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JOINT APPEAL TO THE PRESIDENT OF SO BANJA LUKA AND ALL OTHER CONCERNED POLITICIANS IN OUR BOROUGH AND THE REGION

To the above named,

Confronted with the atrocities of a terrible war, destruction, killings, cleansing of innocent men, women and children in our country, we still refuse to be helpless and silent witnesses to a terrible catalysm, which is already producing horrible consequences for the future of us all.

As spiritual leaders of the three largest religious groups on these territories: the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and the Islamic Community; we have, even until now, actively contributed, in many ways, to bringing the peace and lessening the tensions among our peoples within our own communities, as well as, our prayer groups, public areas and speeches of politicians of our whole region. We were happy and thankful to God, whenever our words and appeals were accepted by those who were in a dilemma whether or not to rise against fellow men and neighbouring nations. We were always deeply saddened whenever open conversation was replaced by weapons, and whenever needless doubts were undermining agreements concerning a better future for our lives together on these territories.

As people, worshippers and members of the three constitutional nations, we strongly condemn every attack and the one-sided results of political and ethnic problems. We condemn the killings of innocent people, the destruction of private and public properties, every type of population cleansing from hundreds of years old home, as well as threatening the lives of religious servants and destructions of religious monuments.

We are appealing to you Mr. President, as the mayor of all citizens of Banja Luka as well as to all of the politicians of this region, who have so far resisted any war atrocities to do everything in your power to keep the winds of war outside our borders. However, where confrontations and incidents do take place, we ask you to stop the deadly and inhumane destruction and bring back peace and justice.

Once again, we are calling upon all our worshippers, as well as all people of good-will, who cherish peace in their hearts to come together to protect their own homes, to share among each other the smaller and smaller quantities of medicine, as well as all other needed goods. We, especially, recommend our worshippers of God to ask for solace and peace, we encourage them to be aware that only God, our Creator and Saviour can soften and blind the hungry hearts of war and instead of hatred and revenge, bring about forgiveness, love, friendship and peace.

TO ALL NEGOTIATORS OF THE FUTURE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
GENEVA

In the name of humanity,

From our meeting in Banja Luka the fourth of September 1992., as head leaders of the three largest religious communities in the region of the Bosnian Krajina: Serbian Orthodox Church, Islamic Community and Catholic Church, we encourage all negotiators to continue the struggle for peace and the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

URGENT APPEAL

September 4, 1992.

We are doing this in the name of God and the law of love and peace, in the name of humanity, in the name of countless injured children, saddened mothers, the dying, ill and helpless elderly, refugees and all those whose lives are endangered on the territories of Bosnian Krajina, as well as, in all of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We would like to express our ples to all responsible to take one of the first steps as a gesture of ending this bloody war. The immediate steps may be to free electrosystems and postal and telephone communications and where is possible to put back in use train and auto transit systems.

Horrible consequences of war: destruction, hunger, lack of goods, illness, epidemics, and lack of work are endangering, day by day, more and more innocent civilians on the whole territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are asking you in God's name and in the name of all humanity: Stop this senseless, horrible war and needless suffering and dying of hundreds of thousands of innocent people- your brothers and sisters! Let's be God's people!

Jefrem Milutinović,
episcop of Banja Luka
Ibrahim Halilović,
muftija of Banja Luka
Franjo Komarica,
bishop of Banja Luka

TO OUR FELLOW CATHOLICS, FOLLOWERS OF THE SERBIAN ORTHODOX FAITH,
THE ISLAMIC COMMUNITY AND ALL PEOPLE OF GOOD WILL

+FRANJO, bishop of Banja Luka
+JEFREM, episcop of Banja Luka
IBRAHIM, muftija of Banja Luka

The highest representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Islamic Community and the Catholic Church of our country, have invited all people to a meeting in Switzerland for prayer and a peace rally for all endangered people in war torn Bosnia and Herzegovina and other parts of the former Yugoslavia on December 23, 1992. United with them, we again would like to turn to you, our followers, as well as, to all the people of good will in our city, region and all concerned.

1. As sincere peacemakers, peacekeepers and creators of a just peace and a possible life together for all the people on our territories, we have repeatedly expressed our views about cherishing a valuable peace. We plea to God to spare us of hatred, revenge and other war sufferings. It was not hard for us to use any means of peaceful action when flames of war started burning closer to our parts, destroying peoples' lives and all valuables that we possess.

2. Together, we have, numerous times, condemned every means of violence against rights and the dignity of all mankind; we have expressed our sincere common feeling with all of those who lost their loved ones, or were forced to suffer horrible consequences of this filthy, shameless war that was forced upon us. By the faith of our religions on which we confess, teach and defend, we have tried to exploit every opportunity to speak out against hatred, revenge, assaults of any kind and the degradation of the dignity and rights of each and every man.

3. We would like to stress this, once again:

We condemn, from deep inside ourselves, every type of violence, all degradations, all acts of torture, massacres, cruelty, violation of rights and law, every type of destruction and robbery.

