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Title: Creation of Peace  
Dates: from 21<sup>st</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2014  
Country: Bosnia and Herzegovina

Project background: Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) is a post conflict country that has been suffering post war consequences for the past twenty years. The conflict between three parties, Serbs, Croats and Muslims has occurred in the period from 1992 to 1995 when Dayton peace agreement has been signed and has divided country into two entities, Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republic of Srpska. Even though peace agreement was signed twenty years ago, there are still severe consequences. The ones that concern me the most, as a young citizen of B&H, are children and youth, learning about nationalistic, hearted and discriminatory behavior from adults such are their parents and even teachers. Nationalistic hatred is an issue that should be issue of the serious concern of leaders in the country, as it is a serious problem that needs to be worked on continuously. One of the very efficient ways to tackle this issue is to work with youth so they deal with prejudices and misconceptions of the other two parties and realize the importance of cooperation of all three nationalities throughout creative-educational programs. Creating common safe space, enabling young people to meet, get know each other and using art as a social tool is the strongest way for leading youngsters on their way to reconciliation and peace building. Nationalism is an issue that cannot be diminished in a couple of days and it takes time to learn about different perspectives but creative programs that bring people together is certainly a way to start dealing with this burning issue in this country .

The main goal of this project is to gather young people in B&H, from different ethnic affiliations, and work together with them, in an interesting, creative and productive way on getting across prejudices that they might have towards their first neighbor, and finally reaching a peaceful pathway. This project would be led by a group of students with the support of the United World College in Mostar, Youth Cultural Center of Mostar and UDAS, organization of amputees from Banja Luka (all of which have agreed to be a part of the project). Target group/participants for this project are 30 high school students, age form 15 to 18, from at least three different smaller places belonging to three ethnic parties from B&H, students who do not have that many opportunities to travel, meet other peers and change their perception about youth from other ethnic background from BiH. 30 students, equally mixed nationalities, will be called to participate in the project in duration of 12 days.

During this period they would be participating in the project activities that considers a 10 day lasting art colony in which participants would be **guided and**

**taught** by two art teachers from B&H and Ringling Art and Design - Fine Arts major student in **painting and creating their art works**. Besides painting/art works there would be **discussion evenings** held at the end of every day on different topic concerning position of youth in BiH, where are division lines, what makes us so different, what can we do together in order to reach reconciliation, etc. In the discussions participants would be encouraged to share amongst each other, with leaders included, their thoughts, aiming to discuss the roots of the problem, which makes so many invisible but very present borders in B&H, and to find possible solutions and break down prejudices. Also at the same time **small video clips** and written messages from young people on peace and reconciliation will be made. United World College in Mostar is willing to participate in this project by including some of the students in the project, as participants and by including mediation leaders to lead mediation workshops/discussion during the period of the implementation of the project. Also **two ecological events** of cleaning garbage from the site will be organized in the neighboring area and **two organized hikes** for the whole group. By the end of the 10 days art colony, works that were made will be exhibited in two cities in B&H, Mostar in the YKC Abrasevic and Banja Luka, UDAS and will be followed with the video and written messages of young people in their ways of understanding their peers. The last two days of the program will be devoted to making reflections on the past 10 days and everyone who participated in the project will enjoy performances of young bands from Mostar who's players are educated in the Mostar School of Rock, one of few schools that has mixed ethnicities under one roof. The idea is for the project *Creation of Peace* to become a traditional program with multi events that will bring young people together and positively affect their knowledge, way of thinking and encourage creativity which will all lead to creation of a more peaceful community in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- 30 young people will develop their artistic skills and discover different ways of creative expression
- 30 young people from different ethnic backgrounds in BiH will have opportunity to meet and get know their peers and make friends, changing their perception and breaking the prejudices about the "other side"
- 30 young people will be able to hear the "other" truths, and in that way change their way of seeing others and bring other voices in their communities
- 30 young people will get close and make friends
- Two locations will be cleaned
- At least 150 people will see the works of young people and hear the messages about peace and reconciliation