pretty sure that the weight of the case cannot be measured. Each of you experiences your case the same, similarly hard. And I stress it again, I apologize, although it will look and if it looks like that, just say it: “Why, what does she want now with these speeches?” No, I am not and nobody is for that issue here. Simply, we in a very conscious way share the concern with your discomfort. And we consider that being at this table here and at all others that are to be organized we will achieve to get closer to each other, to get the truth out, to feel compassion because, first of all we are human, and we are not the ones who contributed to the bad, so we should approach this issue with pride. It is a success when we communicate with each other. And due to this I invite you to express yourself freely, without hesitation. There will definitely be nothing bad, no consequences, on the contrary – we will contribute to the issues and to revealing the truth, making a road, a platform where things will come to light and simply to discharge future generations from this burden that is upon them today. And as Nora said, we can never manage and nobody can ever return the persons who have gone missing. They do not exist today, not even in the past, but we should at least take a break dealing with accusations, or the future generations will accuse us. Therefore I sincerely ask you to be open-minded, I know it is very difficult to give us information and contribute, but only after sharing the information something could be done. If we keep the information the government, the civil society or anybody else will not be able to help us, nor you nor the process. Thank you!

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you Shuki! Go ahead! Please present yourself by name and last name!

MANDUSH BUGARI: I am Mandush Bugari. My husband my son and my sister-in-laws son are killed. Although we didn't know where they are buried or anything else, but I have been mistreated, and I cannot mention it since we are here in a friendly environment, I was questioned 3-4 times; why – you are a separatist, you are like this, and your husband is such. However I then, how you say, lost consciousness I was like blind, went through the police and they sent me to Prizren, they mistreated me. One saved me when I told this police commander in Prizren: you can very well know that my husband worked in “Zhitopromet”, at a silo, he was the kitchen chef, I said and until Friday my husband was at work, this is one, and I myself was to be imprisoned because: you are a separatist, you have this... I was taken

by the police in Rahovec 2-3 times. My husband was killed; I didn't know where he is. My son was murdered; I didn't know where he is. I didn't know where is my sister-in-laws son, however they were returned from the road with, whilst these were soldiers.

NORA AHMETAJ: They are still missing?

MANDUSH BUGARI: No. now I will tell you everything, how we went in line, how I was stunned, I lost consciousness that day, didn't know for fear. How my house seemed very empty, that we still had friends there, although they were returned from the road. We prepared food for the soldiers. I can stress it now and I feel sorry for them now since I came with them now. But when they took me to Prizren, only one saved me, I said it maybe already, you know Miroslav Gjinović well, my husband worked here. When I finished these relations of mine he told me: wow, so many peaceful people they murdered. Do you know, clasping his forehead, this SUP commander that here were plenty of people that mistreated me and the police commander started beating me, there was one Agim, Ilaz's son, I don't know what was his last name, he stood up and hit me. I told him Agim go ahead, there is no problem. I lost my husband, my son and my sister-in-laws son. And he was sitting there. He asked me what do you have...? Yes I said, but you should be ashamed because they helped you at the wedding. There they put me out, they told me wait on wire for two hours and I waited for the van to take me to Prizren. At that moment I lost consciousness, I fell and my vertebra moved. And then when I felt a bit better I went to Prizren, I gave the information, then my young boy, which was with me, 15 years old, and I had the children of my sons bride as well. He said: mom I love my dad because people say that they have cut his head...When he is found it is again a bit easier. Mentor; don't be with your mother like that, all my children were almost wasted with the bride and everybody. I told him come with mommy. It was snow when we went to Prizren. I tried to enter into police...Skender Jugosllavi or Jugosllav Skenderi was there, close to the court to let me in, he didn't let me in. I went wondering around the town, I have walked around, then again I returned from there, what to do, get a lawyer. I hired Adem Jetishi and I paid the fee. We didn't know the graves at all. Now the only problem was to find the grave and see the photo that the father was alive, does he knows like this, found, not cut to play ball with it.

NORA AHMETAJ: Did you find your husband?

MANDUSH BUGARI: Yes, I will tell you everything now. The snow was up to knees. I went I found him I hired this Adem Jetishi and he has worked before on these urgent cases, yes I believe they worked before, when there was no war. He said that you can only be a strong companion; I told him that I am like a stone, and I will bear everything. And when we went to court he said, my friend – so, are you strong, I said I am strong. Even my son lost consciousness and the lawyer... I saw the photos, although I couldn't say it immediately, even the ones I knew, they told me that this one is mine, outside these three of mine, and to see it with my own eyes I did see – the photo albums were there, although this lawyer was from another religion, he was shaking, and saying: even for me it is not easy that this happened. Yes I first found my son, I found my sister-in-laws son. I didn't find my husband and then they took me to the third floor, again to the commander. He said, my friend you are like this and this...Anyways, he told me you have this and this...I said it is not true and I told him I want to know where is my husband because my son is making me crazy. He went outside and when he went out he went to an office; he again had some photos in his arms, he just brought three photos and asked: is this him? It was my son, I told him, and yes this is my son. But they made me stupid also, for sitting close to the window; they lit a cigarette for me

to make me lose the trail, and for the other son. I said don't tell me because my son is very young he could even jump and we have been already for three weeks in the forest. Imagine going from Rahovec to Prizren on foot, all in circles. He said no, no it is his father. And I got so mad I just grabbed the photo – during, and looked at it. I said this is my husband, this is my son and this is my brother-in-laws son. Oh, good! He said, Mandush take them, remove them and take them to the cemetery. I said no, first I want to know where they are buried. When I went to Prizren I was at one corner, there are some pine trees close to the cemetery, and like a water line for the water. We went there I saw the grave and it everybody from Rahovec was there, some that are there, whom I identified were there. Only one was taken out...I returned again to the ones I saw. They told me Mandush within 24 hours you have to take out these victims. Yes, the bodies! I said I don't know really, I don't have six brothers-in-law; there were only three, three brothers. I said I cannot say anything, I have six brothers-in-law, I cannot say anything before I ask the in-laws. The thing was how to do this thing. I said I don't have money to take them. He said no, no – it is easy you just have to pay for one tractor and you put them on a tractor. I came and asked in the municipality and they told me don't take them out because they will not be counted as gone in the war. When I went to them to report I didn't dare to report because they told me – this lawyer, that you have to be a master. He said, you Bulgarja what do you want to do with these? I said, to tell you the truth I asked the imam, and imam told me that you shouldn't dare move them out of there because they might fall victims again, look now with some delusion, because with lust it is hard to lose the number. He said no, no you are with father Sheh, and do you know that. I said I asked him as well and he said...Now I had to answer who they are. I said I feel sorry, why are you mistreating me like this, I had them at the bus station and I said I am sorry father imam, and if I lie, those are the notes I have.

NORA AHMETAJ: I would like to know, do you get any type of benefit from the state, for the murder of your husband and the rest?

MANDUSH BUGARI: Yes, 130 Euros.

NORA AHMETAJ: And I would like to know the following. Are you satisfied with that, or not?

MANDUSH BUGARI: No. Why? I thank you as a team for coming to ask us. I for the 13 or 12 years since I lost my husband never ever anybody opened my door, although my house was destroyed, and that only it was not set ablaze. Yes, and today I am here, how they say, my son is missing, my sister-in-laws son is missing, husband and everybody, but I came here with pleasure because there is somebody asking me. Did you see it, when somebody asks you, shows condolence it is a bit easier, because you have somebody? I always suffered because nobody asked me about this. Nobody, nobody at all ever asked me about this, I walked alone, with my strength for my husband and for everybody. However, even the funeral that was done, we didn't have so much, but I think they gave their sole for life, because a person doesn't have a price. For a live person there is no price ever.

NORA AHMETAJ: So, you get money for your husband and your son?

MANDUSH BUGARI: No, the bride gets the money for my son, she is over there.

NORA AHMETAJ: OK. That's what I wanted to know.

MANDUSH BUGARI: Yes I get for my husband only, only like this, my house was destroyed as well, and I was also in some kind of organization, nobody ever asked me what your name is. Today, this is the first time I give this interview and my body is shaking, although my son was only 14, he was almost going mad, I took him to the doctor,

neuropsychiatric, to give him tranquilizers. I am very happy for your organization. I hope that from now on there will be more care. So, even those 130 Euros I get, I have such a disease diabetes, fat, tricyclides, heart, I had 2 heart attacks. That's it. Now I spoke for my son and my bride as well, for my sister-in-laws son. Because they returned to make food in the basement of my house. As you said the case of civilians. A civilian is a bit different, he has a soul. But these ours have been returned from the road, to make food for them. Because now I am talking contrary, it is like that, a bit different. And now, if they want to give an interview again, they may so for their son, because they are not aware of the happening, the bride is more informed but I don't believe she might talk or something since she is shaking too much and she is so young, this destiny. I couldn't cry for my husband on her shoulder or the shoulder of the other one.

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you! I would ask other women which have missing in their families, to hear their needs, what do you expect, do you believe that their bones will ever be found, from whom do you expect help, where did you ask for help, do you get any kind of financial compensation from an institution, what kind of information do you get, do you have any hopes regarding this, to find your family members remainings?

TODIĆ STANICA: My husband was kidnapped on 23.3.1999 in Brestovac...Now in march, it will be 12 years now, in March, I want to know and to find him, to know where he is, to bury him in his grave, nothing else is important to me, I only want to know where he is because after 12 years I do not know anything about him...?.

NORA AHMETAJ: And where did you look for him?

TODIĆ STANICA: All these organizations that were here I looked for him, I went to Gracanica, to Prishtina, everywhere. Nothing!

NORA AHMETAJ: So, no information about him?

TODIĆ STANICA: I don't have any information on him. I just want to know that, to bury him in his cemetery. That's all!

NORA AHMETAJ: Did you get any information...?

TODIĆ STANICA: Well, I didn't get any information, some, as some say, because I was not sure on them, when I don't know who they are what they are, I cannot blame anybody since I didn't see anything. But I know that he was kidnapped in Brestovac in 1999. It will be 12 years in March. No information, nor was he found, nor I know where he is, nothing at all.

NORA AHMETAJ: Well do you hope to find him?

TODIĆ STANICA: I do hope that is why I am here.

NORA AHMETAJ: And if such commission was to be created, to conduct research once again...?

TODIĆ STANICA: Yes, I want that. Just to know where he is and I want to lay him down in his cemetery. So, to know where he is.

NORA AHMETAJ: You saw the witnesses giving their testimony, how they were mistreated, and even while looking for the missing? Would you go in front of such commission and talk on similar issues, how your husband was kidnapped...?

TODIĆ STANICA: Well, I know that he was kidnapped, but I don't know who did it. How could I testify when I don't know who did it.

NORA AHMETAJ: OK! There are no witnesses who know about this, who saw something?

TODIĆ STANICA: There are. Ismet Berisha and Abaz Berisha, from Brestovac.

NORA AHMETAJ: They knew something about this?

TODIĆ STANICA: He went to them, they were best friends.

NORA AHMETAJ: And where are these two now?

TODIĆ STANICA: At home.

NORA AHMETAJ: And they don't know anything about this?