Aware of our moral responsibilities and obligations to God, we are convinced that there is no better way, nor better exit out of this hell of hatred and greater danger from new sufferings and destruction than this plea that we repeatedly cry to all who are willing to listen:

Friends and brothers, stop in the face of evil! Reach down inside yourself, if peace exists there, and put it in use again! Hatred, revenge and weapons will never bring genuine peace, Only forgiveness, love and an extended hand can do so. Peace within yourself will lead to peace with God and fellow man. This is how you will become peacemakers, builders of tolerance, trust, freedom for mankind and everything that is worthy, man's dignity and our faith in God, our Creator, our Saviour and Judge of all people!

4. We sincerely thank all of you who were, until now, resisting all evil, who did not return evil with evil, who did not do to someone what you would not wish be done to you, but you did what you hoped from others. We are grateful to all of you responsible for order and peace and all your valuable effort used to prevent further law breaking, anarchy and greater suffering of many innocent people.

5. We are not expecting anyone from the outside to help us. We are more than able and obligated to help each other! We all have had enough evil, blood and destruction! We need genuine and true peace offering, instead of, God forbid, new long-term sources of confrontations

and disasters on all our territories.

6. We call and ask all of you in the name of God, all you who are making decisions concerning war and peace, to finally opt for genuine peace, by preventing war actions, creating possibilities for peace for all forthcoming solutions.

We are demanding, in the name of humanity from all you who are competent to enable deliveries of humanitarian aid to all people regardless, to release all prisoners from war camps and jails and for all refugees to create opportunities for safe returns to their homes.

7. We pray to Almighty God that our sincere wishes for peace and possibilities of living together and equality for all mankind and the joining with millions of peacemakers in our homeland and abroad to be heard. We, also, hope for a quicker friendship in creation of new forces that would create a friendlier and a happier life and a new, brighter future for us all.

Mons. Dr. Franjo Komarica, bishop of Banja Luka, v.r.

+Jefrem, episcop of Banja Luka, v.r.

Halilović hadži Ibrahim, ef. muftija of Banja Luka, v.r.

Banja Luka, 23. 12. 1992.

CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF THE REPUBLICS OF CROATIA AND BOSNIA/ HERZEGOVINA
FROM THEIR JOINT SITTING IN ZAGREB, FROM ~~JULY~~ JUNE 7 to 9, 1994, SEND THE FOLLOWING:

A P P E A L

We, already at many times had demonstrated our worries and pleas to the International Public on behalf of those: suffering and deprived of one's human rights in our dioceses. Once again we energetically raise our voice in defence of basic human and civilian rights and freedoms of our Faithful, and at the same time of all people who are deprived of their basic human rights.

We, especially want to warn domestic and the World Public, all Episcopal Conferences of Europe and throughout the world, other church institutions, humanitarian organizations, as well as all state and political forums concerning worsening and more dramatic conditions of the Catholic faithfuls in the occupied territories within Bosnia/Herzegovina and Croatia.

We are bitterly dismayed at the fact that in front of the Christian and democratic Europe, that three of its Catholic dioceses are forcefully being destroyed, namely that of: BANJA LUKA, SARAJEVO and TREBINJE. The innocent and unprotected Catholic Church members are suffering the hardest humiliations, evictions, and killings are very common. They are deprived of their basic human rights, left to the power of lawlessness and arbitrariness of persecutors. They are forced to leave their century's old hearths, and flee somewhere else, and often times to a total uncertainty.

Prior to the war, in 1991, the Sarajevo Archdiocese had 528.000 Catholics in 144 parishes. In this war 350.000 people were forcefully banished, 45% of its churches are destroyed, and 30% heavily damaged or demolished. The rest of the Faithful live under pressures or are in great uncertainty.

In the Mostar-Duvno and Trebinje-Mrkan diocese 25.000 Catholics were expelled out of 210.000, and a large portion of this diocese is inaccessible. Over 40 churches and sacral buildings are destroyed or damaged.

The Banja Luka diocese had 110.000 Catholics and there exist a real threat that on 4/5 of its territory church life will be totally annihilated, for already on that territory, 50% churches are destroyed and other sacral buildings, whereas, 45% of churches and sacral buildings are more or less severely damaged and 3/4 of our faithful had taken refuge or were banished. In spite of the fact, that in this diocese there was no military resistance from the Catholics and that their peaceful behaviour during the ongoing war in Bosnia/Herzegovina, they are still being banished.

And further, if this aggression is not immediately stopped, the above mentioned dioceses will be annihilated, having their millenarian history of existence in the Republic of Bosnia/Herzegovina.

A similar event will befall the parts of the dioceses in the Republic of Croatia into which the bishops are prevented to visit their parishes. And in those occupied areas there are 115 parishes either destroyed or demolished, and 245.000 Catholics, together with their priests, Religious priests and nuns expelled.

Therefore, we call upon all of you to raise your voice, so to stop these lawlessnesses, cruelties and destructions and that injustices be rectified.

We trust that hundreds of millions of Catholics and other Christians, united in prayer and in Christian solidarity, will find the way to the most responsible authorities in order that this ghastly moral blemish be removed from its midst .

