

**ELEVENTH REGIONAL NETWORKING CONFERENCE ON THE MISSING PERSONS ISSUE**

Organizer: International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP)  
In collaboration with Associations of Families of Missing Persons

**Hotel M, Belgrade, Republic of Serbia  
November 28-30, 2008**

**CONCLUSIONS**

Members of associations of families of missing persons express their discontent with the results achieved in the process of tracing missing persons and request the following steps to be taken in order to improve the process:

1. We request that the countries of the region ratify the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances and establish mechanisms to ensure the implementation of this Convention;
2. We ask all competent institutions in the region to sign bilateral international agreements on information exchange and cooperation in the process of tracing missing persons;
3. We request from prosecutors' offices of all countries in the region and all levels of judiciary that they seek to obtain information during investigations on locations of gravesites and circumstances of disappearances principally while interviewing suspects or witnesses in cases of war crimes;
4. We request that legislation in the countries of the region be amended in order to stipulate that the relocation of or interference with a gravesite, in order to conceal it, be treated as a criminal offence;
5. We request the provision of adequate financial resources and expert employees for prosecutors' offices and courts processing war crimes cases and the creation of efficient witness protection mechanisms;
6. We request from countries in the region to take effective measures to conduct proper and impartial investigations of all cases of disappearance, to prosecute and punish perpetrators regardless of their ethnicity and ensure the fair and adequate treatment of the rights of families of missing persons, including the right to reparations or compensation;
7. We request proceedings to be launched in BiH, in order to assess the legality of legislation regulating the rights of members of families of missing persons in cases where these laws are not in accordance with the constitution;
8. We request a report on the implementation of decisions of the Human Rights Chamber and the Constitutional Court of BiH regarding missing persons issue and rights of families of missing persons;
9. We request from government commissions on missing persons and other government institutions to give absolute priority to the exhumation of imperilled mortal remains and known and located gravesites in the region, as well as the re-exhumation of NN gravesites;
10. If documentation and other arguments of competent institutions indicate that there is a need for additional checks of identity concerning previously identified persons, we request that the competent institutions take the necessary steps, including the use of DNA analysis;
11. We request competent institutions involved in the process of tracing missing persons to intensify their activities; above all we insist that prosecutors' offices and courts increase their activities in the processing of suspects of all war crimes committed in the region;

12. We request from competent institutions that they conduct investigations into the fate of persons who were registered by the ICRC as detainees, and whose subsequent disappearance is linked to the responsibility of government institutions;
13. We recommend that the Joint Project on DNA-led Identifications between the Ministry of Family, Veterans' Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity of the Republic of Croatia and the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP) be improved in accordance with the laws of the Republic of Croatia and ICMP's own procedures in order to hasten the process of identifications;
14. We request that the ICMP organize a meeting between the government commissions on missing persons from the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Serbia with representatives of families' associations of missing persons from the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Serbia in the spring of 2009;
15. We request that the ICMP urgently organize a meeting between representatives of Albanian and Serb associations of families of missing persons and relevant institutions involved in the process of tracing missing persons in Kosovo, with the aim of ascertaining facts on the fate of all missing persons from this area;
16. We request that additional mechanisms be created in order to collect information on the location of gravesites and that the competent institutions of countries in the region request financial support from European Union institutions to support the full functioning of these mechanisms;
17. We request that all existing documentation and information be exchanged between the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Serbia without delay and that representatives of institutions for tracing missing persons from these countries organize meetings on a regular basis in order to exchange information and improve cooperation;
18. We request that law on missing persons is passed in the Republic of Serbia and in Kosovo and that the Republic of Croatia amends existing laws which regulate the rights of civilian victims of the homeland war;
19. We request that associations of families of missing persons be proclaimed to be of special public importance and granted special status and adequate financing for their activities;
20. We send these conclusions to governments and to parliaments of countries in the region and other institutions involved in the process of tracing missing persons and to the media and we task the Regional Coordination Board to follow their implementation.