

Humanitarian Law Center Kosovo

Subject: Annual report

Period covered in report: January 1st 2016 –December 31th 2016

Prishtinë/Pristina, February 2016

1. Organizations background

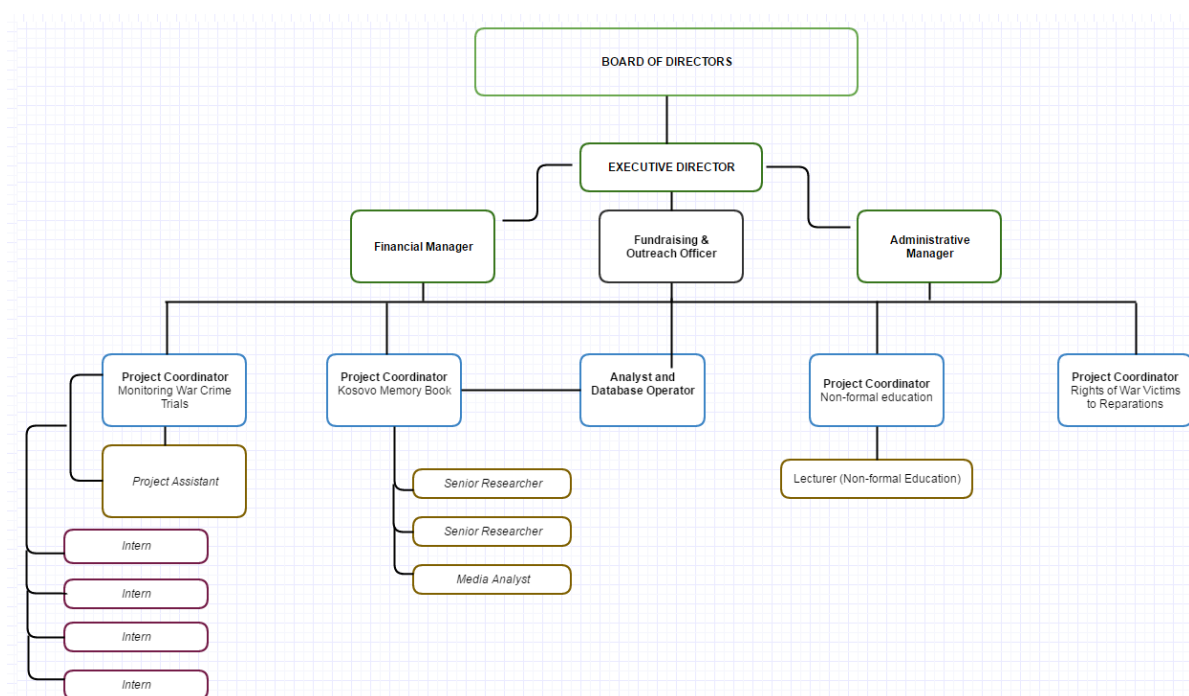
The Humanitarian Law Center (HLC) Kosovo was established in Prishtinë/Pristina in May 1997, by a well-known human rights activist, Mrs. Nataša Kandić, as a branch office of the Humanitarian Law Center. Until the outbreak of hostilities between Serbian security forces and the Kosovo Liberation Army in February 1998, HLC Kosovo focused on documenting police repression towards Albanians, investigating cases of torture, illegal detention, and political trials. After this date, HLC Kosovo shifted its focus to documenting the killings and disappearances of Kosovo Albanians and Kosovo Serbs. When NATO intervened in 1999, HLC Kosovo temporarily moved its office to Montenegro, where it continued its documentation work among the Albanian refugees there. Following the June 1999 peace agreement that ended the war, HLC Kosovo returned to Prishtinë/Pristina to continue its documentation work. Since that time, HLC Kosovo has published numerous reports, advocated for the rights of victims, monitored trials, urged authorities to bring war crimes perpetrators to justice, and investigated the killing and disappearances of Albanians, Serbs, Roma, Bosnians and other minorities in Kosovo. Today, HLC Kosovo focuses its work on documenting crimes, trial monitoring and support to the victims in the exercise of their right to justice and to reparations. Additionally, HLC Kosovo has developed a program on educating the youth about the past and how to deal with it, by designing a non-formal and participant-oriented curriculum, based on facts and on victims' stories.

Since April 2011, HLC Kosovo has been registered as a new independent organization registered at the Ministry of Public Administration of the Republic of Kosovo (under number 5200236-2). Nonetheless some of HLC Kosovo's projects and activities are conducted in cooperation with HLC in Serbia, such as the Initiative for Regional Commission for the Establishment of the Facts about War Crimes and other Gross Violations of Human Rights Committed on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia (RECOM).

The board members of HLC Kosovo are:

- Nataša Kandić, human rights activist, Serbia
- Teki Bokshi, lawyer, Kosovo
- Ismet Hajdari, journalist, Kosovo
- Kosovare Kelmendi, lawyer, Kosovo
- Mario Mažić, human rights activist, Croatia and
- Veton Nurkollari, artist, Kosovo
- Bekim Blakaj, executive director of HLC Kosovo.

Organizational governing bodies (Management and Board) share power, and usually function together when it comes to decision-making processes. HLC Kosovo organizes two meetings per year with all board members. During these meetings, HLC Kosovo's executive director presents the narrative, financial and external audit report, and reports to board members on the functionality of the organization. Board of the directors is a decision making body and is responsible for the strategic development of the organization.



HLC Kosovo's fifth board meeting took place on 17th of June 2016. All Board members were physically present at the meeting, along with the administrative manager and the financial manager.

2. HLC Kosovo's Vision and Mission

The vision of HLC Kosovo is a society that faces the past and where rights are respected equally. HLC Kosovo seeks to fulfill its **mission** by contributing to the Kosovo's ability to establish the rule of law, face the past and restore the dignity of victims.

In 2015, the Humanitarian Law Center Kosovo (HLC Kosovo) implemented activities under its two main programs: **Kosovo Activities on Transitional Justice** and **Regional Cooperation**. Under the former, HLC Kosovo's activities were focused on promoting reconciliation through truth telling, criminal accountability, institutional reform, reparations and education of youth on transitional justice issues. Under the later, HLC Kosovo implemented activities that had impact on improving regional cooperation in the transitional justice field, which is crucial due to the regional character of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, including the Kosovo conflict, and to the movement of victims and perpetrators across the region.

HLC Kosovo's activities at large have the goal to contribute towards the creation of better social environment for Kosovo society that will entrench positive peace and the rule of law in the country. For this, the activities have several interrelated aims: to identify all victims of war crimes in Kosovo and provide them with justice and reparations, and fight impunity of perpetrators. It also intends to provide a fact-based historical truth and educate new

generations about what happened in the past in order to create a collective memory based on facts enabling everyone to accept victims from the other community.

3. Strategic planning HLC Kosovo 2015-2017

From 27th – 29th of September, 2014, the HLC Kosovo engaged in a strategic planning meetings jointly with Nenad Golčevski as a facilitator to plan the strategy of the organization for the 2015-2018 period. The meeting focused on the SWOT analysis of the organization and SMART analysis of each project. As a result of this strategic planning, HLC Kosovo staff came up with new activities and projects that have been initiated in 2015 and will be developed over a three years period.