TODIĆ STANICA: Well no. I went to them to talk, but they don't give any information. They were like brothers. My husband and they were like brothers, Ismet Berisha and Abaz Berisha. They came to our house we went to theirs, at all times, we had good relations. But I cannot guarantee it was Ismet Berisha and Abaz when I didn't see it. Otherwise, they were like brothers, he went to them, tractor and from there all trace is lost.

NORA AHMETAJ: And for example if such commission was to be created, then these two would probably be forced to come and testify?

TODIĆ STANICA: Well, maybe they know where he is. Only they could know, for others I don't think so; Ismet Berisha and Abaz Berisha.

NORA AHMETAJ: And what about the International Red Cross?

TODIĆ STANICA: I went to the International Red Cross...

NORA AHMETAJ: Is he on the list of missing persons?

TODIĆ STANICA: He is placed everywhere. I was in Prishtina; I was everywhere, wherever I heard I went everywhere, but no trace. I just want to know where he is and to bury him in his cemetery. That's all. And the best witnesses are Ismet Berisha and Abaz Berisha. I know they went to each other, if they know they might help. I am not asking anything from them, just to know where he is.

NORA AHMETAJ: And what do they say when you ask them?

TODIĆ STANICA: Nothing! "We don't know anything about it". I went to talk to Ismet Berisha but he said I don't know anything about that. As it is, and I cannot say it.

NORA AHMETAJ: Because of this we believe it is very important that these witnesses come and say something about that.

TODIĆ STANICA: Of course it is important; I am in uncertainty for 12 years.

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you Mrs. Todić! Just one more question, you didn't inquire anything from the Kosovar institutions. Do you get any kind of social aid?

TODIĆ STANICA: For the moment no.

NORA AHMETAJ: You don't get anything for your missing husband? Did you ever ask for anything or not?

TODIĆ STANICA: I didn't ask for anything.

NORA AHMETAJ: Then from what do you live?

TODIĆ STANICA: I receive the minimal wage. My husband was employed; he was working to that day.

NORA AHMETAJ: OK! Thank you! I see you all are a bit tired. We will continue for a bit more, for ten minutes then we will have a break for coffee and then carry on with the discussion. Go ahead Fahrije!

FAHRIJE HOTI: I am talking again and I will get to the part of our village when in 1999 we were deported from our village and we were mistreated. I believe we are two parties here, their party and us. If we communicate amongst us, for example I have an information and she has an information on Ismet Berisha and we can contact and inquire about their case, but also if they have any knowledge on the 46 bodies from our village that were massacred and burned in 1999, on 26th at 6 o'clock they were murdered, on 27th put on trucks and thrown in Drin River and we were not able to find a single person to identify them who they are based on their clothes. And I believe all were local Serbs, there were no others, because I am from

another region and we never had contact with Serbs and the village of Krusha was ethnically clean, there were no Serbs, however there are rumors and people talk that they were from Hoqa, Rahovec, Brestovac, and other surrounding villages where Serbs lived. However, to establish a commission, to be eyewitnesses who really testify the truth both from our side and their side, then we could solve this problem and search for war crime cases both of the missing and of the killed persons. Therefore, as long as we have no communication between ourselves and we find those who have really committed crimes, again, from the Albanian and from the Serbian side, we can never find missing persons or missing victims. And if we keep this to ourselves, we don't tell the names, we don't brand the people, that this person in 1999 at that time there, when he was taken with 200 and plus people and was killed, then who will do it, the dead person will not stand up and say Fahrije killed me. Witnesses around who have worked, have killed people, have participated in the missing of persons and who have exact information, not fictive information, in cooperation with the commission that will be established can search and solve those problems, can shed light on the fate of the missing persons, can establish the war crimes, because, otherwise, this is how we make ourselves busy with conferences and for the period of 12 years, that I have been dealing with missing persons' conferences, we have had no results.

We keep contacts with the International Red Cross regularly, but we have a problem that at that time 46 corpses were burned and thrown in Drini i Bardhë River in Krusha and I personally saw these events and in 1999 and there was Robin Cook where there were 64 killed, from our village, I participated there as well when they were searched for. They were identified and buried, but we could never identify who were the penetrators.

I personally, and I said earlier I don't know Serbs, from Rahovec or Hoqa but these from Rahovec that used to live with them, and as Serbs as Albanians living with them, cooperating with them, since I don't speak Serbian, they are the linking bridge that should identify these bridges and come out with specific results: it has been done, people have been killed, the war is over, we are in the Kosovo state, we are not anymore in 1999. These events should be clarified, identified. Nobody can know more on the Rahovec Municipality than the Rahovec itself, with Hoqa and local Serbs that are there. Nobody else can identify these cases. I said I know one issue; it is good that she identified them by first and last name – Ismet Berisha and Abaz Berisha. If they from their side give one name, yes I know, NN person, had committed this crime in Krusha or in Rahovec, then they are those linking bridges on which we can debate to find and identify these cases.

I will get to the pension scheme for a bit, the rights we enjoy. There are two categories of pensions here. Those, the so called martyrs get 200 and something Euros. Those civilians, victims, as many of us do, get 135 Euros. We never had any other scheme or benefit, except this what we get from the state. Thank you! I apologize for making it longer, I expect somebody from you to speak.

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you, Fahrije!

(Recording is stopped)

(CD 2, recording starts like this)

XHEMILE SYLKA: It happen to me in 20 July 1998 when they killed my husband and seven peoples were killed there, if its necessary I will show the name who has been there, my brother –in – law Eqrem Sylka, Faik Sylka my husband's uncle, Qemajl Sylka, my husband Nesimri Sylka, son – in – law Haxhi Sharku, Baki Shehu, we are neighbors to them and Xhemajl Rama; all seven persons were killed on 20 July. I myself saw this event. We were

with one family, Shehu, in a house, when in basement they came, Serbian military, they took them out to surrender and that moment they killed seven persons. The one I knew was Nenad Matić, Serbian, son of Toma Matić, and another one whom I didn't know, but I heard of him by name, Goran, he was from Prizren. They killed them there and burned half of the corpses. Now some corpses are found and two corpses are not found yet, two victims, Faik Sylka and Baki Shehu, nothing is known of their fate yet. I feel very sorry. I really know who is the murderer of my husband, he was in Mitrovica in prison and how could he escape, get out of prison and not pay for his crime. It is really too much that the person cannot face his enemy, because they didn't pay for what they did. They also burned my houses. There were plenty of soldiers there, but I don't know their names, because I was at the place where it happened with kids, but we women were in one basement, and men on another so the women and children, we survived, and stayed alive, that day we stayed closed all day, without food for the children, without anything, during the night we went to the forest, left for Rahovec, because on that day we couldn't go anywhere, because our house is close to the police and therefore we were isolated very bad.

NORA AHMETAJ: Can I ask you a question?

XHEMILE SYLKA: Yes.

NORA AHMETAJ: Since you know who killed your husband, is it easier for you to find the killer, the criminal who murdered your husband and to imprison him and give him the sentence he deserves, or him to come and to apologize for what he did to you, for the pain he caused to you. What would you like?

XHEMILE SYLKA: He does never deserve the forgiveness. It is never possible to forgive Nenad, because I know, they were my father's neighbors, we went out together. He was a friend of my brother-in-law and so he destroyed our family, there is never pardon for him anymore. He should pay for the crime that he has committed, for the whole Rahovec, but also personally, I myself have a great desire for that since I lost my husband, I was left with small children from age one to eight, my children were small, I feel a lot but, I wonder why he cannot be convicted yet. We reported him, he was imprisoned in Mitrovica, I knew who he was but he escaped. They are allowing him to get away, to be free in foreign countries, but maybe he is hiding in Rahovec also, in his families, but I don't know where he is.

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you! I wanted to say since you live in a small community and hear different information, but the lack of communication, mentioned several times, creates a lot of confusion, because everybody knows and has its own pain. One of the ideas or experiences from other countries shows that when these commissions are created, their experience is those victims, and their families, like you, come out and speak publicly to tell one truth. Why we don't know that truth until now, because the lady said that she knows the witnesses, knows those who might know something about her missing husband, but they do not dare to speak, or don't know, or they act as they don't know. On the other side, you know who the killer of your husband is, but he is not in the prison. Why does this happen? It happens because every country pictures themselves as victim, or every society says I am a bigger victim than the other community victims. This is first.

Second, I will give an example. In 2008 in Prishtina this Regional Commission was initiated, the one we are going to speak about later, when it was initiated from organizations from all countries that came out of former Yugoslavia and decided to enter the coalition to give their proposals how to form this commission, there were more than 400 participants. For the first time after all the wars in former Yugoslavia. We had Serbian, Bosnian, Albanian, Croat,

Macedonian, Montenegrin victims from these countries. The conference – forum, was held in Grand hotel in Prishtina and I cannot explain to you now about the trauma, emotions that were present there by the victims and their families, which they showed, each of them spoke about what happened to them and their trauma, victims were from every community, from every country. And let me tell you this as well, I remember it, we had victims there, there were two families from Drenica; one of them lost a 13 old child and another woman, also a mother to killed children. When a mother of a victim from Istog started her testimony, her son was kidnapped – Serbian, and then later he was killed and she knew who kidnapped him because she saw them and she knew who killed him since she had the information, and she was a mother, wearing all black, she was crying. During the hearing she was crying and she could be seen at the screens, not only at the conference but there were TV sets everywhere in Grand and in the hotel lobby and the people heard her testimony. I cannot paraphrase her testimony to you and testimony of other victims, victim families what emotions she arouse in others who were not victims and there I myself noticed what does lack of information mean, because there, amongst us, in the Grand hotel lobby, there were plenty of Albanians and my friends which said: no, it is not possible that this happened, since we don't kill, we don't kidnap, we don't do these things. It is hard to take a certain truth and color it with it, and say we are like this and the others like that. The criminal has a first and a last name, the victim has a first and a last name. When these commissions are created, I will give you an example of South Africa. Victim hearings were broadcasted on state TV across the country. On those state TV stations, in every hotel, every house, all premises, every polyclinic there was a TV set and everybody listened to the victims, and they have suffered during apartheid. Only then, when every citizen of South Africa heard with his own ears and saw what the victim survived, only then a different truth came out, compared to the truth given by the state, the government, they were apartheid in United Kingdom also and they suffered a lot. We hope if this commission is created, then in all countries in the region, including Kosovo, let's say RTK will broadcast your testimony, the testimony of this lady here, testimonies off all victim family members. Only then the public will be aware. On the other side when we say that witnesses don't dare to come and testify they are afraid because there is no security and of course that they do not dare to and due to that when there is rule of law security exists for the citizens to come and testify. And if this commission is formed then a special witness protection system will be set in place. Witnesses to be secured or to be anonymous, or those to be questioned won't be named witnesses, their names will not be shown to the media. However, the victims that will come to testify, regardless of being a victim of torture, or being women, men or children, regardless if those are raped women and with those victims before the hearing, as you saw the old lady there, psychologists will work with those victims. It is not easy what we did today, by coming here and asking you to open your wounds and talk in front of each other and talk for things you maybe want to keep to yourself.

Due to this, we think that only when it is public, when the people have the courage to come out publicly and tell the truth, then it will raise public awareness and the children will say: stop, the truth is different; I didn't learn about this truth in the school, I didn't hear about this truth on the streets. Today's children live in two different worlds. Serbs, Albanians, Turks, and Bosnians and Roma don't live together. And there is no place where they can hear other stories.

