

## **MESSAGE OF PATRIARCH PAVLE AND CARDINAL KUHARIC FOLLOWING THEIR MEETING IN GENEVA ON 23 SEPTEMBER 1992**

After our meetings in Sremski Karlovci and in Slavonski Brod in May and August last year, we have, by the grace of God, met for the third time today, 23 September 1992, in the Ecumenical Institute, Chateau de Bossey, near Geneva, where we and the members of our delegations have experienced the hospitality of the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Council of European Bishops Conferences (CCEE). For this hospitality and their generous assistance during our meeting we express our thanks. We also thank all of those who have sent us their greetings and expressed their support in prayer and good wishes.

We deeply regret that the chief of the Islamic Community, Ra'is ul Ulama Jakub Selimoski and his delegation, who had stated that they would come to participate in the conversations, were unable to travel out of Sarajevo. We hope that the tragic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina will change for the better and that his participation also will be possible in our encounters and conversations in the near future.

First of all, we joined in common prayer to our Saviour, the Saviour of all people, our Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Prince of Peace and Peacemaker, that he will give his peace, the only lasting and indestructible peace, to our peoples and to all humanity. Then we sought, after an opening exchange, to enter into a candid and truthful dialogue on all dimensions of the present situation, beginning with spiritual and pastoral problems, including those of people in all ethnic communities of Bosnia-Herzegovina and elsewhere who are threatened by this situation.

Following our prayers and conversations, we appeal with one mind and voice to the faithful of our churches, to the responsible organs of the state, to military commandos and troops, to all peoples and men and women of our common geographical and spiritual area, as well as to all international forums and institutions engaged in the search for a solution or in the provision of aid to our region and in our states; and we do not only appeal but demand, on the basis of our spiritual position and moral responsibility:

1. Immediately and without condition to cease all hostilities, all bloodshed and all destruction, in particular to stop the blasphemous and insane destruction of places of prayer and holy places, Christian and Muslim alike; and that negotiations between the warring parties be initiated without delay.
2. Immediately and without condition to liberate all prisoners of war and hostages, as well as to close all prison camps and to free all those incarcerated in this evil war.
3. Immediately and without condition to cease the inhuman practice of ethnic cleansing, by whomever it is being incited or carried out.
4. To permit all refugees and deportees to return to their homes and to ensure all bishops and priests of our churches as well as Islamic spiritual leaders free access to their flock and undisturbed exercise of their office.
5. That normal communication and unrestricted circulation be re-established, as well as the possibility of free movement and settlement for all people, whatever their religious or national affiliation, and
6. That all suffering people be assured undisturbed and equal access to humanitarian aid.

Equally with one mind and voice we condemn all crimes and distance ourselves from all criminals, irrespective of which people or army they belong to or which church or religious affiliation they claim. We especially express our horror at the perpetration of extremely immoral misdeeds, at the mistreatment of older and younger women and girls, which only monsters can perpetrate, no matter what name they give themselves.

Before God, before humanity and before our own conscience we pledge that we will use all evangelical means and the full influence of our office and responsibility in church and society to work, in our own states and peoples, decisively and openly for peace, justice and the salvation of each and every one, for the dignity and inalienable rights of every individual and every people, for humanity and tolerance, for forgiveness and love.

We ourselves call, individually and together, for repentance before the God of love, for conversation and for service to him, that we can live anew as neighbours, friends and brothers,

Peace to all!

Patriarch Pavle of Serbia

Archbishop of Pec, Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci

Franjo Cardinal Kuharic

Archbishop and Metropolitan of Zagreb

**TO THE RIJASET (LEADERSHIP)  
OF THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY IN SARAJEVO**

We deeply regret that it was not possible for you to travel to Geneva for the very important joint meeting which we have held, for in our conversations we desire to contribute to the peace so much desired by all peoples.

Our message and our appeals express the united positions taken at this meeting, but your reflections and proposals are lacking. We are convinced that you will agree with the principles and positions we have set forth, which are based on equality of rights, justice and peace. We hope there will be an opportunity for a future meeting in which all three sides can participate and in which we can exchange ideas and draw constructive conclusions for our future life together in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

From this meeting we send our best wishes to your and pray to the Almighty God that he will bring the conflicts to an end and that peace may prevail among all people.

The participants in the meeting.

Patriarch Pavle of Serbia

Archbishop of Pec. Metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci

Franjo Cardinal Kuharic

Archbishop and Metropolitan of Zagreb