The new transitional Justice Programme is composed of 3 essential components:

1. The monitoring and reporting on war crimes trials: While keeping local trials as a central focus, the Programme extended the monitoring to the work of the soon-to-be Special Court. In this respect, the HLC long-term goal is to be established as the watchdog and main expert organization providing unbiased information on the work of the Special Court

2. The representation of victims: HLC Kosovo will actively engage in locating victims and their families and representing them in court in Kosovo and Serbia.

3. The Education on Transitional Justice: Spreading knowledge on Transitional Justice within professional and non-professional communities will remain a priority.

These objectives are to be attained in the frame of two main programs - **Kosovo Activities** and **Regional Cooperation** – gathering in total **7 projects**, themselves divided in specific and targeted subprojects. These projects are seeking both:

- the continuation of existing projects: such as: Monitoring War Crimes trials, ethnically and politically motivated crimes; Non Formal Education; RECOM; Kosovo Memory Book (joint project with HLC Serbia); Reparations for Victims of unlawful detention (joint project with HLC Serbia); Batajnica Memory Initiative (joint project with HLC Serbia)
- the development of new activities: such as Monitoring the work of Special Court (to be established); Representing victims in cases for War Crimes and submitting criminal reports; Publication on completed court cases; Promoting the realization of the right to Reparation and strategic litigation for war victims; and develop new activities within existing projects

The year 2016 continued implementing this new strategy, and the results this last year will be closely monitored in order to inform, amend and adjust the new Programme in the remaining year of implementation. A new strategic framing is foreseen in the summer 2017.

HLC Kosovo currently employs **14** permanent staff members, **1** associates and **4** interns.

4. Completed project's and activities January, 1st 2015 –December, 31th 2015

During 2016, HLC Kosovo has implemented the following projects:

- Monitoring War Crime Trials;
- Kosovo Memory Book;
- Non-formal education for youth in Kosovo on Dealing with the Past;
- Promoting the Realization of Victims' Rights to Reparations (Phase 1)
- Batajnica Memory Initiative;
- Representing Victims in War Crimes Trials
- RECOM initiative

4.1. Monitoring War Crime Trials and Politically and Ethnically Motivated Crimes in Kosovo for the period of January – December 2016

Kosovo judiciary system is still engaged in prosecuting war crimes cases related to a conflict that has ended fifteen years ago. Due to the sensitivity of certain cases, the presence of international judges and prosecutors was introduced in the Kosovo judiciary through the European Union rule of law mission (EULEX) as European biggest civilian mission ever. Although the creation of a new Special Court for crimes committed between 1998 and 2000 was announced, the local judiciary is still a chief pillar in bringing justice to victims of the war crimes and human rights abuses. The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) has almost ended its work and small numbers of cases related to Kosovo crimes were finalized several years ago.

HLC Kosovo is still the only organization to systematically cover, monitor and analyse all war crime trials and most of trials for ethnically and/or politically motivated crimes at the national level. Thus, professional and general audience relies on the HLC Kosovo's reporting in order to receive unbiased information about the trials. The practice of writing reports on each court sessions, and of publishing analysis following final verdicts and comprehensive annual reports, additionally strengthened HLC Kosovo's position as the main source to provide recommendations on improving the performance of the judiciary and the legislation and procedures applied in trials for war crimes and ethnically and/or politically motivated crimes. This has led to a continuation of the good relationship that HLC Kosovo has with both local and international legal bodies present in Kosovo.

Since it has no competitor in this field, HLC Kosovo is serving as a watchdog to both local and international legal presence in Kosovo, by having its experts watch over the judiciary's work and acting to improve its performances. During the reporting period, HLC Kosovo continued monitoring sensitive trials for war crimes and ethnically and politically motivated crimes before the mixed panels in Kosovo.

Based on its monitoring findings, HLC Kosovo produced an annual report, which contains important recommendations for the judiciary and for the legislation and procedures in use in Kosovo. Although HLC Kosovo maintains a very good relationship with the EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), it does not hold back on constructively criticizing their work, which also strengthens HLC Kosovo's credibility amongst media and the wider audience.

HLC Kosovo has also given a great importance to informing the public by increasing the amount of information available in relation to important developments in war crimes trials, and ethnically or politically motivated trials.

All of our reports are widely distributed to the general public and the professional audience in Kosovo, as well as being available on our website and facebook page. Without being specifically targeted, they aim to monitor and report on existing practices in the field of criminal justice in Kosovo, discuss the implementation or existing regulations, and raise awareness of the public to these themes. The recommendations provided, while communicating our opinion on current issues, do not intend to change the laws but rather to discuss practices and initiate public debate.

Court Monitoring

During the period of January 1st 2016 – December 31st 2016, HLC Kosovo conducted a total of **55** days of monitoring trial sessions, produced daily reports from these monitoring and conducted **22** meetings with students undertaking an internship at HLC Kosovo. HLC Kosovo's staff collected **421** documents - from investigation phase, evidences, testimony of witnesses and decisions – amounting to **6226** pages of court documents in pre-trial proceedings and investigations, from the **15** following cases:

At the basic court in Mitrovica

- Gani Konjuhi and others (ethnic)
- Oliver Ivanovic et al (war crime and ethnic)
- Milaim Zeka & Rustem Rrukolli (disclosure of the identity of the anonymous witness)
- Slavoljub Velickovic (ethnic)
- Xhemshit Krasniqi (war crime)
- Kasalovic & Sovrlic, also known as Zymberi II case (ethnic)
- Klecka (war crime)
- Slobodan Sovrlic et al (ethnic)
- Sabit Geci et al (war crime)
- Agim Demaj et al (war crime)
- Radic & Vlaskovic, also known as Zymberi I case (ethnic)

- Korenica & Vasic, also known as Lowers case (witness intimidation)
- Ismet Haxha et al (war crime)

At the appeal court

- Kasalovic & Sovrlic, also known as Zymberi II case (ethnic)
- Oliver Ivanovic et al (war crime and ethnic)

Internships

During the reporting period, HLC Kosovo hosted **15** interns to monitor war crime trials and ethnically and politically motivated crimes in Kosovo. The students followed each trial session, and drafted reports on them. In total **130** students reports were submitted during the reporting period. HLC Kosovo's coordinator held a total of **22** meetings with interns to discuss and analyze the trial sessions that they had monitored. During this period, 5 interns have prepared seminar papers on different topics.