We will continue. I see that concentration has gone down again, and then we go for coffee break. OK. Please!

NASIBE NURSHABA: I am Nasibe Nurshaba, from Rahovec. I was in the hospital and heard that we have this meeting so I came here. I thank you for coming. Until now we never had such events. This meeting now is the first. I have two children wounded in the war. Nobody never listened to me nor helped me. And my brother, he was single, is killed. Only this friend that spoke, they were here in Rahovec and they were caught and they killed some in Prizren and buried them in Prizren. They didn't allow us to go to the cemetery, the police would run to us, and whenever I went there, two – three times I went into water just to see the grave of my brother; he was single, 26 years old. 7 names were written, the rest were without names, 17 were not written. I was later caught 2-3 times and I still evaded the police when going to the graveyard, when they would not let me to go to the cemetery. I was saved two-three times from the people going to the cemetery. For the children wounded in the war I never received any kind of aid, for my son and daughter wounded at the beginning of the war in Rahovec. My children were wounded on 19 August at 09:30hrs. I was in Rahovec, at home. I left the house to look for relief for my children, we went to a house and there at 3 o'clock we were caught by the police, they wanted to kill us all. They were from Hoqa and from Rahovec, and now being sick I don't know their names, I forgot them but I know them all, those who were there. They ordered us out to shoot us and I left the cue to feed my kids once again. They asked me where are you going, I told them I want to feed my children once more and then you kill us. But we were saved that time, they called them on the phone since our neighbors were Serbs they asked them for our neighbors and they didn't kill us, they took us to another house. When they took us to this house they brought the doctors to take care of us, to check the children and from there they checked our children and wanted to kill us again, but again our other neighbors said to not touch us since we are neighbors, they took us down, and they took us there. There all people were lucky. For our luck some journalists from far away came and saved us. We were 200 men and 50 women; some were taken and sent to Prizren. They took all the men and released the women. I and my husband were released only because our children were wounded and to take them to the hospital, from hospital I went home and stayed and after two days I heard on TV about my killed brother and the names, they mentioned 17 persons. Immediately after I heard it on TV I went to the cemetery, the police caught me, I was dressed as an old lady and I said well I cannot speak, they returned me, they said this is not your street so I returned, I went there to see if it is really my brother's name and they said yes. The next day they brought me newspapers in Prizren and I recognized my brother's grave. The following day I went again to the street for the cemetery and I was returned by the police again, they didn't want to let me pass. Then after two days I went, police ran I went to water up to here, I was saved. On third time I entered the cellar sliding and I escaped, because I couldn't, my brother was single, and I couldn't stay there. And I took care of my two children, who were wounded, I went close to them and now for having two kids, nobody ever helped me, my daughter finished high school this year and tried to get into university, but they didn't accept her. She is wounded in the war, and is this OK? For the first and last time since I left the hospital in Prishtina just to be able to come to this meeting. Thank you a lot because I cannot speak more, I am going home since my son and my daughter is there. They get pension both, each of them 40 Euros. My son is 16 and my daughter 19 years old. Thank you, I am going home, my daughter wanted to come as well but they had to come and visit me for being sick, but I wanted to come here and thank you, and I say, until today nobody came to invite us for a meeting in such a way. Have a nice day!

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you for coming. Can we have a short break for coffee and then we will continue again. Shall we go for a break, for a coffee only and then we will continue. Please, since I can notice that you are tired and then we will continue.

(Break time)

NORA AHMETAJ: Let's start! Give her the microphone!

HABIBE EMINAZIRI: As-salamu alaykum! I am Xhemajl's mother, police took him, and we were at Samedin Dranoga's, 30 persons, 30 people. They took him there; the police lined them up, all of them, to kill them. I told them don't kill my son; kill me and not my son, since I have only one son. He didn't believe me and took him to prison. There in prison they gave one glass of water to four persons and one loaf of bread to eight persons to eat, in Prizren in Dubrava. They were in Lipjan as well. From Prizren we had this lawyer Bashkim Nevzati was his name. While for Dubrava was that Vokshi from Gjakova, maybe you know him. He told me, go and look for the clothes since today we are going to receive the corpse, look for the clothes to find your son. I went and I saw the clothes and my son. Then, after a week we took him home, for a week we went to Dubrava every day, the doctor washed my son with a water beam because the police said that NATO killed him, and it was not us. Now they washed him with a water beam, police found him and killed him, not the bombs. I left my jacket in doctor's hands. I was with Bashkim, my brother-in-law's son. He said just go and see your son. I said I don't want to cry, and I didn't cry at all, I went and saw my son whom that doctor washed. There were two soldiers in Dubrava which washed all corpses. Then after a week we took him, we buried him here, at home. But my son suffered a lot, he didn't have food. When I went to visit him after two weeks he said, what is wrong with you my son, are you sick. No mother, he said, there is no food to eat. Then he said buy me some cookies and bring them to me. And then when I was starting to eat I thought about my son who didn't have food to eat, I felt very bad, very hard. I wanted to drink water; my son was without water I felt very bad, very hard. He was imprisoned in Prizren, in Lipjan once and then they killed him in Dubrava. When I was in Prizren, with a finger, police didn't want to take me to him we talked quietly, he didn't want...because there were police in front, behind, they heard what we were talking. So. They beat him a lot; he had blood in pajamas, on the jeans, on the shirt. His skin clang to his shirt, on skin they've put iodine. Now I took that leather, smelled it since it smelled like the shirt of my son...I noticed the shirt with the leather, the shirt with the back and it smelled on iodine they have treated him with over there. I hope he is a martyr may God make it so; I hope all of them are martyrs, and who made him miserable, who had beaten my son and all of them, let God do as he pleases. I wouldn't return with bad but I hope that God will, may God make it so. I don't; but I hope God does punish them all. My son stayed without food, water. Yes, he was very nice. I told Savić, the policeman, I have one son, here take me, and don't take my son.

NORA AHMETAJ: Did you bury your son?

HABIBE EMINAZIRI: Yes, he was there for two months and a half, after two months and a half we brought him here. Look they gave me this book for my son, Xhemajl. Here is the paper when I brought him and when I buried him. Here, here are these letters as well. Look what son I had. He was 22, he was single. It was very hard for me. Look, here it is written since I am uneducated. Look my son was 22 he was innocent.

(Short stop in recording)

NORA AHMETAJ: I feel sorry since it looks that you are harassed by this, when you open your wounds and show your suffering, but in a way I believe that you are taking out all this

bad stuff from you and we hope that we can do something to find the criminals which committed these acts and find those who are not amongst you anymore and are still missing. I don't want to bother you about the agenda now and I pass the floor to Shuki, to explain you a bit more why we think that those answers which you are looking for can be offered after this commission is created. I believe Shuki will be a bit shorter than me since I bored you a bit with information, and then we will pass the floor to each of you. For the ones who didn't talk yet to give your opinions as well. Thank you!

SHUKRIJE GASHI: The topic which I have to present here today is titled: Why RECOM, it means why a Regional Commission should be formed.

We are witness to cases and issues which we heard today from you and only these few cases today and how they impacted us. If these cases, as today, for example, in the near close future are not put on paper, they will not be registered and nobody will deal with them seriously, and in this case it is the countries, these cases will diminish. With these cases diminished the truth will be forgotten and a truth which is forgotten is destined to repeat. And to disallow repetition of such truth with such pain and killing of people, to not repeat in history commissions should be established.

For this reason the civil society in all countries of former Yugoslavia decided to take over the duty to push forward the process of establishing the Regional Commission. At the moment, in regard to the conviction of penetrators it is only The Hague Tribunal dealing with it, and local courts from time to time. But this is not sufficient, it is not enough since, as Nora mentioned earlier, there are still more than 16,000 missing victims. Even for those victims that are found, the penetrators have not been convicted yet.

All this has pushed us, the civil society, to do everything we can do to awaken the consciousness in our surroundings that a body should be established, which will push this process forward. By knowing, it means, that for establishing this commission factography is important, then to be able to create such factography, or to make it, it is essential that we and you, all of us speak, especially the ones directly touched by the war.

Some time ago on TV I saw two Serbian police officers who have testified for crimes committed in Mitrovica surroundings. And I remember very well that one of them said like this: I feel obliged to say today about the truth for some of my fellow policemen which killed this and that, he mentioned them by first and last name, Albanian from the surroundings of Mitrovica. And why? Because I am a family person, I am a parent myself and I didn't want and I don't want in front of God and my children to hide a certain truth. I don't want to die because I am not able to sleep properly for some years now.

And for me this means a lot, but it should mean a lot for all of us. It means this is an example of the human aspect, and humanitarian, and religious that we have to release ourselves from something which burdens our soul, life and will burden the generations to come. And the way to achieve it is by establishing a commission.

Why RECOM Commission? Because a range of cases has been mentioned so far, information has been distributed, but if all that is not officially stated in a structural way, then there always appear tendencies to change them, to be given another shape, to increase, to falsify. Therefore, creation of a commission is needed which will be dealing with proving, confirming of the cases and also, due to the fact that the war occurred all over Yugoslavia, there are similarities everywhere. Apart from that, perpetrators of these criminal acts often were the same people, hereupon this is precisely the reason why RECOM - a regional commission should be created, so that family members of missing persons, of the victims, of

war veterans, which means all the groups that have been mostly attacked can come to the commission and testify for war crimes.

Why RECOM? ... also for the reason of the compilation of a register of all the victims and the missing persons so that once and forever manipulation can be hindered, as one of the participants already mentioned before and told us that she sometimes receives information that her husband and son are somewhere and that she hopes for their return some day.

Another reason why this commission should be established is the creation of a platform where you, all of you that were directly touched by the war, have a safe space to tell your words, without hesitation, without fear that something will happen to you or something bad will happen to you. The war was yesterday, we can say yesterday, due to the fact that yesterdays wounds are still with you, therefore it is important that they are taken out, to come to the surface and you have to be sure that you will not be helped by anybody else more than you are going to help yourself. You will heal psychologically, in the soul: I did this human act for the benefit of my soul, for the piece of conscience in front of God, the truth and in front of my children, in front of new generations we are going to leave behind. So, it is good today and every other day to set you free from the burden that the case shouldn't be told. If my father was the one who committed the crime, my brother committed the crime; I will put them to surface, because crime brings crime and nothing else. Therefore, we should do this and help the establishment of a commission which will help the entire region to exchange information, to bring out the truth, but this also depends on respective governments, in former Yugoslavia and not on the civil society

Another reason why this commission should be established is adding or increasing the support of respective governments for establishing this commission. Governments are the ones, I want to say states and governments are the ones that can help in making this commission. But, as Nora said earlier, since the relationships between the states in the region are much tensed now, the governments are not ready to open such a debate yet, but also for other reasons there are still postwar circumstances, and it is still too early. However, we and you should get up to speed and do something because the time passes quickly and if we are going to be silent, the cases will not be known, nothing will happen and the ones who committed criminal acts will stay unpunished. So, we should come to speed and take steps to find the perpetrators, to bring them to the justice and them to get the deserved penalty.

