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PRESS RELEASE

On Tuesday, June 9th, the Presidents of the Constitutional Courts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Republic of Slovenia and Republic of Serbia held an online meeting by means of a platform at the initiative of the Presiding Judge of the Constitutional Court of Montenegro, Ms. Desanka Lopičić and President of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Zlatko Knežević. The meeting was organized by the AIRE Centre.

This was the second meeting dedicated to the challenges and experience that the Constitutional Courts in these countries have encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic, the reorganisation of the work of the courts in each country and future cooperation between the Courts. The Constitutional Courts agreed that the AIRE Centre would organise a gathering of the registrars and legal advisors of the regional constitutional courts in June 2020, the subject of which would be freedom of movement in the context of COVID--19 and European Convention of Human Rights. The speakers will be honourable experts of the European Court of Human Rights in this field.

With regard to that meeting, the Presiding Judge of the Constitutional Court of Montenegro, **Ms. Desanka Lopičić** stated as follows: “The events caused by COVID-19 constitute in all aspects a crisis which requires a strong cooperation between the constitutional court, the primary duty of which is the protection of human rights and freedoms of citizens. The constitutional courts, within the scope of the limits of their jurisdiction, have an important mission to review the extent of the restrictions of human rights and fundamental freedoms of citizens compared to their constitutional and Convention right to the protection of health in the cases concerning the measures taken during the epidemic.”

Mr. Zlatko Knežević, President of the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina briefly commented on new case-law of the Constitutional Court of

Bosnia and Herzegovina concerning the freedom of movement in the circumstances which occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic. He also drew attention to new decisions of the relevant agencies, which liberalized, gradually, although considerably, the measures taken. President Knežević emphasized that regardless of the measures imposed in the context of COVID-19, the Constitutional Court have not created backlog cases as the work from home has been carried out without problems and with the same capacity owing to the digitisation of the work of the Court.