Analyses of finished War Crime Cases

During the reporting period HLC Kosovo, prepared 7 case analyses as follows:

- 1) Agim Demaj et al (Drenica I) - war crime;
- 2) Sabit Geci et al (Drenica II) - war crime;
- 3) Radic & Vlaskovic –ethnic;
- 4) Ivan Radivojevic – war crime;
- 5) Sovrlic & Kasalovic – ethnic crime.
- 6) Xhemshit Krasniqi (war crime)
- 7) Oliver Ivanovic et al (war crime and ethnic)

Round Table and publication of our annual report – “Justice remains Unreachable” - March 29th 2016¹

On March 29, 2016, HLC Kosovo hosted a Roundtable on War Crime Trials and Ethnically and Politically motivated offences in Kosovo in 2015. The purpose of the roundtable was to present the report prepared by HLC Kosovo on the court proceedings for war crime trials and politically and ethnically

¹ <http://hlc-kosovo.org/?wpdmdl=4406>

motivated crimes in 2015. The report gave in-depth analyses of 17 cases which came before the Basic, Appeal and Supreme Court within Kosovo, and focused on EULEX competences, transfer of competences to the local staff, local staff willingness to deal with these crimes, and challenges in the establishment of the special court. It also presented HLC Kosovo's recommendations and views about on what is necessary for Kosovo's judiciary in the future.

The roundtable and debate focused on following issues:

- How prepared the Kosovo judiciary is to take over the prosecution of war crimes in the future, and what progress was made in terms of capacity building in general
- What has been the impact of EULEX on the prosecution of the most high-profile crimes so far;
- What sort of assistance is still needed by the Kosovo judiciary from EULEX, and in which format?

The discussions in the roundtable were split into two sessions: the first discussed the issues **war crime trials: results and expectations**, which HLC Kosovo consider to be the central problem for Kosovo's judiciary in 2015; while the second was focused on discussing the upcoming **Special Chambers (Special Court) and its perspectives**.

There were over 70 participants at the roundtable including representatives from Kosovo's judicial and governmental institutions, EU representatives, European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), local non-governmental organizations, as well as international organizations and embassies present in Kosovo. The panelists came from the international, local communities, thus they offered varied opinions on the issues discussed. The representatives of the institutions all stated that HLC Kosovo's work - analyses, recommendation and findings - were appropriate and helpful for Kosovo Judicial and EULEX Kosovo mission.

After the round table HLC Kosovo received several e-mails from participants and panelists of the round table who congratulated HLC Kosovo and its staff for very successful round table and useful debate.

Numerous media reports of the roundtable and of the publication of the HLC Kosovo's annual report occurred, among which:

1. <http://portalb.mk/258840-sot-raportohet-per-krimet-e-luftes-ne-kosove/>
2. <http://www.ekonomiaonline.com/video/36359/fdhk-prezanton-raportin-vjetor-mbi-monitorimin-e-gjykimeve-mbi-krimet-e-luftes/>
3. <http://www.kosovapress.com/sq/siguri/gjashte-here-me-shume-shqiptare-te-akuzuar-per-krimet-lufte-se-sa-serbe-68357/>

4. <http://www.kosovapress.com/sq/siguri/per-nje-vit-30-shqiptare-dhe-5-serbe-jane-akuzuar-per-krike-lufte-68323/>
5. <http://www.rtklive.com/?id=2&r=64862>
6. <http://klankosova.tv/fdh-prezanton-raportin-mbi-monitorimin-e-gjykimeve-te-krikeve-te-luftes/>
7. <http://www.arbresh.info/lajmet/fdh-prezanton-monitorimin-e-gjykimeve-mbi-krimet-e-luftes/>
8. <http://expresskosova.com/lajme/per-nje-vit-30-shqiptare-dhe-5-serbe-jane-akuzuar-per-krike-lufte.html>
9. <http://expresskosova.com/lajme/%E2%80%8Bprezantohet-raporti-per-krimet-e-luftes-dhe-veprat-e-motivuar-etnikisht.html>
10. <http://gazetafjala.com/publikohet-raporti-per-monitorimin-e-gjykimeve-me-krike-lufte/>
11. <http://www.ilirianews.mk/?p=54944>
12. <http://www.ilirianews.mk/?p=55026>
13. <http://lajmi.net/per-nje-vit-30-shqiptare-dhe-5-serbe-jane-akuzuar-per-krike-lufte/>
14. <http://lajmi.net/sot-raportohet-per-krimet-e-luftes-ne-kosove/>
15. <http://www.telegrafi.com/prezantohet-raporti-per-krimet-e-luftes-dhe-veprat-e-motivuar-etnikisht/>
16. <http://www.kosova.info/?p=255438>
17. <http://www.lajmyt.com/publikohet-raporti-per-monitorimin-e-gjykimeve-me-krike-lufte/>
18. <http://www.topalbaniaradio.com/v7/kosove-publikohet-raporti-per-monitorimin-e-rasteve-gjyqesore-per-krike-lufte/>
19. <http://koha.net/?id=27&l=105528>
20. <http://www.rtklive.com/rtk2/?id=2&r=5386>
21. <http://www.info-ks.net/vijesti/kosovo/63894/fhp-pravda-i-dalje-nedostizna>
22. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O01vPZPmZqo&list=PLRrFsdYF5HhJpjsE_tg8Y82KaTseurEO9&index=1 RTK 1 (minute 21:20-23:15)
23. <http://klankosova.tv/prokuroria-speciale-vazhdon-te-perballet-me-sfida-te-medha-video/> - Klan Kosova
24. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TNKjCXz8ym0&list=PLdZvL5MTAKSiju7UUZrwYU4zWmun7fDFU&index=1> KTV (minute 10:25-13:25)
25. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJvMIBpV54M> RROKUM (minute 11:40-14:20)
26. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m24D8gwFlos> Tribuna Chanel (minute 10:00-12:48)
27. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ljZ2tOwseIg&list=PLf6ulLvSRTb2uvWzT9yNuSbbFxQZpdDH4&index=2> RTV 21 (minute 32:50-37:25)

The event was transmitted live by RTK and reported on in Newspaper Koha Ditore (30.03.2016). The press release from this event was published on our website.²

The constructive criticisms and recommendations produced in our annual report were therefore welcomed by the professional public. During the reporting period, and following the roundtable, the Chairperson of the Committee to amend the criminal procedure code has requested suggestions and opinions from HLC Kosovo regarding the manner of extending the deadline for war crimes investigations, seeking to profit from our great experience in the field.

² <http://hlc-kosovo.org/?p=4421>

Meeting with officials

The cooperation between HLC Kosovo and the judicial institutions is becoming stronger and deeper, as the recognition of our legitimacy and serious work grows in the professional field in Kosovo. During this period HLC Kosovo had a meeting with Judges, Prosecutors and lawyers of the cases which were processed during this period, and noticed an increasing willingness of these stakeholders to cooperate with us and communicate data.

In particular, HLC Kosovo has 2 meetings with of President of the Judicial Council, we are making efforts to sign a Memorandum of access to judicial documents in those cases that we are monitoring. The Juridical Council of Kosovo should have an internal meeting to discuss and decide regarding this issue. There are not any developments on their side but HLC Kosovo is keeping the contacts to push the process further.