I am pretty sure that this will be done as well, but you probably will not be satisfied with this only, because it doesn't come back, the ones who died cannot return. But, I say to relieve the burden from the generations to come.

For years it has been talked about Ukshin Hoti and his sister has been hassled that her brother was here or there. So it is good to establish a group which will deal with this issue, it will do it in a respective way by registering cases and the information will not be scattered, information will be full and as such will help in solving the case and finding the perpetrators and convict them. Otherwise, we will never achieve to do anything. Therefore, it is good that all of us and you, if you know who committed those crimes, you except the personal experiences from the subjective perspective that all of us, if something happened to me I am sure that I will be directly subjective, although I know that my father, my brother committed crimes, it is in human nature to not blame your own, but we should turn to conscience and act as those two Serbian policemen did, by testifying about their colleagues for the benefit of future generations.

So, RECOM will be a body or an organization which will be well structured, it will have all the mechanisms which are linked to collecting facts, their verifying, their finding and the cases will be solved.

As we are gathered here today and with God's will tomorrow this commission will be established, you will do the same just in a more structured way in telling your cases to help the truth. This is all. There is a lot more, but I don't want to tire you because you have all the information on paper. I came here more to be a voice which will support you morally and spiritually. I was not touched directly, but I have to mention that I was a political prisoner earlier, as a student, it means I was imprisoned at that time, and while I stayed in prison, and although Yugoslavia was known as a democratic state, during the time while I was imprisoned my boyfriend was killed, and he could have been even my husband now. In other words, I also suffered as you did and many years passed and since then I never ever hated the Serbian nation or any other nations. It is the governments that commit crimes and bad behavior and even today in these days we should look at each other as humans, to understand your and our concerns and not to hate the majority because a certain government, a regime commits such crimes.

Simply, I am here as moral support to be compassionate with you and together with Nora to encourage you and all others to speak here today, to become the voice of your truth. Nobody can become a greater lawyer for your problems, concerns and cases than you yourself. Thank you!

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you Shuki! If we were to follow the schedule we should give you some more information on the process flow for the idea of founding this commission, but I see that many of you have a need to speak, express yourself and to tell us about your suffering and at the same time I would like to ask you if you already understood if it is a good idea or not the creation of such commission, then I would like you that as you speak to tell us if you see any perspective if this commission is going to deal with victims suffering mainly; do you think that some solution for it could be made. Maybe I would start from here by order, all women which feel that they should talk may talk, but since there is a lot of us, I would like to ask you to be careful about the time, do not make it too long and on the other side, those women who don't want to talk because they feel bad, have the freedom to not talk and nobody can pressure them or order them to talk without their will. So, I would start and since this side was less active we will rotate, and I would start from this side to talk I and ask who wants to take the floor. Vesna, do you want to say something? Who is Vesna? Please!

VESNA KAZIĆ: I am Kazić Vesna, my brother-in-law was kidnapped. Now, since he has no wife and children, no parents, my husband went to all organizations and I don't know where else, they know Tanja, Jasna and these other women. I am here for the first time. I feel some stress. I will now start how it went, or I would say now since I am for the first time here, earlier we knew where he was and nobody wanted to help, and now when we don't know where he is everybody is asking to help. Initially we knew on 2 July when my brother-in-law was kidnapped. He worked in the vineyards, how they call it up there, he was picking grapes and everything... He had a lot of Albanian friends, and Serbs and all. He called them "fish", "fish" because he was deaf-mute. And we told him don't go that day, on 2 July, but he went. He told everybody but we thought that nothing will come of that. We told the Dutch, we knew where he is that day; he was in the centre of the town, sitting for an hour. All people from Rahovec saw him and told him to go home but he didn't want, he was waiting for one Albanian to exchange fish cans for cigarettes and to buy some vegetables. At that moment a

car came – a red Ferrari, I don't know what type was it. It was a guy from a village and they took him. From that day onward we heard that he works in the vineyards and that then they sleep in basements and like this. We had all the information, where he is. And we told the Dutch, they couldn't do anything. After a few months it was, there was an Albanian prison, there were 3 Roma, 2 Albanians and 1 Serb. When the Albanians had a fight between themselves KFOR interfered, found those people and transferred them to Mitrovica. We heard about this since I was working for CIMIC as a German language interpreter, he used to come with me we had satellite phones. We had the right to use them for two minutes, once in two weeks, we didn't call our family but we called Mitrovica and we gave information and pictures about this to mister Kan, we all know him, if you also know him I don't know, he was black – mister Kan. We gave him photos and everything, he saw him that he was in Mitrovica. He couldn't speak, using his arms or legs, I don't know how and he came to me, he said he is there just waiting to go and pick him up, pick him up and that... When we called Mitrovica prison we introduced ourselves, since we all speak Serbian we don't know what nation is... Is Kazić Siniša there, I believe he signed, on that he didn't have his identification card and when we finished our conversation he said that it is Kazić Siniša, of course come and pick him up. Well, when we said what nation we are, we are from Rahovec but we are afraid to come... He said why are you afraid to come; now it is easy. He says we are in an enclave, we are Serbs. The phone was hung up since then, probably from Mitrovica some our people and relatives went to Mitrovica and said that there is no trace or sign of him. We knew that he is in an Albanian prison. They thought it was Serbian, that it doesn't matter, but they didn't know that he is Serbian, and when they heard he was Serbian, maybe to leave it secret, I don't know why, and from then all traces about him are lost. I hope he is alive, I hope he is well, like everybody. I don't lose hope. I wouldn't like to be in any place, I am just a sister-in-law, and it is very hard to you. I wouldn't like to be and to my worst enemy to wish something like this, just that. We are everywhere, we knew everything and now they ask for help. How can this be helped I don't know. I thank you in advance! I apologize! This is all!

NORA AHMETAJ: And when did you for the last time...get info about him, on which year?

VESNA KAZIĆ: In 2000 for this.

NORA AHMETAJ: Ten years from this... you don't know anything?

VESNA KAZIĆ: No! I apologize once again. They called Maja about this in Belgrade. A journalist, some Željko, called and asked are you this person. She said yes. Do you have a brother Kazić Siniša? I said yes. He said do you want to see your brother alive and healthy, since he is with us, to come and pick him up, to take him with you. Now she got afraid or she didn't believe or I don't know Željko was a journalist. If it was me, if it was my brother I would turn everything upside down and do everything, now I am a sister-in-law and I don't know why she can't maybe she is mistrustful or feels it is a trap, I don't know what is it about. That's it, now I don't know what date or which year was it but it was in March or April...Yes in Mitrovica, and this I don't know, it was a bit later. We knew but we didn't have the possibility to go.

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you!

VESNA MANITAŠEVIĆ: I am Vesna Militašević, from Velika Hoča, I represent the Jefimija Women Organization, and my brother was kidnapped on this day while my cousin and brother-in-law killed. They went for timber in the woods, in their woods, and didn't

return, it was during the Dutch, when they were here. We are not blaming the Albanian side, or anybody. We are blaming the international community.

NORA AHMETAJ: What year was it?

VESNA MANITAŠEVIĆ: In 1999, on this date. My brother was kidnapped on 12 October 1999. For him everybody knew that he went for medicine and never returned. Police used to come home non-stop, he is alive, and we just have to wait for some time for him to come, from then we didn't know anything. On 29 November 2003 we received the corpse, police came...

NORA AHMETAJ: And he is buried...?

VESNA MANITAŠEVIĆ: Yes, he is buried in Velika Hoča on 29 November 2003.

NORA AHMETAJ: Did you know where he was killed ?

VESNA MANITAŠEVIĆ: Since my brother works for the kidnapped, he runs the association, I don't, and it is hard for me to speak, and so...

NORA AHMETAJ: And for the brother-in-law?

VESNA MANITAŠEVIĆ: Brother-in-law was killed, buried the same day on this date.. so yes, hard. And brother...

NORA AHMETAJ: But, did you know where he was killed or not ?

VESNA MANITAŠEVIĆ: Same as Albanians my brother-in-law and the rest were for woods, in their property, and for my brother just that he was kidnapped in the centre of the town of Rahovec; he was going for medicine and didn't return anymore. My brother was looking for him, one boy told him, this guy looking for his brother with the police, and the policeman, Sami was his name, said no, this kid says that he recognized him, and said that brother is where he is, that he is in the cinema, cinema hall that it was showing that location there where my brother was locked and this, from all trace is lost, to this policeman and my brother until 2003. We were informed in 2003 that he was found dead and we buried him with UNMIK Police and so.

NORA AHMETAJ: If you knew who killed him what would you do?

VESNA MANITAŠEVIĆ: 'I wish God returned it to him, his parents and sisters should feel like I have felt'.

NORA AHMETAJ: And would you like to find out who killed him?

VESNA MILITAŠEVIĆ: Well I would like to know who it was, and why, because he was good with everybody, he worked in Žitopromet, when it was the hardest times he was helping friends to go with trucks, to do everything; he left us aside, even for the New Year's eve he wasn't with his family, but instead he went repairing trucks. And why it came to this?

NORA AHMETAJ: And are there any witnesses who know about him?

VESNA MILITAŠEVIĆ: I don't know, I am not informed about that.

NORA AHMETAJ: And would you ever like to face him?

VESNA MILITAŠEVIĆ: Yes I would like.

NORA AHMETAJ: And what would you do?

VESNA MANITAŠEVIĆ: 'I only wish he told us the reason why they killed him, why was he killed. He was married, he got a daughter three months after that. He could not see his first child. He was thirty-six. His/her side is difficult for everyone, everybody cries over his/her own. We cooperated with Hareja Association; we went to different meetings, seminars and rest. I am a bit emotionally linked...I say Vesna you cry, well I cry because I feel crying. I cry because when it was best time to live he is not here, he gave gifts to all children and

couldn't see his own. That is the reason I don't like to come to this kind of meetings because it feels so hard. That is all!

NORA AHMETAJ: You please!

BRANKICA MILIĆ: I am Brankica Milić from Velika Hoča. My father's name was Duško Vlašević; he worked in the fire brigade... He was kidnapped on 17 July 1998, we are talking about this for 12 years and nothing, and it is really hard. He was working that day, he was on duty, together with my uncle Đorđe Balošević, and everybody in Rahovec knows my father and him. Everybody knew him, he did well to everybody, and he harmed nobody. I was also at work at that day; I used to volunteer in the trade union. At half past twelve me and my father spoke on the phone and agreed that he will come to pick me up. And he said wait for me there, I will come now. They went to Termomont with our car, they had some business to do, my father had a car, a white Opel Cadet, they went together with my uncle to Termomont and on the way back they didn't take this route through the city, but the one up there for me, I used to work there, close to the polyclinic in the trade union, it was there. I was waiting for him 3 hours, alone up there; I could have also perished that day. Thanks God I didn't. And I never saw my father again. In 2006 he was found in a mass grave in Malishevo. As they say, he was killed after five-six days. On that day we immediately reported him missing, missing at twelve thirty; it was the attack on Rahovec. My father wasn't in uniform, nor was he a soldier, or anything similar, but a civilian. Innocent people suffered. Horrible! I don't know who killed him. I would like to know and to punish the penetrator. Yes. It is really hard for me, I cannot speak. We are talking for 12 years about this.

