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We the undersigned have been informed that Prof. Ivo Banac from Zagreb and Prof. Obrad Savić from Belgrade, together with a group of intellectuals from Sarajevo, have nominated and expressed their support for the nomination of Prof. Rusmir Mahmutćehajić for the World Interfaith Harmony Week prize.

We, as the Chairpersons of the Helsinki Human Rights Committees in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia and Serbia, express our support for this nomination. We have had the privilege of knowing and working together with Prof. Mahmutćehajić, both personally and on behalf of our respective organizations, over a period of many years on the vitally important matter of reconciliation in our war-torn and divided region. His vision for a reconstruction of harmonious relations between different religious and cultural communities on the basis of mutual respect and acceptance has been a source of hope to many, ourselves included, and has provided the guiding inspiration for a series of initiatives whose number and quality is without equal in the region. He has drawn a strong line in the sand on behalf of coexistence, cooperation and a truly inclusive and humane religiosity, against intolerance and fundamentalist divisiveness of all sorts. We have participated actively for the past two decades in the programme of summer schools and international conferences that he has organized in Sarajevo, Mostar and Stolac, which provide an unfortunately rare and therefore valuable forum for inter-community and interfaith dialogue at the highest level. His work in this area is given particular credibility by the range and power of his record of publications on Bosnia, on its religious traditions, and on the need for dialogue between them, many of which have been translated into English and other foreign languages. The past year has seen a particularly rich harvest of such writings.

Prof. Mahmutćehajić's is a vital voice for harmony in an increasingly inharmonious world and we can think of no more suitable recipient for your award from this region.

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