Other important meetings were with:

- Aleksander Lumezi and Reshat Millaku – Chief of the State Prosecution,
- Paul Flynn - international prosecutor
- Reshat Millaku – Head of Special Prosecution Office,
- Prosecutors: Charles Hardaway, Damare Elizabeth Theriot, Andrew Carney, Drita Hajdari, Jaroslava Novotna.
- Judges: Dariusz Sielicki, Roxana Comsa, Vitor Pardal, Vidar Stensland, Hajnalka Karpati and Radostin Petrov
- Lawyers: Ibrahim Dobruna, Bajram Tmava, Haxhi Millaku, Albana Kelmendi, Agim Lushta, Miodrag Brkljac, Nebojsa Vlajic, Zivojin Jkanovic, ect
- Representative of victims: Burhan Maxhuni
- Legal officers: Chiara Tagliani, Agron Kelmendi, Vera Manuello, Alan Vasak, Dukagjin Kerveshi, Adnan Isufi, Shkelqesa Ibrahim, ect.
- Dragana Nikolic Solomon - Head of PPIO

Moreover, the HLC Kosovo has daily contact with lawyers and legal officers. They are the main persons who supply us with judicial documentation. HLC Kosovo managed to obtain court documents about all major trials and to make them accessible to the general public.

Public statements and press releases:

HLC Kosovo, during the reporting period, released the following statements and press releases:

- [“The hinder on the right of free movement and religion rituals not to be allowed”](#) regarding to the violent protests that took place on August 28, 2016 in the Mushtisht/Mušutište village of Suhareka/Suva Reka Municipality. The protest aimed at preventing the 150 pilgrim’s, which have lived as refugees in various settlements in Serbia for more than 17 years, from visiting the village. This meant preventing them from taking part to the liturgy of the Orthodox Church on the occasion of the orthodox feast of *Mother of God*.
- *Press release regarding the appeal session in the case Prosecutor against Oliver Ivanović*: [Review of the right „not to be tried or punished twice for the same matter“in the case of Oliver Ivanović](#)³
- Press release regarding to the judgment of Enver Zymberi case or known as “Zymberi I: [Suspended sentences imposed on the defendants in the Zymberi I case](#).”⁴

Seminar on criminal justice

During this period, from 26th October – 1st November 2016 in Serbia and Kosovo, HLC Kosovo together with four (4) other partners national and international NGO-s took part to a seminar called “*Justice without reconciliation? War Crime trials in Europe since 1945*”. While a first meeting happened in Limoges, France, the final phase of this seminar took place in Pristina, *where* meetings were organized with survivors of the war massacre in Kosovo, meeting with State Prosecutor, EULEX Kosovo mission, Public University of Pristina and others).

Our staf also took pare to the annual regional RULE OF LAW forum for southeast Europe in Sarajevo.

Kosovo Specialist Chambers

As will be explained at the end of this report, our work regarding monitoring sessions in front of the new Special Court has not started in the reporting period due to the fact that the court was not created yet. However our preliminary work of establishing contacts and seeking to preserve a good public image of the court begun.

³ Prosecutor against Oliver Ivanović <http://hlc-kosovo.org/?p=4833>

⁴ Prosecutor against Radić and Vlašković <http://hlc-kosovo.org/?p=4858>

During the reporting period HLC Kosovo obtained a continuous correspondence with Ms. Silke Studzinsky, Head of Victims Participation, The Hague office-KOSOVO SPECIALIST CHAMBER. HLC Kosovo provided The Hague office with various information and updates on the following issues:

- Explanation on how the Kosovo Judicial system functions in practice despite the applicable law. Moreover, the obstacles that the compensation claims may encounter.
- Clarification on the compensation claims by the domestic Kosovo courts
- The territorial competencies of the compensation claims
- Information on current Kosovo civil society organizations due to the upcoming visit of the Mrs. Silke Studzinsky and to help them establish contacts with relevant actors in Kosovo.

We are continuously monitoring the official web page of Kosovo Specialist Chamber and Specialist Prosecutor's office via this link: <https://www.scp-ks.org/en>. We also closely follow daily news and statements given by various relevant subjects/institutions. In fact, during this period, HLC Kosovo was often contacted by media with regard the Kosovo Specialist Chamber. HLC Kosovo's executive director gave several statements on this topic. Some of them may be found below:

- <http://koha.net/?id=1&l=145377>
- <http://indeksonline.net/lajmet/gjykata-speciale-mund-ta-trazoje-skenen-politike-33638/>
- <http://telegrafi.com/gjykata-speciale-mund-ta-trazoje-skenen-politike/>

The establishment of the Specialist Chamber grounds were more evident by the visit of the Head of the Prosecution in Prishtina and Belgrade (7 and 11 November 2016) and the appointment of Dr. Ekaterina Trendafilova as the President of the Specialist Chamber. In addition, The Home State Agreement will come into force on the 1st of January 2017. These events are accessible at the link below:

- <https://www.scp-ks.org/en/specialist-prosecutor-visits-pristina>
- <https://www.scp-ks.org/en/specialist-prosecutor-visits-belgrade>
- <https://www.scp-ks.org/en/host-state-agreement-come-force-1-january-2017>
- <https://www.scp-ks.org/en/dr-ekaterina-trendafilova-appointed-president-specialist-chambers>

4.2. Kosovo Memory Book

Within this project HLC Kosovo was focused in the field research. Research was focused in in two direction, verification of data for early evidenced victims and amendment narratives about circumstances of death or disappearances of those victims. The second direction of the research involves searching for information about potential victims, for which HLC Kosovo doesn't possess any information from the field research but whose names were mentioned in other sources, like "What Happens in Kosovo" by Joseph Martinsen, "Serbian Crimes in Kosovo" by Kosovo Archive etc. The field research in reporting period was focused in the following regions of Kosovo:

Gjakovë/Đakovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane and Glogoc/Glogovac, Istog/Istok, Malishevë/Mališevo, Kosovska Mitrovica/Mitrovicë, Kačanik/Kaçanik.

Verifying information for already evidenced victims

In the reporting period, HLC Kosovo's methods of collecting information were simplified with the use of a unified questionnaire for all field research. That means that the staff, when carrying out both formal interviews or verification of information with family members of victims, is using the same **form for verification of data**. In total, **486** of those forms were completed during the reporting period, allowing to collect information on **900** existing victims. While most of these forms concerns victims of Albanian nationality, 4 concerned victims of Serb nationality, 6 concerned victims of Ashkali nationality and 3 concerned victims of Bosnian nationality.

Collecting information about potential victims

When it comes to potential victims, HLC Kosovo's researchers have searched for information about **223** new potential victims during the reporting period. They have conducted **55** interviews and filled out **168** forms for verification.

Through this process HLC Kosovo came to the conclusion that out of these 223 potential victims, **60** were indeed direct war victim, while **21** are in fact still alive, **21** are not war related victims (natural death), and **10** were killed but not because of war (suicide, revenge, traffic accident etc.). Further, **111** of them were victims for which we could not find any information or already evidenced victims (with names wrongly written in other sources). It must be noted that HLC Kosovo staff is not counting as direct war victims also what were formally counted as indirect war victims (die due to the lack of food or access to medicine and health support).

Collecting evidences, documents and photos

During reporting period HLC Kosovo has collected a total of **1109 different types of evidences**. **361** of them are certificates of death, identification and exhumation. Researchers have made **457** photos of memorials. **156** photos of victims were collected, as well as **135** other types of documents. All those evidences were entered on KMB database.