NORA AHMETAJ: I have to ask you a question, I probably have to ask this question because these are the cases which happened in different parts of the world...; You don't know who killed your father?

BRANKICA MILIĆ: No.

NORA AHMETAJ: And would you give everything to know who killed him?

BRANKICA MILIĆ: Yes.

NORA AHMETAJ: OK now! If somebody was to call you and said, I know who killed your father, but would you pardon him?

BRANKICA MILIĆ: Never!

NORA AHMETAJ: What would you then say and do?

BRANKICA MILIĆ: He should be given what he has deserved, he should be punished.

NORA AHMETAJ: Imprisoned! OK!

BRANKICA MILIĆ: But he would eventually get out of prison, while my father never will! He was only 44 and plenty of them from Rahovec have been killed, it was not war. I cannot say anything more!

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you! Please!

TATJANA KOLAŠINAC: I am Tatjana Kolašinac from Rahovec. I am happy that we have gathered here today. As Nora said every victim has a name and a family name, that should be the case with every perpetrator to have a name and a family name, and not the whole community.

My father was killed on 6 August 1999. He was a pensioner, he was not uniformed. He lived in the lower part of Rahovec. After KFOR came all Serbs left the lower part of Rahovec and moved to the upper part. He was killed on 6 August at the line, border line between the Albanian and Serbian part in that time. Then there was no check point at that line of separation, in other words a murder had to be committed and several wounding at that

evening for KFOR to place a check point. The perpetrator is not known yet, I wish I knew him/her. All I am interested in is the reason why my father was killed. I would only like to know the reason why my father was killed. He didn't have a son. He was a pensionist; he never did anything bad to anybody. Thank you!

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you! Please!

JASMINKA STANOJEVIĆ: I am Jasmina Stanojević from Rahovec. I was also kidnapped in 1998; I was at my working place in the polyclinic. Between others they took many, they took the doctor, the technician from the polyclinic where I was a witness. There were plenty, I didn't know the names. After this they called my husband, where is your wife, come and pick up your wife. My husband came down for me. But they kidnapped my husband also. When they took him I went everywhere, couldn't find him, then I found him in 2009. There was a funeral on 12 October in Volljakë. But on the paper it says he died from his death [natural death], how can it be. Died from his death! Kidnapped in 1998 and found in 2009 in Volljakë. So he was not killed, he died from his death. How can it be? Determined death!

NORA AHMETAJ:

JASMINKA STANOJEVIĆ: Well I received the papers in three languages: Serbian, Albanian and English.

NORA AHMETAJ:

JASMINKA STANOJEVIĆ: Mass grave, all were found, and my husband was found the last in this grave but registered that he died from his death.

NORA AHMETAJ: There is an international organization dealing with the missing persons and they issue certificates and based on that....

JASMINKA STANOJEVIĆ: DNA analysis, done!

NORA AHMETAJ: So if it is NP, it is the name of the organization, if they issued it, then this paper....

JASMINKA STANOJEVIĆ: But I don't believe it. A woman who was kidnapped – family of five, she was released; now he is dead. She told me everything, however I don't believe it. The death was determined, then it was given to me...I don't believe it is my husband. I accepted it but I don't believe it. That's all. I don't believe it is my husband. Undetermined death. In 1998 all were found, after two years they bring the corpse to me. I don't believe it!

NORA AHMETAJ:

JASMINKA STANOJEVIĆ: Well what to say to you? How could they all be identified in 1998, in the same mass grave, and my husband only after two years, in the same mass grave, and it says, died from his death. It cannot be determined.

NORA AHMETAJ: I never heard of such case until now, but something comes to my mind at this moment. In Argentina, 30 years ago, in the 80's, the dictatorship of that time killed plenty of young people by throwing them out of an airplane. Thousands and thousands, I think that 8 thousand of them missing and killed and their mothers...they are still registered as missing, they are called, they have this world famous organization called "Madre de Plaza", they still don't believe that their loved ones – children, husbands, especially children, are killed or dead. They believe deep inside that they are either alive or expect to find body parts. Simply, even when people tell, and they also know that those people were thrown from a height of ten thousand meters and there is no chance to survive that...either in the sea or somewhere in the jungle. They deeply believe that their children or missing will return. I will not tell you to change your opinion, since that is your belief and only you can change it...I will just tell you how many cases are there where people simply want to see their beloved

ones and believe, deeply believe that they are somewhere alive and that they will be found one day.

JASMINKA STANOJEVIĆ: No, there is no chance of surviving. I was kidnapped and I know it all. The live ones don't exist. I wish they would, but no. That's all!

SVETLANA VELIKIĆ: I am Svetlana Velikić from Rahovec. My brother was kidnapped – Staniša Milenković, he lived in the lower part of the town. He was kidnapped on 29 October 1999. They have left their places when KFOR came, they were refugees in the upper part of Rahovec, and they stayed with me. They were with us for several months and since he was staying with me he wanted to go to Serbia and four others in a car, some Roma was driving them from the part of Rahovec through Gjakova for Montenegro. However, probably upon agreement with a man from Gjakova, who was waiting for them there, and we heard that by name it was Hekuran Hoda, he was a KLA commander. He delivered them there. We reported it to KFOR; Italians were in Gjakova here were the Dutch. Allegedly, they went there right away, and more exactly to the warehouse where they were staying. If they reacted immediately they would find them. The person that was driving them, this Roma said that they were seen the next day in that warehouse, tortured and that after that all trace of them is lost. So KFOR didn't react. If they have went immediately they would have found them. Then it strolled for months, that they are here, I don't know, or that there were information about them, even that they are in Mitrovica, in a hospital in Montenegro, I don't know.. The Red Cross came to inform us officially that they were somewhere in a hospital in Montenegro. At that we believed the most since the Red Cross is some prestigious international organization which should deal with cases like this one and they should be trusted. And they asked us to write letters so they could forward these to them. They don't know the place exactly but they will forward them these letters. We didn't believe that they were in a hospital since they would've called us themselves if they were in a hospital. The letter was returned after 3 months. They couldn't find them and the letters were returned. I was very angry at that time. If you are an official organization you shouldn't do like that. It is such tremendous stress for the family, and now I cannot describe how I feel talking about this, since this is not the first time I am talking about this. Thousand times! From my family nobody is here, I am the only one that remained here. My sister-in-law and two nephews left Rahovec went to Serbia, she lived in the lower part, and she lost everything, and after everything, she lost even her husband. We contacted everybody; we even gave the name, who was the driver, where he took them and everything, but nothing.

They went in 2003 to Kraljevo to inform her that he was found dead in Suhareka in a mass grave. In the report she received it said that they were killed five days after the kidnapping and then thrown on a dump yard in a village Rize close to Gjakova, so I don't know what has remained out of them or what they took from them. They were torn to pieces even my sister-in-law couldn't look what remained out of them, only by a sweater she knew that he was there...I am also only interested in ... I know that nothing can return him. My mother died with that wish and I only would like to know why? He never did anything bad to anybody. We lived in the lower part of Rahovec, I used to work, and I had more Albanian than Serbian friends. We never did anything to anybody. How he deserved to end his life in such manner. I can understand that he was killed, but the torturing and then throwing on a dump yard, and burning and all that, with this wish as long as I am alive I don't know how will I stand it. I go to bed, I wake up and I just think how it was and will we ever know what really happened.

NORA AHMETAJ: Let me ask you something? If this commission was to be formed and they invite you to testify, would you then say what you think and do you have proof who killed your brother and if it was to be proved, how would you react, would you like to face this murderer or person, as you call him Hekuran Hoda?

SVETLANA VELIKIĆ: No. Law should put him on trial, I would not like to face him at all.

NORA AHMETAJ: You wouldn't?

SVETLANA VELIKIĆ: No. I wouldn't stand it and simply there is law for such things. I cannot do anything about that.

NORA AHMETAJ: But do you think, would such commission deal with it again, do you still have the strength to push this issue...?

SVETLANA VELIKIĆ: You know what? Even coming here today, I accepted and I was thinking I will be able to cope with it after so many years; it is very hard for me. I have lost my health a lot and really I am very bad. I thought it would be easier for me, but I feel very weak and I don't know if I will survive because there are years and years with one thought: how it went and that we will never know what really happened. The life goes on, but really as long as we are alive we are going to think about it...I have said thousands of times, If they killed him there, in front of us, we would know whom we buried, but like this, we still suspect that it is really him. This is because that was really miserable, but you know, you cannot give up. What was there closed in the coffin. My mother had asked do you want to open so we can see, she was thinking that they found him then and that she will see him. She didn't know that there is nothing of him, except two-three bones. And we convinced her that the coffin is hermetically closed and that it cannot be opened. And she was always wondering how something like that could happen, and I don't believe it, and I would always tell her: mother I don't believe he is dead. They came, I don't know they changed several times, German, Dutch, Italian and whoever came same information, same information. Now, the others who came now, we don't have that information. The same thing cannot be repeated for hundreds of times. If they, as international community placed one, then probably they pass it on and the family shouldn't be mistreated and bothered for hundreds of times and repeat the same always. Many years passed, he is buried in Kraljevo. What we have buried even we don't know, but everything ended there. We thought that now after he is buried it will be easier, but believe me it isn't.

NORA AHMETAJ: What would you do if it was determined who killed your brother, and he would face you and ask for apology?

SVETLANA VELIKIĆ: I wouldn't be able to face him. I would not be able to face him. No! Simply, only law should finish the job for such people. Nothing can bring back my brother any longer. My mother used to say, now if they gave me entire Serbia and Kosovo I don't need them at all, since he is not anymore, simply whatever they want to do now; it doesn't mean anything to me. I wish I knew who he is and to be punished, based on law, of course. I would never be able to judge anyone or to do anything like that. God forbid! That's all.

NORA AHMETAJ: You please!

MERADIJE RAMADANI: My name is Miradije Ramadani; I am from Krusha e Madhe. I found my husband two years ago, he was missing. There were 11 men; they were all related to my husband, from the age of 15 to 39. We are all now young brides without husbands which raise our children. But the animals, when they took our men the children heard of it and in front of children they used to kick them with tomatoes sticks, as we the people in

Krusha call these sticks, they made them lay down because they wanted to have fun, the children were screaming, the fathers were screaming, we the women were screaming. Then after three hours they took a rest, they harnessed the horses, and where they found these horses, over the bodies of 250 men of the village of Krusha these horses ran, they stepped on their feet, on their hearts, on their stomach. Women and children present there were screaming. Children, because the women just surrounded the children. Next, after their lust passed, from 8 o'clock in the morning to 4 in the evening men of Krusha e Madhe were beaten with sticks, hands and then they told the children say good bye for the last time because you will not see these parents or brothers anymore. What they did then, they loaded them onto trucks, alive and tired and took them to a private house somewhere near Drin River. Some of them were burned alive there, while they were alive and we run after the truck with children, because the children could not wait, and they burn 60 men under 60 years old of Krusha e Madhe, they left there alive and shooting on them, as well the young under 40 years old they burn them. Is this normal, to burn the parents without doing nothing to the local Serb, or Hoqa, Rahovec or Krusha e Vogel, because the Serb from Belgrade did not come to do this to us, not at all, but they thought that Milosevic told they that they will eat with golden spoon in order to do everything in Kosovo, but it did not happen, it is normal that our man have gone but also young bride have gone. In Nagovc village NATO bombed but they say no no Milosevic has bombed from Belgrade. They left the mothers without any children; it is a shame to talk in front of them because we are sorry these cases have happened to them. Albanians have suffer in Krusha e Madhe. Even today Krusha e Madhe have 520 orphan...