Furthermore, we continue to tirelessly occupy ourselves for the respect and defence of human and civil rights of people, minorities and of all peoples; in order that just peace may prevail, this automatically includes: right of all displaced to return to their hearths and the right to life, worthy of civilized people.

We heartily thank all benefactors, who are helping us in carrying all these sufferings.

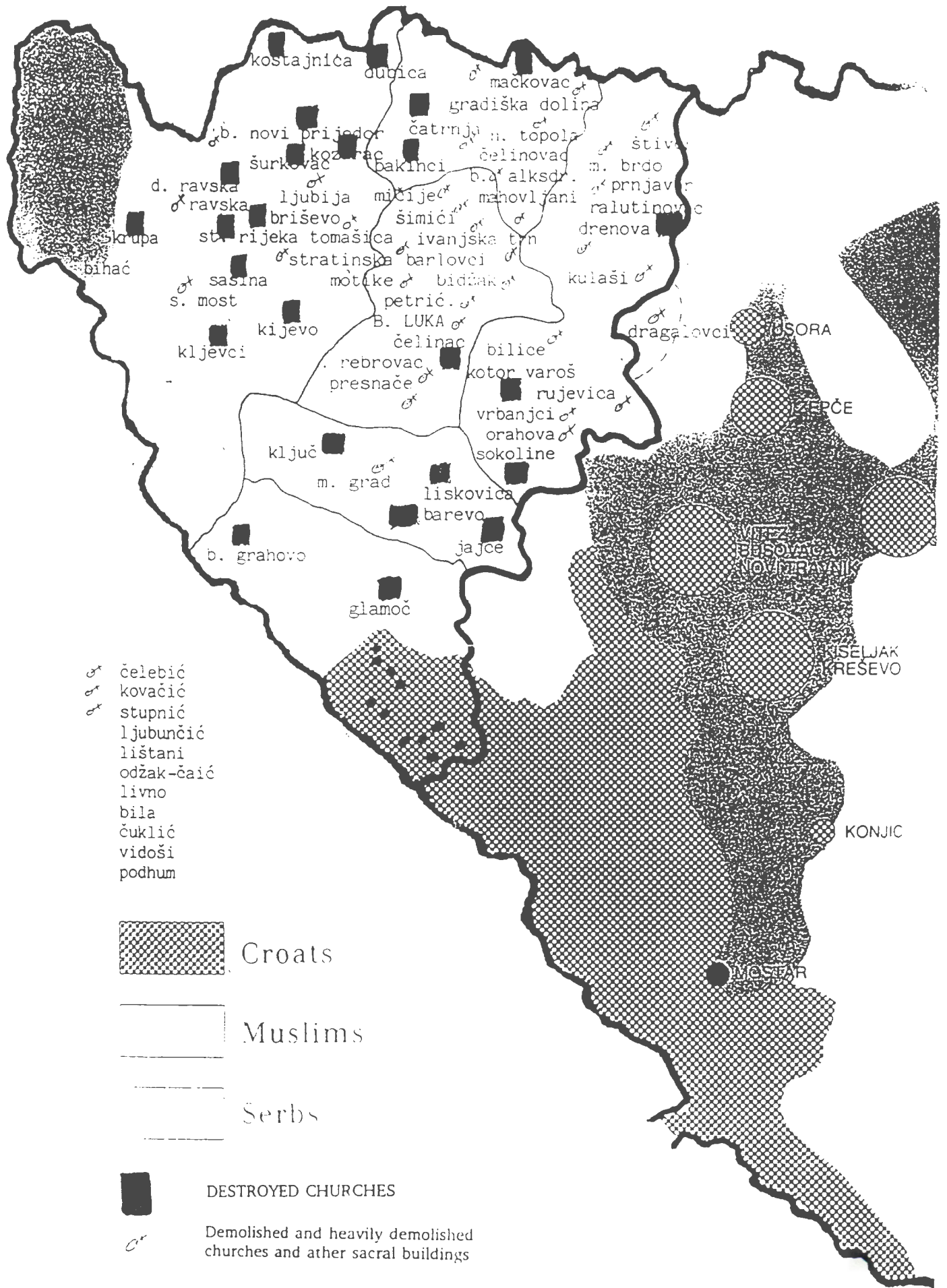
In Zagreb, July 9, 1994.

Signed:

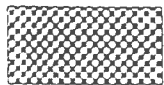
Cardinal Franjo Kuharić,
Archbishop of Zagreb and,
President of Croatian Bishop's Conference

Signed:

Msgr. Vinko Puljić,
Archbishop of Sarajevo and
Metropolit of the Sarajevo Metropoly



- ♂ čelebić
- ♂ kovačić
- ♂ stupnić
- ♂ ljubunčić
- ♂ lištani
- ♂ odžak-čaić
- ♂ livno
- ♂ bila
- ♂ čuklić
- ♂ vidoši
- ♂ podhum



Croats



Muslims



Serbs



DESTROYED CHURCHES



Demolished and heavily demolished churches and other sacral buildings