Media clipping

From 1st October 2015 until 31th March 2016, HLC Kosovo photographed and translated **2697** articles in different written medias related to war victims. With these media items HLC Kosovo enriched information about **7829** victims. All texts were translated in Serbian and analyzed and entered into Kosovo Memory Book database.

Public presentation of KMB database

Independent evaluation of the Kosovo Memory Book was conducted in March, 2012 the Human Rights Data Analysis Group (HRDAG)⁵. On December 10th 2014 the evaluation team submitted two reports – one made by HRDAG Executive Director Mr Patrick Ball and HRDAG Field Consultant Ms. Jule Kruger, and one made by Professor Michael Spagat from the Royal Holloway, University of London. The reports concluded that the Kosovo Memory Book database documents all or nearly all the human losses during conflict in Kosovo during the period 1998 – 2000.

During the reporting period, the Humanitarian Law Center (HLC) and the Humanitarian Law Center Kosovo (HLC Kosovo) presented publicly their findings from the evaluation of database of Kosovo Memory Book Database in **three** different occasions. Each time, international experts on quantitative and statistical analyses of human losses in armed conflicts presented the results of their evaluation of the Database.

On the occasion of the international human rights day, as was detailed above, several members of the Coalition for RECOM presented existing research on human losses and detention facilities operating during the wars in the territory of the former Yugoslavia on the 14th of December. The same presentation was carried out in Zagreb on 16th December 2015 and in Belgrade on 18th December 2015.

Additionally, the KMB database is introduced to students attending educational workshops.

4.3. Dealing with the past: innovative non-formal education opportunities for youth in Kosovo

⁵ <https://hrdag.org/2015/02/04/kosovo-memory-evaluation/>

The objective of the project is to make and keep Kosovo youth aware and active in understanding transitional justice principles, and to promote the importance of implementation of transitional justice mechanisms such as criminal prosecutions, reparations, institutional reforms and truth commissions to enable Kosovo society to move forward from its recent violent past. HLC Kosovo aims to put special emphasis on the dissemination of accurate facts through its non-formal education activities.

For this purpose, HLC Kosovo is working since 2011 throughout the whole Kosovo to reach out to as many university and high school students as possible, as well as the wider Kosovo audience. The final aim of the project is to include Transitional Justice in civic education official curricula. Indeed today the formal teaching material in Kosovo ignores facts about war crimes committed established in court and focuses instead on the suffering of a specific community. As the Ministry of Education has announced a general textbooks review to take place in 2017, these actions are ever more relevant and need to be maintained in the future.

Workshops in high schools

During the Reporting period HLC Kosovo within its project: *“Dealing with the Past: Innovative Non-Formal Education Opportunities for Youth in Kosovo”* has held **20** workshops in secondary schools, reaching out to **721** pupils.

Each workshops starts with a short **documentary movie**, highlighting the risks contained in societies who did not deal with their past and refrained from implementing the four pillars of Transitional Justice. The short movie also serves well as a base ground for a debate that later opens the path for introduction to Transitional Justice. In the second part of the Workshop, HLC Kosovo informs students briefly with the history of Yugoslavia (Dissolution: Wars, Causalities...etc.), with a focus on Kosovo. After examples are presented to the students, together with facts and findings, students are presented all four pillars of transitional justice and their respective particularities.

For better understanding of the topic, as well as greater engagement students, HLC Kosovo offers a chance to the students to participate in a **mock-truth commission**, during which students take different roles (Commissioners, Victims, Perpetrators and Observers) and mock the work of a truth commission during a public hearing, as well as preparing a one paragraph “report” with their recommendations.

During the reporting period HLC Kosovo organized the following workshops in secondary schools, universities and elsewhere:

Nr.	Date	School	Place	Nr. of participants
1.	04.05.2016	“Eqrem Çabej” Philological gymnasium	School library, Prishtina	16
2.	17.05.2016	“Ymer Prizreni” economical high school	DokuKino, Prizren	40
3.	27.06.2016	Loyola gymnasium	Loyola, Prizren	33
4.	22.09.2016	“Gjergj Kastriot-Skenderbeu” gymnasium	School library, Glogoc	52
5.	06.10.2016	“Remzi Ademaj” gymnasium	School’s sports hall, Prizren	53
6.	11.10.2016	“Ismail Qemali” gymnasium	School library, Kamenicë	30
7.	13.10.2016	“Luigj Gurakuqi” gymnasium	School library, Klinë	32
8.	14.10.2016	ZENIT High School	School library, Prishtina	35
9.	20.10.2016	British School of Kosova	School amphitheater, Prishtina	84
10.	21.10.2016	“Ulpiana” gymnasium	School library, Lipjan	19
11.	26.10.2016	“Hoxhë Kadri Prishtina” economical high school	School library, Prishtina	40
12.	28.10.2016	“Ali Hadri” economical high school	School library, Peja	31
13.	01.11.2016	“Marin Barleti” economical high school	Classroom, Gjiilan	28
14.	03.11.2016	Malisheva’s vocational school-Compentency Center	School’s conference room, Malisheva	26
15.	08.11.2016	“Shaban Hashani” philological gymnasium	School classroom, Ferizaj	34
16.	09.11.2016	“Ulpiana” gymnasium Gadime division	School classroom, Gadime	20
17.	18.11.2016	“Isa Boletini” economical high school	School library, Podujevë	36
18.	21.11.2016	“Haxhi Zeka” gymnasium	School library, Istog	36
19.	22.11.2016	“Hasan Prishtina” economical high school	School library, Mitrovicë	36
20.	09.12.2016	“Gjon Buzuku” gymnasium	DokuFest Cinema Hall	40

Overall, HLC Kosovo was very satisfied with the organization and student participation and interest shown during the lectures. High school students were very active during discussions, and raised very interesting issues, mostly related to reparations and war crime trials. 1998-1999 was well known in

terms of Kosovo's recent history, but lacked information about causalities particularly about victims of other communities. In general, HLC Kosovo is very pleased with how the students are responding to and engaging with the topics; they show a strong interest in the topic and also often ask for more information.

Lectures in Universities and trainings for civil society

In addition to the workshops in high schools, HLC Kosovo extended its educational activities to university students and NGO activities. These lectures occurred on a slightly different format, as the challenge of this variety of audience – both in terms of age and quality – resides in providing a tailor-made programme to each target group.

During this period, HLC Kosovo conducted lectures with 14 groups of students from various study fields. There were 442 students that participated these lectures in total.