(The End of CD II, part 2 ends like this, with some interruption)

(The Beginning of CD III, it starts like this)

MERADIJE RAMADANI : at the age of one they were left by Serbs, the ones that are grown up we leave aside. Is it OK, without doing anything to the Serbs, we didn't have any Serbs, only two houses, because he was also in their lines and run away, he is in Kraljevo today and we couldn't identify the Serbs. Why? Because they painted their faces, they used masks. Why? To not be able to identify them, if one is from Kosovo, or Hoqa, or Rahovec or Apterusha or Retimje, or Krusha e Vogel. Now, please, I ask from all the Serbs who are present here, that we take further steps for your people, but you should also take steps for our people. Let those who have gone missing appear and let us know where their mortal remains are, because it is enough. Almost twelve years have passed. Children have been waiting, young wives have been waiting for the mortal remains to appear, because we know what has happened. But, please, if you have information share them with us where we have gathered here. So, we for your people, if we know anything we share information, but if you also know anything share the information with us because it is enough, 12 years have passed, it is not easy for a mother to breed seven children, I apologize for crying, because when my husband was separated from my youngest daughter she was 5 years old, and my son was 7 months old. Children didn't have any food to eat for a week, my husband got some how he got it and shared a piece of bread and said here my son eat something since you didn't eat with your father for a week. And the Serb caught him, pulled him on the ground and placed amongst others. And the daughter continued: don't, my father didn't do anything; he didn't do any crime, why do you want to kill our father. And I cried for that, I remembered that piece of bread, he was taken with that concern that his children haven't eaten or drink anything. Then they took us. They burned the men. They took us with trucks and said: we

want to take you and burn you all. And some women screamed, and I did as well, and I said: do whatever you want with us, you killed our men, and there is no life for us anymore. But there should be. Kosovo is in his hands. Entire Kosovo will not vanish because maybe you will not kill them all. Do you understand who am I? You look like you are from Krusha e Vogël, I said to the Serb's face. Because he was painted with colors, he had placed a mask on his face, how could we recognize him. That's all. I thank you for this meeting and we would like to have some more because we feel the need to meet and get some information because we are missing 69 men in Krusha e Madhe. We also have some raped. We have women and girls that were raped; they closed them in the mosque, on windows, and raped them one by one. Serbs from Kosovo did such things, and not the ones from Belgrade. That was all.

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you Muradije. The massacre of Krusha e Vogël and e Madhe are well known and believe me before I organized this meeting I thought a lot that it would be hard to gather you all together, and especially to call the women from Krusha, since I was there several times. But not only the women of Krusha but also the women from Çirez and Likoshan, and Likovc and some other places where there were a lot of killed. Now we are almost speechless. You offered a good suggestion, that was never mentioned in consultations and we in Kosovo haven't had the chance yet to gather the people of different ethnicities, exactly due to the subject because it is so painful. You see it yourself how hard it is to meet, to sit close to each other. But when you suggested it, for us to say who kidnapped from our side and who kidnapped and killed from your side, there is no need for you to do that since it is too much trauma for you. This exactly is the idea why we think when the commission, if created, there will be trained people working with you and there will be psychologists which will work with you and they will not come as we came here today to take out the bad from you and I don't know how to react since I am not trained to work with victims, I am not a psychologist. So this is the reason why we think to do it like this, so your suggestion is very good that if the commission is created it should work parallel with victims from all ethnicities, and then on taking the information out. And to face the victim with the perpetrator takes a lot of time and it is something painful. It is not coincidence that I am asking you how would you react when you would see the people you relatives, because if we are proposing, if we are saying let's create this commission it will be like us putting you once again in the same position, and it is very painful. However it is not something that wasn't done in some countries by some people. There are victims and I know it from the Latin America, there are victims that say, I just want to see their face. There are victims that say I just want them to say why they did it. There are victims that say I just want to know the motive, what made them do it. There are victims that say I want to see him in prison since he belongs there. However, when they recently asked the women of Srebrenica, which I meet very often: are you happy that Radovan Karadžić is in the Hague Tribunal now? They said: no, it doesn't make any impression on us, because our children, my children or seven or eight members of my family are killed and the one that is in prison, he cannot return my son or my daughter. There is even one very famous witness, her name is Munira, and when they told her: what would you want, what would you do about this? There are women which say for example except the reason, I want to know why he committed this crime, I want him to say: I apologize, I committed a sin, I committed a crime and I don't know how to forgive myself for this. In other words, victims' families react differently in different situations and they have different needs. And I apologize again I know it is very hard for you, but it is very

important for us, because somehow we have to wrap this up so we can find the reasons for your suffering, we have to know what are your requests also. Please!

MERADIJE RAMADANI: of Krusha to Albania and they wanted to take my son. I said I won't give you my son, with great effort God gave him to me, after 25 years of marriage. He said no, I am not taking him to kill him, but I just want him to save him. And up to this day I remember the first name only, and not his last name, Shasivar somebody. If I knew today where he lives I would bring him to the property of my husband. Why? Because he saved my son, he left me a successor. I would bring this Serbian 25 year old – soldier today to my husband's property, he was in uniform and he took my son because they didn't want to give him to me, he took my son and took him to the border. I said to him: good boy, I hope we will survive this with my children because my husband has been killed already. If he comes to me I will take him to my husband's property, make him brothers with my son, just for leaving me a successor and not allowing them to kill my son. I am who I am, and even though he was a Serbian, I would bring him today to Krusha e Madhe to my property. I apologize for talking to much maybe.

NORA AHMETAJ: Yes then Shuki!

SHUKRIJE GASHI: It is good that this lady told us about this case, because all these feelings of yours are human, they are normal reactions. And it is also human to give examples as she did. I am pretty sure, since there was a war and in the war cases cannot be controlled, I believe in near future I believe that there will be a possibility to come to the surface that the killings were often committed by the criminals of the same nation: Serbs killed Serbs and Albanians killed Albanians. And in such cases we shouldn't hesitate and speak with prejudice until facts are proven. But to prove such facts there should be courage to talk about and report even such cases that a Serb saved an Albanian child and vice versa. In other words an Albanian saved a Serb.

All this is very human and it is very normal, but they should be separated in such manner and by exchanging such experiences we could come closer to each other and by getting closer we can build trust and when we build trust we will also find the strength to find the truth.

Thank you!

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you!

MANDUSH BUGARI: I also had a case when civil militia took me, I want to say the reserve, but a certain Trajče Marković saved me and told this militia: hey do you know whose wife she is. They said we don't care, take her to the basement let's make her mother cry.

But I thank this Trajče, maybe this Trajče can hear me, he was a policeman. He told me: Mandush, go ahead just walk, nobody can touch you. I had something to do with the Mayor for a passport so I could leave with my son and he said go on the street, and I will go through the basement because if somebody saw you they could say, look she's spying. I wanted only to do this to thank him, and what is good it is good, and what is bad it is bad. That's all.

Thank you!

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you! Fahrije are you going to talk or should we continue over there...

FAHRIJE HOTI: Let me talk to lady Miradije. How would you perceive the fact that a criminal who has killed your husband has been revealed? Would you forgive or punish him? For example, I would neither forgive nor punish him. If I had been given a possibility I

would revenge myself on him. I would not leave him alive, just like the father of my children who is not alive any longer Thank you!

NORA AHMETAJ: Ladies, do you want to talk, introduce yourself please!

MIHRIJE ZLLANOGA: I am Mejrije Zllanoga and my husband is a martyr. They took my husband in 1998, here in Rahovec, who was a soldier. They took him, it was this mayor of Rahovec, Anđelko Kolašinac, or what his last name was, but anyways he was the mayor of Rahovec, then he took him to the prison of Rahovec. From Rahovec they took him to Prizren. They kept in Prizren for some time and then transferred him to Lipjan. From Lipjan they took him to Sremska Mitrovica. From there they transferred him to Dubrava, from Dubrava they sent him to Niš. He was convicted for three and a half years. I want to say that he served for two years, and the rest of the sentenced was reduced with the help of the lawyer Krsta Tanasković, and he reduced a year and a half from his sentence, while he served two. Two years earlier he was released, he served his sentence, 7 days before he came home to his family, mother, father, wife and children they took him there in Niš and massacred him, they massacred him. They brought the corpse and we couldn't believe how it could be him, the one who was a soldier, they killed him alive. I would go together with a friend of his every two weeks to Niš to visit him, while he was imprisoned. Yes, they would leave us in Preševo while we would go Serbian police were armed with automatic rifles and what is the worst they told us that they have mistreated him and we would continue full of fear, being frightened and everything. Yes, it was bad for me now, for whom did he work, for soldiers. I want to say he was a soldier, after two years, I feel petty for him, for his suffering in the Serbian prisons. If it was possible for him to come alive for a short time and see his family, or his relatives, but 7 seven days to release they massacred him as we saw the corpse they brought to Rahovec. I thank you for coming, for calling us to take our information. The youngest daughter he left, she was then 3 weeks old, and my husband didn't have the chance to meet her. But may God return them the same for what they did; I hope God will repay them, like my children are crying shall the children of those who raised their hands to massacre my husband in the prison of Niš. They brought him in 2000; we buried him here with the martyrs in Rahovec. Thank you for inviting us so you could get to know what happened to us. I apologize, that lawyer has taken 17.000 German Marks that my brother-in-law paid, and he took the cash personally to Prizren and told him that we will get him out of the prison but he didn't. However, he took the money. It was Krsta Tanasković, a Serb from Prizren, the lawyer. Forget the money, if he was alive and to be able to come and see his children....He got the money and they neither released him and at the end they killed him. If he only came alive home, so we could see him. Two years of his sufferings, without water, without food, anything at all, they have beaten him as much as they could, the Serbs, they would kick him, with everything since I went every two weeks to visit my husband. He was well, healthy, he never felt any pain. He was never sick. He was 37. I finished. Thank you!

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you. Do you want to say anything?

LULJETA BUGARI: There is no need for me to talk since my mother-in-law spoke already, and there is nothing for me to add. Only that it hit us hard. That's all. Thank you!

BEHIJE HAJDA: My name is Behije Hajta. They killed my husband on 20.7.1998. It was our first day home; we had left our house since we were afraid to stay there. We had some Serbian neighbors. We left our place and went to my sister-in-law. We later left that place as well since they told us they are coming to this place as well. A large number of us went to the centre, from there we went downwards, there was a curve and we couldn't see two tanks

coming. And from there the big number of people split. Some ran down and some up. And while we were there we had our two children with us, our son and daughter, mother-in-law and my husband. My husband was holding his mother and I was holding the children. I ran, but unfortunately my husband was hit since he was with his mother and she was old so he was hit since both tanks shot. Now mother stayed there with his son. And I followed the larger group of people, where they went I followed. We went to the village, and we stayed for two weeks in Berdelane. From there we came to Rahovec. My father-in-law had looked as much as he could to find his son's corpse but he didn't find it. After 3 weeks he heard something, we were in Prizren. They told him that he was buried there. When we went to the police station in Prizren we entered an office and he asked somebody, I don't know who it was: and this person asked what was his son wearing. I was together with my father-in-law in Prizren there. They gave us photos to look at them but I couldn't find him on those pictures and then somebody called this Serb on the phone and told him to not give the photos to me to look at them. Then he himself was looking at the photos and was asking us all the time what was he wearing. There were plenty of policemen, soldiers, I was afraid a lot. They told us to come some other time. I dint go there anymore. I was frightened. From there they told us that there are some, that there is a cemetery where some were buried, they took us there, and my husband wasn't there. They were form Rahovec, her husband was there, husband and son, their names were written. Then I returned to Rahovec and didn't dare go any other time over there. And now, after ten years we have found him and buried him in Rahovec.

