



Reconstruction of Serb Orthodox sites in Kosovo –Secretary General Terry Davis

I am very surprised at what Archbishop Artemije and some representatives of the Serbian authorities have reportedly said at the press conference held yesterday in Belgrade. Their criticism of the reconstruction of Serb Orthodox sites in Kosovo is in clear contradiction with the appreciation expressed to me by representatives of the Serbian authorities during my recent visit to Belgrade. Perhaps I should make it clear that I have no record of any complaints by any Serbian official to the Council of Europe, and I would have expected that they would first speak to us before making such unsubstantiated criticisms, especially since Serbia is a member of the Council of Europe.

The only reason for our involvement has always been to repair, as quickly as possible, the religious sites which were damaged in the riots 3 years ago. I believe that we are making an important contribution to the reconstruction of Serb Orthodox monuments in Kosovo. We are ready to continue, but we will not impose ourselves if our assistance is not wanted. I would personally regret it, because Serbia is a part of Europe and the Serbian religious and cultural heritage is a part of the heritage of Europe as a whole.