Nr.	Date	University/Seminar	Place	Nr. of participants
1.	23.01.2016	MA in Human Rights, European Inter-University	HLC Kosovo offices	30
2.	07.03.2016	University of Oslo students	HLC Kosovo offices	8
3.	29.05.2016	University of Belgrade, Faculty of Political Sciences	HLC Kosovo offices	10
4.	10.06.2016	Study visit-U.S. professors	HLC Kosovo	6
5.	11.07.2016	Prishtina International Summer University (PISU)	University of Prishtina, Prishtina	41
6.	19.10.2016	YIHR study visit*	HLC Kosovo offices	10
7.	13.07.2016	University of Trentino	HLC Kosovo offices	20
8.	03.11.2016	Study visit of students participating "LinKS" seminar	HLC Kosovo offices	30
9.	29.10.2016	Study visit of students participating "War Crimes and Trials" seminar	HLC Kosovo offices	30
10.	23.11.2016	University of Prishtina, Faculty of Law	Faculty of Law, Prishtina	24
11.	01.12.2016	ILIRIA University	University room, Prishtina	53
12.	08.12.2016	AAB College-Ferizaj branch	University premises	59
13.	09.12.2016	University of Prizren, Faculty of Law	University premises	100

14.	22.12.2016	University of Prishtina, Sociology	University premises	21
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Additionally, HLC Kosovo provided workshops with NGO representatives, volunteers and other participants from different organizations to keep the public informed with the content that is presented through the workshop.

In total, HLC Kosovo provided 8 workshops with different NGOs in different cities and towns in Kosovo with a summed up number of 117 participants.

Nr.	Date	NGO	Place	Nr. of participants
1.	29.03.2016	Play for Youth	HLC Kosovo offices	8
2.	27.04.2016	Community Building Mitrovica(CBM)	CBM offices, Mitrovica	14
3.	22.05.2016	Local Democratic Agency (LDA)	LDA offices, Peja	14
4.	10.06.2016	Youth Council of Deçan Municipality	Council's offices	14
5.	17.06.2016	NGO THY	Caritas conference room, Prizren	16
6.	23.06.2016	Youth Council of Gjakova Municipality	Restaurant Ura, Gjakova	11
7.	30.06.2016	BarCamp Gjakova	Ali Podrimja square, Gjakova	Apprx. 20
8.	08.08.2016	YIHR regional activists	Hotel Centrum, Prizren	20

Summer school on Transitional Justice

The summer school started with 22 participants from all around Kosovo, and almost all of the Kosovan ethnic groups like Albanians, Bosnians and Serbians. They all came from different backgrounds. Like in previous years, the Summer School was organized during DokuFest in Prizren.

Initially, the participants got introduced to each other and went on with an introductory lecture on main pillars of TJ presented by Bekim Blakaj the executive director of HLC Kosovo. To support the presentation, Mr. Blakaj screened the 'Act of Killing' documentary movie, where participants had the chance to express their opinions.

The school lasted 5 days. The following lecture and activities were presented to the students:

- Day 1-08.08.2016: The Right to Know, lectured by Sabina Karisik Hasanaj (HLC Kosovo), Marijana Toma (HLC), Kushtrim Koliqi (Integra),
- Day 2-09.08.2016: The Right to Justice, lectured by Nemanja Stjepanovic (HLC/SENSE)
- Day 3-10.09.2016: the Right to Redress and Reparations, lectured by the croatian professor Žarko Puhovski, Njomza Haxhibeqiri (HLC Kosovo), Saranda Bogujevci (victim and co-author of the Bogujevci war narrative).
- Day 4-11.09.2016: The right to Civic Trust via Institutional Reforms, by Shkelzen Gashi on the history textbooks on Balkans, Bekim Blakaj (HLC Kosovo)
- Day 5 12.08.201: Meeting with victim's families: visit to Landovica and Starogradsko

Partnership with DokuFest

“The Act of Killing” which is a movie re-edited by DokuFest and screened in the beginning of each workshop was used during this reporting period too. This short screening at the beginning of each workshop allows initiating the debate by bringing out reaction to the film extract. The students are confronted with a context very different from Kosovo, but highlighting similar dynamic in terms of peace, justice and dealing with the past.

During the fifteenth edition of DokuFest, a panel discussion on dealing with the past was organized. The discussion was participated by the Summer School on Transitional Justice participants but was not limited to this audience as it was a public discussion. The speakers were: Nataša Kandić, Žarko Puhovski, Daliborka Uljarević and Shkelzen Maliqi. The discussion was moderated by Mr. Bekim Blakaj.

Engaging students and receiving feedbacks

From the feedback that we gathered from the students, we noticed a pattern with the most common answers. Although workshops last for five hours, students often thought that they should've lasted longer. They all stated that this topic was important and the vast majority of them stated that this topic should be a part of their school curricula.

The evaluation sheets allowed both to improve our workshop's design to tailor the students' needs and to draw observations from the reactions to our workshops, and pattern of behavior depending on age and region of origin.

The findings from these feedbacks, and from our own observations, are the following:

Positive impact: student's and school staff good will to work with us:

- **Enthusiasm of the students:** During this reporting period, HLC Kosovo shows a great satisfaction with the way that the project went overall. Students were interested to participate, to be engaged during the discussion and express their thought without hesitation. The part where they mostly showed interest was the truth commissions' part and the discussion on establishing the regional commission for the former Yugoslavian conflicts. Although workshops last for five hours, students often thought that they should've lasted longer. They all stated that this topic was important and the vast majority of them stated that this topic should be a part of their school curricula.
- **Good cooperation with the school staff:** There were plenty of times where the school principals showed great interest in cooperating. This was easily noticed when they participated the workshops themselves, added their own war experiences. Due to this satisfactory co-operation, HLC Kosovo established many good relations with plenty of the school directors, municipality representatives and professors. In many cases, our reputation had even preceded our workshops, showing the positive impact that our educational activities have had through time and how they now help us building amicable relations with schools

General findings: uninformed and misinformed youth

Our general finding from this project period was one of a **widely misinformed youth**, both in terms of the facts of the war and of transitional justice mechanisms.

- *Students' misconceptions of the facts of the war*

Students in Kosovo have a distorted vision of the events of the war. They grossly overestimate war related casualties: when asked, some students have honestly answered that they thought the conflict resulted in over 300,000 deaths.⁶ The HLC Kosovo has also noticed patterns showing student's lack of knowledge as to numbers of casualties from other communities: notably, many ethnically Albanian students believe that there was no ethnically Serbian victim, and were surprised to see that there are victims from the other side. These misconceptions can give way to

⁶ According to HLC Kosovo information, 13,549 persons died, during the conflict, from 1 January 1998 - December 2000, of whom 10,829 were Albanians, 2,199 were Serbs and 529 Roma.

manipulations and the forming of inaccurate narratives about the past, the deconstruction of which is precisely the goal of transitional justice mechanisms in Kosovo.

- *Students' lack of knowledge of transitional justice*

Beyond the misconceptions about the facts and consequences of the conflict, HLC experience proved that children in high schools have close to no knowledge of transitional justice instruments and concepts. For example, when asked which key individuals were on trial for war crimes related to Kosovo, students were unable to respond. When presented with the different transitional justice mechanisms at play in Kosovo (international and local trials, truth-seeking initiatives, reparations and institutional reform), the vast majority of students admitted having learnt something they previously ignored. Most of them had come across a transitional justice tool at some point, but without being aware of what it stood for or what goals it served. More crucially, almost none of them could explain the difference between them.