NORA AHMETAJ: Did you find out who killed him?

BEHIJE HAJDA: No, because they were shooting from the tanks.

NORA AHMETAJ: Would you like to know who killed him ?

BEHIJE HAJDA: I don't know what to say. Even if I knew what, I cannot return him anymore.

IDAJETE DELIU: My name is Hidajete Deliu from Rahovec. My husband was working in the field when Serbs came through this place, they caught him, massacred him, cut him to pieces, we waited for him, we didn't know where he is, we didn't dare look for him. When my brother-in-law came in the morning he asked where his brother is. We don't know he didn't come. When my father came he heard. Sebadin Sosi from Rahovec, he knew. He said somebody from Rahovec, he didn't know who he was, was killed close to that patrol. Beginning of the war, there was nothing, two months before the war they cut him to pieces, and when we found him, we saw it was my husband. He had some cherries in the pockets. The Serbs asked him what do you have there, are those bullets? He said, no, it is cherries for my sons. He left behind a son of a year and a half, when he came; we buried him after three days. It was like this.

SHAIP SHALA : Tell about your killed mother?

IDAJETE DELIU: They also killed my mother at the beginning of the war. They have run through the vineyards and they killed her. So, what to do, I don't know what else to say.

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you im so sorry!

MANDUSH BUGARI: That day when they wanted to get away it was my husband, my son, my sister-in-laws son, her husband and her son. And now look at the fate, she had one son, they killed him at the same place where they killed my husband, my son and my sister-in-laws son. Her husband survived, a bullet caught his finger and although he was unconsciousness, and he was wounded here. They took him to the hospital, Sheriban cannot know about her son at all, she is searching if he is alive somewhere. I am the one who

identified them in Prizren, when I identified my husband, my son, my sister-in-laws son, and I identified her son as well. And I informed them all. If something is done do not get crazy or something since their movie has ended; only when they identify them, you know through the state that is gone. And that's all, I did everything for her son, for my son, for my sister-in-laws son and my husband. I paid Adem Jetishi and did everything since I was in my basement. And these, even if they stayed in the basement they would have been killed because they threw a grenade at us in the basement. Their fate, when they came out, was bad fate, but still somebody had to be victimized for Kosovo you know. We always knew this, even when we went out. However their fate, they went to the street on the road that goes to Jaha Petrol, so they could go to the fields and they told them stop. They were afraid to stop since the police was coming from Niš, with tanks and everything and they were getting into private houses. And they didn't have the guts to stop because of fear, they walked and they killed them. Then I collected them all. One was in the vineyard, on the street. Police dragged my husband and took him to Mirovë, how they took him like this, and according to them he was a soldier and allegedly has shot at them and I went, I looked for them again, they told me check behind the water lake [water plant] and then I looked behind the water lake [water plant], they, I don't know how to say, were found in Prizren.

NORA AHMETAJ: I just want to ask her: Sheriban can't you talk at all? OK. You can't!

MANDUSH BUGARI: Yes she grew up with us all the time. I will speak for her; she cannot say a word about this. And now, since we are talking about this boy I will address her since they were all together, the people ran away, they have eaten in my basement, the military did as well and you have even Albanians who don't accept it. When I told one of them that I will pay for my husband's debt since my husband had taken some food from his shop, but that he will have to testify one day, he said ok. When I asked him a few days ago: are you the one that said like this he said no, you are dreaming. He thinks I am sick in the head. I am not sick in the head, I am sick in the heart, with pressure. And that's all. So, this son of mine, he has fought in Bosnia. He was a soldier in Macedonia. From Macedonia, where I went to see him take an oath, they sent him to Bosnia, they sent him to Zagreb. Well, I even said one day, as they say from the broken heart, it would've been better if he died in Bosnia rather than leaving two kids and a bride behind. He left the children very young, but may God help us to raise them and may they grow up to be wonderful persons and we were lucky having the house...My son had survived three wars, but nobody came to ask why. So, we all, everybody took care of himself, everybody knew. My son came that day from the army, he came with clothes ripped out, and two officers escorted him personally. Because Bekim has taken care of us and we took care of Bekim. And to survive three wars and nobody to ask you about it, it is a shame to God. So, even to those who haven't tasted it let the God judge them regardless, and for God to judge you have to know it that it is tough. That's all. We cannot organize a wedding, or a death ceremony, or anything, we are never happy. We are always with tears in our eyes.

And for my sister-in-law, who lives in tough conditions, they have burned two boutiques of theirs, when I went to ask for aid for them, because I have fled in the second war, they took me out and said: she should go and work. But how to go and work; you cannot be a field worker. Here in general, regardless of Albanian, Serbian, or whomever everything goes with connections. The son had 20.000 euro's in the boutique when they burned his shop. I don't know what else to say, although I have also worked for my Albanians, for myself. But the police had come to me every morning and would ask me how are you, miss...the Serbs!

Miss, did you have a nice sleep. Every day I have expected a massacre for myself and a 14 year old child that was with me. Entire neighborhood was empty and I was the only one that stayed there. And I was told by the lawyers, the neighborhood and everybody don't go inside because your husband and son and your sister-in-laws son are hanged in the basement. I told them that I have confronted everything and even if they are hanged and killed in such manner I don't have any other option but go in. I want to find them. And I found stuff, bullets, and different things and so on. So with the house, the children we were in a catastrophic condition. I don't want anything else, but her son when he saw it, everybody said: dad, dad, took the photo album and said look I have a father as well. Yes, my father is a soldier in Germany. Until he grew up some more to say: why are you lying to me mother, my father is dead. And we all have our virtues and we are stressed a lot with them.

NORA AHMETAJ: Please, do you want to talk!

SHYHRETE ALISALLAHU: I am Shyhrete Alisallahu. My husband is massacred and at the beginning of the war, when it initially started I took my son, daughters and children to leave. My son is gone, he was 9 months old, I left him because a shell was dropped near our tractor, and my son died there and because we didn't have any food to give to him, as a 9 months old baby. And I saw my son dead, then I looked for my older son who was driving the tractor, my uncle's son was wounded in the head by the shell. I ran to my son that was driving the tractor, to check whether he was wounded as well and I dropped the corpse on the ground, I ran to him and asked him are you alive, are you wounded. No, he said, nothing to me but the cousin only. And when he got wounded he fell onto my son and covered my son with blood, I was thinking it was my son, since he was driving the tractor. And we left, I left my other son dead and we checked for the other one. Now, when I went to my family we continued to a village called Turjakë where we stopped, they were coming from Rahovec, from everywhere and my husband stayed at home. He said take the children, maybe you will survive. I am from here he said. Because I spoke Albanian, he said I am from here, Rahovec, and you since you don't speak Serbian just go. So, I left. And when I left, a neighbor of ours, his name is Burhan Oruçi; he stayed together with my husband at home. They came they took him and massacred my husband in the neighbor's yard. When he came to us I was pregnant after my son died I was pregnant and I left. And I have a daughter. My daughter is now 12. For this Eid-al-fitr they took her to arrange my son's grave. She called my son father, she didn't know yet. And his bride she called mother. And the girl thinks of me as her grandma. And now for Eid-al-fitr we went to the cemetery, the boys took her since until now they didn't take her. Where you are going, she would ask. We would tell her that we are going somewhere, but didn't tell her where. When we took her this time she asked us why didn't we tell her...She still calls her brother father but I say to her, no my daughter. She has grown up now, she is big and she is asking me why I didn't tell her that she doesn't have a father. She was born in a hospital in Prizren. And when we came home she said now I also want to die. When she came with us to the cemetery she would say I want to lie down with my father here. Why, what he did, she was asking. And my husband has worked in the plastic factory here I cannot say what and explain it. He said no ...we have eaten, drank and stayed together; I never did anything to nobody. And when they massacred my husband, nothing else, after two years when we found him, the head was cut off, part of him; we found only the shirt, a leg and an arm, nothing else at all. When we went to take the corpse it was me, my husband's brother and my sons. I didn't allow my two sons to come close since I felt sorry for them, they were too young. The younger one asked me, mommy, who is it what is this? I

said to him, nothing. I told him that when they died. They have grown up now and are asking me why didn't I tell them on time but we are keeping this pain inside. My daughter goes to school now; she is in the fifth grade. When she now went, all children were together and she said why I am the only one without a father. And that neighbor of ours is in Germany. This time he came with his family, they have regulated their residence permit, she told him: Uncle Dan I was expecting you for such a long time, I thought you are going to bring my father as well. I cannot talk anymore!

MANDUSH BUGARI: Although we Albanians didn't have...to do the thing. This one now...and we didn't have any guns even to defend ourselves. We were endangered...Yes I know that we didn't have guns.

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: I am Sheribane Ukshini. Thank you for the invitation. I greet you all! I thank you for showing interest for our young boys. I am from Rahovec. Four and a half months, on the next 21-st, twelve years and 5 moths. Last time... I know nothing about him. It was 17 July when the war started; the first offensive and we didn't know anything. When my son went onto the street, when he saw that the war is going to begin when he came he said: mother, the war is coming here also.

The entire neighborhood came to me because my house has a concrete slab and they were afraid that they will be bombed. When it was around 10 pm on that night, he was escorting them and sheltering families all night and the next day until 12 o'clock, when he came home to rest. He came to rest and the lower floor was full with neighbors, there were many of us. And he said I want to go up to have some rest. When my son passed the first set of stairs nothing happened, and when he passed the second set, the Serbian buildings we have across, a sniper shot just above my sons head. So he came down. He said: mother, don't let anybody go upstairs because Serbs are looking for us through snipers because we were full with neighbors' children. So he laid down in the lower part and rested. When he woke in the evening; he drank tea a lot. He didn't want to eat anything, he just wanted to go and help people. So I prepared tea for him, I filled the glass, drinking one after another, since he drank tea a lot, and then he went out, he said I want to go to my cousins and save them, shelter them somewhere. When he went close to the polyclinic he had to come back. He opened the yard door and hit the door. Mother, he said, what are we going to do! Why, my son? There are large forces coming from Prizren – Serbs. They are almost here, they just informed them from Prizren, and great forces as Bellacërka informed them. I want to go to my uncle and save them because the municipality is close to us. And my brother, as he was in the field with his daughters came directly to me because they didn't allow them, they didn't dare to pass the polyclinic because of the Serbs, because our house is past the polyclinic, they were by us. I, from anxiety didn't know what to do, to go upstairs and close the doors, while the rest, my neighbors, my husband, my brother and the rest have left, I was alone in the house, and our dog was on the leash so went to unleash him. I thought he has a soul as well. I couldn't, I didn't know how to do it then I said may God help you. When I came down my younger son was saying mother lets go. Where to go my son? He said let us go to our uncle's place, to my brother Remzi who is looking to save them, let us save ourselves as well. When we were out close to the polyclinic, and it was dark, around 10 pm, I hugged my son and went back. I was thinking that instead of Serbs taking me and massacring me on the street somewhere I would rather like to be killed at home. When I came close, I was almost in front of the door I saw the neighbors leaving with the truck and they said come on, come with us, and I said no, I don't know anything about my sons, my husband, they are nowhere and for me to salvage my

soul only, what would I need my life for. My neighbor's son grabbed me and threw me into the truck. And up to Malishevë I didn't know where I was. When it happened... My son had helped families during the night to save them from the Serbs and the next day he came there to Malishevë and told Sebajdin Cena....

