

organized the exhibitions presenting the at-risk sacred heritage of the major religious traditions present in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

5. An exhibition on “New Works of Sacred Culture,” on the 2nd of February, 2013, in the Hercegovina Hall of the Holiday Inn. The exhibition presented the most important books published in the country on the topic of sacred culture in recent years.

6. A presentation of eight books by Academician Rusmir Mahmutćehajić on the topic of interreligious relations.

The entire programme was developed and planned by Prof. Mahmutćehajić and his associates from the International Forum Bosnia. The events brought together several hundred people as participants and guests, united in their appreciation of Professor Mahmutćehajić’s many years of commitment to the furtherment of interfaith relations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the wider region.

Given the extent of media coverage and the profile of participants, who included a wide cross-section of figures from civil society, the non-governmental sector, and cultural and religious associations and groups active in interfaith relations, as well as leading academics and representatives from the Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, and Serbian Orthodox communities, it is our joint view that the events represent a major contribution to the development of cooperation and harmonious relations between religious people of all communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As an event for the wider public, the performance by the interfaith Pontanima choir in front of an audience of more than 300 was a powerful expression of the spirit of religious harmony in plural societies, particularly as developed organically amongst the various religious communities in Sarajevo through their long history of coexistence and as painstakingly and often painfully rebuilt in the aftermath of the 1992-95 siege and subsequent attempts to keep alive division and hatred.

The panel on intellectual perspectives on interfaith relations was a smaller event to a targeted audience of individuals active in the field. It provided a very clear picture of the resources available within the religious traditions for promoting better and more harmonious cultural and political relations in the world. Discussion was free and frank and included sincere admission of the problems and challenges facing better relations within our communities, but also produced fruitful suggestions for future initiatives. In particular, it revealed the high degree of consensus over basic principles of coexistence