- *Persistence of wrongly informed negative feelings*

Student's engagement with and approach to transitional justice greatly differ according to their region of origin. In the regions particularly damaged during the war, and where students personally lost someone or knew that there were victims in their community, participants were more willing to talk about the crimes and casualties committed by both sides. In parts of Kosovo where students were not as directly exposed to atrocities on the other hand, students were more inclined to talk about victims from their ethnic community and perpetrators from others. These students generally show somewhat of a lack of empathy for the victims of other ethnic backgrounds and show greater readiness to present justification for the crimes committed by persons of the same ethnic background.

HLC Kosovo findings show that the lack of accurate information on Kosovo's recent past and transitional justice measures, in spite of the regional disparities, is generally accompanied by a strong persistence of negative feelings and stereotypes towards other ethnic groups. Such attitudes feed a dangerous 'us versus them' discourse and fuels ethnic divisions. It is the direct consequence of the lack of knowledge observable amongst the youth of Kosovo. It is the direct consequence of the lack of knowledge observable amongst the youth of Kosovo. There were times where Albanian students seemed to have negative approach towards Serbian victims. This may be due to the lack of the empathy towards the victims of the war as the territories less damaged by the war are the ones that are more exposed to the one-sided narratives.

We observed that from these negative feelings and perceptions often fueled a lack of empathy from the students, in particular towards other ethnic groups, and even sometimes the use of hate speech to refer to ethnic communities. Finally, students' critical thinking was impaired by biased preconceptions. For example, while they were very much inclined to criticize the fact that, in the documentary movie, the former perpetrators are welcomed as national heroes, they were unable to show the same critical thinking towards Kosovo and even often protested at the amount of Albanian individuals at trial.

Promoting the inclusion of a chapter on Transitional Justice in school books

Including transitional justice in civic education official curricula has been the final aim of the HLC Kosovo NFEDWP programme since its inception. To this end, the HLC Kosovo has fulfilled a lengthy and step-by-step process of engaging with the relevant stakeholders (via consultations), building an advocacy strategy based on the above findings (policy paper), drafting relevant material needed to support its actions (the manual) and being publicly visible. This process reaches its climax on the 25th of February, when the policy paper was presented publicly during a roundtable held in hotel Victory, along with the manual on transitional justice compiled by our staff and published at the beginning of 2016.

A wide range of panelists attended the event, both from the Ministry of Education, Sciences and Technology (MEST), from the education sector at large, and from civil society. Around 60 persons attended.

The roundtable is considered to have been a success and was relayed in the media as such.⁷ In particular, the Minister of Education, Sciences and Technology, Mr. Arsim Bajrami, committed to work together with HLC Kosovo to reform schoolbooks to include transitional justice in the curricula.

After having a visible support from MEST, HLC Kosovo had the chance to present in front of the Council of Experts on Curriculum and Textbooks. The aim of this meeting was to advocate for **inclusion of the Transitional Justice in the Civic Education Textbooks and review the victim data on History textbooks**. The presentation was practical and concrete, informed by our findings (in particular those of the Kosovo Memory Book and evaluation sheets completed by our students), and offering HLC Kosovo's assistance in all steps of the reform.

⁷ http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/transitional-justice-to-be-included-in-kosovo-s-high-school-curriculum-02-25-2016?utm_source=Balkan+Transitional+Justice+Daily+Newsletter+-+NEW&utm_campaign=ab91fd7be2-RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_a1d9e93e97-ab91fd7be2-319752513

Firstly, the presentation opened with the introduction to Kosovo Memory Book project and the way of data collection for recording casualties that is used by HLC Kosovo and internationally appraised for its accuracy. From the beginning of the presentation, council members showed great interest in the discrepancies observed between HLC Kosovo's KMB findings and the data presented in the school textbooks. Two specific examples of this discrepancy were taken, both from the Serbian language and Albanian language textbooks, highlighting the incorrect data on victims and lack of unbiased presentation of the facts. These example served as a starting point to advocate the use of KMB findings. The example of Croatia was used as the country went through an educational reform on history textbooks and the join of Croatia in European Union 6 years after the reform.

Our recommendations for a reform of history textbooks were:

- correcting the number of victims in history textbooks
- including the victims from other communities
- including of the victims of the period after the Kumanova agreement
- including ICTY main facts on Kosovo related cases.

Secondly, the council was presented with the Non-Formal Education project and the way HLC Kosovo presents the transitional justice to high school and university students. Specifically, they were explained with the main pillars of transitional justice (criminal prosecutions, truth seeking mechanisms, reparations and institutional reforms). In addition, they were shown with the results of the evaluation sheets filled by students after the workshop in which 90% of them claimed that learnt something new and 75% of them responded positively for having the material in school textbooks. To conclude with the presentation, Mr. Bekim Blakaj unfolded the recommendations for inclusion of a full chapter on transitional justice in Civic Education textbooks, based on HLC Kosovo's manual on transitional justice.

Our recommendations were extremely well received, with the audience being very enthusiastic with our findings. Mrs. Anila Statovci-Demaj, the Deputy Minister of Education, publicly acknowledged the importance of history programs and of HLC Kosovo's initiative.

Members of the council suggested to organize continuous meetings with the council and the authors in order to achieve to HLC Kosovo's recommendations. We were also informed that a broader textbook reform was planned, and advised we would be part of it. In the coming months, we will actively seek to follow-up on this success to continue build institutional support for our project. Moreover, as our findings evidenced the need for training teachers, school directors and other parties, we are considering extending our educational activities to these professional spheres.

4.4. Batajnica Memory Initiative - (main partner HLC in Serbia)

The project's goal is to raise awareness about what happened in Batajnica through a **documentary movie**, which will tell the story of the mass graves in Batajnica and through organizing post-screening debates in Serbia and Kosovo. In previous years, through its database, HLC Kosovo identified the family members of victims who were found in mass graves in Batajnica and then contacted them for the oral interviews.

In the period just before the reporting period, HLC Kosovo in cooperation with HLC Serbia completed the transcript and translated the taken interviews, and also finalized the process of the correction of the mentioned transcripts.

In the reporting period the film 'Depth Two' was completed and ready to be screened. It was premiered at the 66th Berlin International Film Festival, on the 13th of February 2016. The film is a combination of live testimonies and photographs taken at the scene of the crimes, which were committed 17 years ago. In an attempt to discover, clarify and give voice to these stories.⁸

'Depth Two' was screened in Pristina on the 16th of April 2016, and followed by a debate about the legacy and responsibility for the crimes committed, The screening and debate were attended by more than 150 spectators, including a great number of victims and victims' family members as well as various film and theatre artists from Serbia and Kosovo.

4.5. Representing victims in war crimes trials - (main partner HLC in Serbia)

HLC Kosovo has, during the reporting period, carried on its activities of assisting victims in pressing charges against perpetrators of war crimes during the war in Kosovo, by supporting the work carried out by HLC in Serbia.