NORA AHMETAJ: Then they kidnapped your son?

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: Three days, earlier, on 21 because on the 17...

NORA AHMETAJ: No, we just want to know when they kidnapped your son.

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: It was 21 July when I saw him for the last time because he came when I told him that your father is killed, since we were not together. The first offensive, on the 21st I didn't know anything about my son. When it was over we went back to our home this daughter of my brother, whose husband got killed, came to us with her two children, his daughter was one year old and her son three, they killed her husband in front of her and his mother. She came, I called her to come to us to get some relief and the phone was ringing. I picked up the headset but nobody answered. It went on for several times, after four-five times she told me: aunt I want to answer the phone because I think that they want to tell you something about Remzi. I feel it in my heart. And I said, all right then. I passed her the set and she answered, somebody asked her is it the house of Sadri Ukshini. Yes. I cannot stay without telling her, but who are you, tell her that her son is alive and wounded. But where is he? It doesn't matter anymore since you know in what kind of situation we are now, the Serbs have surrounded us and we cannot talk much more, just her son is alive, tell the mother and nothing more. This is the first offensive. And us who were in Malishevë, in Turjakë we slept for three days in the woods in Turjakë, when we came back home after three weeks, and I saw all the doors in the house and I didn't repair them yet, I have the means to do it, but I don't want to do it. I am thinking that the day will come eventually; the justice will come to surface. All my doors are broken. My entire house was turned upside down with all the furniture I had, with everything. Serbs took from us 70.000 German Marks. I collected 12-13 bullets in the living room, they have shot first from outside to check whether somebody is inside, from the windows inside, I counted 13 bullets in the kitchen, from the shot I don't know, but the holes were so big. I don't know with what. Anyways, everything what was valuable in the house they took, they took my things, but I don't care about that at all, I just hope my son is alive. The goods come and go. I don't care for money also; neither for the gold they took from me, nor for the things they took, just for my son to be alive.

When it was the second offensive I didn't go anywhere. I don't know anything about my son, if he is alive or not. I stayed with my younger son at home, while my second son I sent abroad, at least to save him. My husband was abroad also. Three soldiers came. The daughter of my brother had young children, their daughter was one and the son 3... And I have something like 15 ars of space behind the house, I have all kinds of fruits there, and at that time was the time of cherries and children were crying for cherries, mother-in-law didn't want to do it, she said go to the aunt and she will give you cherries. She said I don't care if my aunt will give me cherries but my husband is killed and if they kill my children as well what am I going to do.

NORA AHMETAJ: I want to know when they took your son. You don't know for 12 years where your son is.

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: Four and a half months, on this 21st it will be 12 years and 5 months. Last time...

NORA AHMETAJ: You don't know anything about him?

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: Nothing.

NORA AHMETAJ: Ahem! And what does the International Red Cross say?

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: Nothing. We gave blood, nothing.

NORA AHMETAJ: Anything on the corpses?

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: No, no. nothing. She came, all the children from the streets came for the cherries and three Serbian soldiers came. Two had so big beards; one was a recruit, young. All children came down from the tree and ran away. What is going on? No, you should listen to this as well, as we listened to you.

NORA AHMETAJ: No, they informed us that they will leave at around 13:00 hrs.

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: Ok then. And I suspect that our men are in Serbian churches.

NORA AHMETAJ: Mrs. Sheribane, they told me that they have to go, they stayed until now...

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: Well then! Just two-three words more. Sava church, what is the name of it, Sava church, where is it. There are our Albanian men, being held by the Serbs. And in Hoqa e Madhe. I would ask them to take it onto their souls, if we had your men, if I had your men and I wouldn't tell how you would feel. That's an example. Since we are here all together to make an agreement?

NORA AHMETAJ: No, no, we didn't call you here to have an agreement between you. No, this is a misunderstanding from the beginning. We didn't gather you here so you make an agreement between you. I am sorry. And I am sorry about your missing son. I am sorry that you have no information. It is not the purpose here to have you all together and have you seated like this across each other and to have an agreement because you cannot solve the problems. You need...

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: I don't feel hard for this because they suffered as well. I feel sorry; it hurts me if they are not guilty. To the guilty may God make them repay as he knows. And for the ones who are not guilty no, because they are mothers as am I. Is it so?

NORA AHMETAJ: Exactly, we have invited you to tell us about your concerns and problems and this is the reason we want to create this independent commission and it will deal and try to find the missing, to find out who committed crimes and everything, but not you amongst yourselves. Because you have suffered...

SHERIBANE UKSHINI: No, no. I don't have anything against; I am not for imposing pain on them. And I want to say something about this Krsta.

NORA AHMETAJ: Yes, but we don't have time, we are already half an hour late. The women have to go, most of the women said at the beginning that they have to go. I am very sorry but we have to conclude it. But, before we finish I wanted to tell you that in the region there are around 1000 non-governmental organizations, victim associations and individuals that have signed the statement on initiation of this commission. I would ask you, if you want, please read it and sign it, and if you don't want to do it then don't sign it, so we can know if the victims' families and families of the missing in the Rahovec area are supportive of this idea for the commission or not. The women from Hoqa e Madhe said that they have to leave at 12:30 and they stayed until now, and we have to respect that. I know that all of you feel the need to speak, but the time doesn't allow us. We can do some more, but very short please. Go ahead!

BADEME DURAKU: My name is Bademe Duraku and I am from Krusha e Madhe.

NORA AHMETAJ: Arbër, please go and give this paper to the Serbian women first.

BADEME DURAKU: If you can please hear me out. My husband is killed also. My brother-in-law was mentally sick and they killed him as well. Three are found and three are missing. It is not that they just killed my husband but they burned him as well. We found only his spinal cord. So I wanted to continue with the line of that lady that said that Brestovc knows who took her husband. I want to continue on her subject. Boško in Krusha I believe, and I am a bride in Krusha, but I know he grew up and got old there. With my husband's uncle they were close friends. He ate and drank at our place. And I believe that he knows who killed my husband, my brother-in-law, uncle – six of them are killed.

NORA AHMETAJ: For example, if this commission is formed and they invite you to testify and you testify that you know who killed your husband, uncle and the rest...

BADEME DURAKU: I don't know, but I believe he does know something about this. He had eaten and drank at our place.

NORA AHMETAJ: Yes, and now I ask you: ... and he is invited and this commission verifies who the murderer was.

BADEME DURAKU: Yes, luck and God we identified him that it is my husband by the clothes. My brother-in-law was mentally sick, but thank to God I have two sons like two stars and I thank God. **But personally, I will never forgive him. He should forget that I will ever forgive him because when my husband was killed he was only thirty-three years old.**

NORA AHMETAJ: No, nobody is asking for forgiveness, but would you like to take the criminal behind the bars in a prison or would you like to know who did it...

BADEME DURAKU: **Yes, yes, he should be put into a lifelong prison.** Thank you! I have a lot to say and we would need to stay a week here to tell you all.

NORA AHMETAJ: There are many women in a hurry to go. I would like them to not rush and leave, it would be nice to have lunch and then go. Those who want to continue with the discussion can continue.

XHEMILE SYLKA: Listen! If there is a need for witnesses or something I will be the first that can be a witness, because there were 6 or 7 persons, I don't remember exactly, but for one of them I have verified who he was. I am the first that could testify about my husband and six other persons. I wanted to tell this also. Thank you!

NORA AHMETAJ: Fahrije what did you want to say before we finish?

FAHRIJE HOTI: **Just a moment, I just wanted to give a short answer to Badem. It was mentioned that Boško has committed war crimes. As an NGO, as a village council, we have contacted him, we have met him, he is completely innocent. This is that we cannot say something as witnesses.**

NORA AHMETAJ: Yes, very well. If this commission is created it will verify it. Thank you very much. I thank you very, very much for your coming here, I feel sorry for the emotions, effort and the traumas you had.

I thank you and I ask you to have lunch before you all go.

SHERIBNANE UKSHINI: Krsta, from Grdina up there, because my brother has a house in the Serbian neighborhood and this Krsta went to my brother's home and told him at 2 o'clock, because he had a bakery, he was a baker, I believe that people from Rahovec know who this baker was ...if you don't come by 2 o'clock we will kill your entire family. And I went to this Krsta. Their headquarters were at this Medin Zika, I went there and asked for Krsta, where he is and they told me he is in the committee. I went to the committee and I found Krsta and I told him: so and so – they are asking for my brother. He said: what I know is that a foreigner has it in his hands. Krsta, a foreigner doesn't know me or you, but you

point your finger and they do everything. He said: your brother should vanish. And how should my brother vanish? When I went back home, there was Brana, Peka's wife and plenty of soldiers. No, no... Brana is the wife of this Peka. This Brana had worked in the court. She said all, in the cradle that is Albanian, Serbian army... Brana Simić said: all Albanians even the ones in cradles should be killed. Don't leave them alive. We didn't dare open our mouth because all of them, even their children were armed. And we bowed our heads, went home. It was like this.

DRANDAFIL AVDULLAHU: My name is Trandafila Avdullahu as I said earlier. I feel sorry for the mothers, wives and children for losing their family members. I am just a war invalid, I was wounded on 20 July 1998 and I just wanted to say that the innocent, mothers and children have died. I had a two year old and a 14 months old child. I was not in uniform, I was at my parents with both of my children, both of my parents were old, they wounded me. Then we moved to my neighbors and they wounded my father. I just wanted to mention this and that I feel sorry for the families which have missing and wounded in their families. I myself am a war invalid, because we, the innocent have suffered. I just wanted to say this.

NORA AHMETAJ: Thank you very much Trandafile!

Once again I want to thank you very much and with this we will close our discussion. Now we will go for lunch and after this the ones which have come with a bus or a vehicle the finance person will reimburse your tickets or receipts.

Transcripts note:

In the material there were plenty of stops of recording, a lot of interference and noise and it was very hard to be transcript properly.

Underline shows that that somebody has spoken, but his/her first and last name are not known.

It was transcript as it was spoken, and since it is casual talk transcription is done as it was spoken.

Yellow in some places means that it the words what it was spoken about were not understood exactly, or the name of the person speaking is questionable.

Interpreters notes:

[Text in brackets] clarification if the text since it is not known exactly what it is.

The text in some parts is very vague and the sentences and words in original are out of context or even not understandable.
