



**CULTURAL CORRIDORS OF SOUTH EAST EUROPE  
COMMON PAST AND SHARED HERITAGE -  
A KEY TO FUTURE PARTNERSHIP  
A REGIONAL FORUM**

Varna, May 20-21 2005

**SPEECH BY H.E. MR. BORISLAV PARAVAC,  
CHAIRMAN OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA PRESIDENCY**

*(Summarized, the original text is not available)*

- The Chairman expressed his gratitude to the host of the meeting, the Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov, for his warm acceptance and the wonderful organization of the forum;
- Stated, that Bosnia and Herzegovina welcome the organization of this meeting and accepts it as a follow-up of the process of dialogue on high-level between the states from South East Europe to improve the relations in the field of culture and cultural heritage, which has started under the auspices of UNESCO in 2003, in Ohrid.;
- Marked, that the exact geographical position on the crossroad between the East and the West, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea, and also the rich and progressing culture of the region, had turned South East Europe into a genuine puzzle, consisted of different religions, traditions and languages;
- Concurred with UNESCO's views, that the very field of culture was quite favourable for establishing a close cooperation in South East Europe;
- Declared his confidence, that the upcoming exchange of information and the promotion our rich cultural heritage were the best ways to alter the image of the region, known in the world as the "powder-keg"
- Agreed that the cultural wealth of South East Europe was an important precondition for the sustainable use of the countries from the region;
- Shared his expectation that at the upcoming meeting of the World Committee in Durban, South Africa, the number of monuments of world significance of UNESCO in South East Europe, would increase to 55, when the old city of Mostar would be included in the List as a site of world cultural significance. Added that this would be Bosnia and Herzegovina's first monument in this list, that it was symbolic for the combination of this variety of cultures, which have passed during the centuries through the country, and that its restoration had been financed by the Council of Europe;
- Stated that at the opening of the bridge in Mostar, everyone present there had witnessed the implementation of a particular project in a common dialogue frame. Added, that there was no better symbol of a dialogue, than a bridge;

- Shared his regret that the church, symbol of the city, had been destroyed, but he hoped, that restoration work would begin soon;
- Thanked to UNESCO, the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the UN for the ongoing conservation and restoration work in Bosnia and Herzegovina and marked this as an important step towards the long lasting peace and stability in Kosovo;
- Shared, that, basing on the gained experience and external help, his country could reconstruct a lot of the destroyed monuments and stated that the bridge in Mostar could turn to an example for the restoration of the most important sites in Kosovo;
- Declared the support of his country for the exchange between the states from the region, and recognized the cultural corridors and routes as a mean, which could foster the interstate cooperation;
- Endorsed the idea for the creation of a network of experts, which would be given a mandate for working out a strategy for identifying, preserving, sustainably using and promoting cultural corridors of South East Europe
- Stated, that in this way, the region can turn again to an attractive place with rich cultural heritage, for visitors from all over the world, and this will bring new perspectives for the development of the countries from the region;
- Marked, that in this way the region could send a strong political message for the involvement of the countries into the transformation of South East Europe into a model of good neighbour relations, based on a common cultural heritage.