This work involved identifying cases suitable for criminal prosecution based on the Kosovo Memory Book database and consulting victims of war crimes and their families, as well as associations of victims in Kosovo, public archives and other sources, in order to gather additional evidence. It also involved meeting with the victims to inform them on how to press charges and explain the relevant procedures to file criminal reports against officers who were officially in charge in the region during

⁸ <http://www.batajnicamemorialinitiative.org/en>

that time of war when the crimes occurred. 8 family members of victims were met during the reporting period.

Additionally, one family member was accompanied and represented in front of the courts in Serbia. Several fields' visits were organized to collect documents from family members of victims for the purpose of ongoing files, and HLC Kosovo staff escorted him 5 times to Belgrade for the purpose of attending his hearing.

HLC Kosovo staff ensured to maintain good working relations with Witness Protection Support Programs and Office of the Prosecutor of the relevant courts, and with legal institutions at large.

All trial related documents and all information gathered with families of victims and collected and archived in our database.

4.6. RECOM Initiative

The objective of the project is achieving a regional consensus regarding the past that is based on facts. Advancing the process of reconciliation between different communities, groups and institutions, will be done through the creation of **Regional inter-state Commission for Establishing and Disclosing the Facts about all Victims of War Crimes and Human Rights Abuses in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia, from 1991 – 2001 (RECOM)**.

The RECOM process, which began as an initiative of a handful of human rights NGOs, is now driven forward by the regional Coalition for RECOM with more than 1900 members – organizations and individuals from all post-Yugoslav states.

Along with these members, HLC Kosovo has been engaged for years in gaining public and institutional support for establishment of RECOM from governments of former Yugoslav states. The presidents of Bosnia, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo and Macedonia are expected to present their joint initiative to the public and to their respective national parliaments in the near future, after what RECOM will be established.

During the reporting period, **two** public events held under the RECOM flag were organised. Firstly, a debate on reconciliation overseen by RECOM took place during the festival of DOKUFEST, held in Prizren, on the 10th of August 2016. The debate was led by the following panelists: Zarko Puhovski, Natasa Kandic, Shkelzen Maliqi, Petar Miletic, and moderated by Adriatik Kelmendi. They dealt with the meaning and role of reconciliation processes in the Balkans, and discussed the role to be played by the local elites and by civil society. The context of the festival brought many participants to this event, further popularizing the RECOM initiative.

Secondly, on the 19th of December 2016, a public presentation of RECOM was given in Pristina, with more than 50 participants, and further in Sarajevo, Zagreb and Belgrade.

5. Press releases

During the reporting period HLC Kosovo has issued several press releases addressing the issues that had to do with developments on Transitional Justice.

- 23.01.2016 - Oliver Ivanoviqi dënohet me nëntë vite burgosje për krimet e luftës kundër popullatës civile
- 27.04.2016 - Më shumë përkushtim për zbardhjen e fatit të personave të zhdukur
- 05.08.2016 - Ndjekja penale e të akuzuarve për krime të luftës duhet të jetë obligim i shteteve të rajonit
- 29.09.2016 - Të mos lejohet pengimi i lëvizjes së lirë dhe liria e rriteve fetare
- 30.09.2016 - Të ndërpritet heshtja mbi varrezat masive dhe fatin e të zhdukurve në luftërat në ish- RSFJ
- 02.09.2016 - Të identifikohen personat që kryen aktin e shëmtuar në Grackë të Vjetër
- 24.11.2016 - Të akuzuarit në rastin *Zymberi I* të dënuar me kusht
- 25.11.2016 - Verifikimi i parimit “të mos po gjykohet apo dënohet dy herë për të njëjtën vepër” në rastin e Oliver Ivanoviqit

6. Deviations, lessons learnt and Breakthroughs

Change in the composition of staff

Two persons left HC Kosovo at the end of 2015 and, in the beginning of 2016, 3 new staff members were recruited. Moreover, while previous reports established our weakness in terms of fundraising and outreach, HLC Kosovo has acquired a new team member to assist with these tasks.

Deviation of planned activities:

Four changes can be listed here as slight modifications in our activities’ implementation.

Firstly, while we were expecting to start establishing and maintaining contact and cooperation with the Special Chambers from October 2015 onwards, this institution has been late in its implementation and nothing has currently started. However we have established contact with the Outreach department of the Court, and steadily taken public statements in favor of its mandate and preventing misinformation.

Secondly, the timeframe we had set for the promotion of the realization of the rights of victims to reparations was delayed due to the political situation in Kosovo and to realities on the ground. Indeed, this project's final activity, the production of a research report making the implementation of the Law more transparent was due to be presented to different stakeholders involved in this field during a roundtable at the end of 2016. HLC Kosovo's staff has decided to postpone the publication of the report and this roundtable for several reasons. Firstly, as the introduction to this report explained, Kosovo underwent a rather severe political crisis at the end of 2015/beginning of 2016. As a consequence, government officials were fully dedicated to facing this situation that we could not foresee, so that we could not get in touch with the relevant officials before January 2016. This delay postponed the beginning of our field research. Secondly, while expected to be completed by September 2016, our field research in fact lasted much longer, due to difficulties in finding relevant family members, and due to the complexity of some cases, requiring several months of follow up. Finally, at the end of 2016 the reparations issue came on the front scene in Kosovo following a report from the International Monetary Fund highlighting extraordinary over costs in the state budget. The lack of predictability of the consequences of these evolutions urged us to delay the publication of our report to the next project period. We felt indeed it was best to let these developments unravel a little before using the width it has created in the public domain to publish our conclusions.

Finally, while the documentary on Batajnica was ready earlier, it was selected to be screened at the 66th Berlin International Film Festival, which occurred from February 11th to February 21st. Therefore, it was chosen to wait until this public release before screening it in Kosovo, in April 2016.

Financially, as was explained in the Expenditure Responsibility report for 2015, due to the late receiving of our grant (19th of November 2015), all expenses for our Programme in 2015 had been covered. Therefore we began spending the grant in January 2016, as is shown from the financial report. Moreover, there is a leftover of USD 9,920 to our final budget report, due to some unforeseen allocation of funds from our partner in our regional projects.

Success stories

During the reporting period in several occasion family members of victims or their relatives contacted HLC Kosovo in order to see in our database information that we have about victims. In few cases we were offered with new evidences. Moreover, in the project period, we have also improved visibility of the Kosovo Memory Book at the general public level, thanks to several public presentations of human losses that were done.

One of the greatest achievement of the year was the progress made at the level of institutional dialogue on the topic of including transitional justice in national education. Indeed we secured the participation of the Ministry of education to a roundtable we will organize in early 2016 to advocate

for the inclusion of a transitional justice chapter in high school curricula, and managed to organize a presentation to the National Commission for the Revision of Textbooks in June, putting us in a good position to influence the reform process that is expected to start in 2017.

Finally, in the coming year 2017, our activities will take a new dimension thanks to the creation of a documentation center on war crimes and human losses related to the war in Kosovo. With this new dimension to its work making all our past achievements available to the general public, HLC Kosovo will truly put its focus on both education and documentation of grave crimes.

7. Audit recommendations and perspectives for 2017

Our last Audit's recommendations will be given at the end of January 2017.

As this programme's period is coming to an end, we are planning to have a strategic planning session with all staff members in the summer 2017.