

# solidarnost je naša snaga

## Visits war refugees from the Middle East in Presevo and Dimitrovgrad

January 15<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> 2016

Activists of Women in Black, Mirko Medenica and Violeta Djukanovic on January 15<sup>th</sup> 2016 visited the refugees in Presevo. As always we met with friends from the organizations Remar and Mensajeros de la paz. We brought help (fruit and socks). We also visited their tent, where they sheltering refugees. The tent is big and heated, there refugees can rest and get some warm tea or soup. At the time of our visit, the tent was full of refugees. What is needed most there are tea, biscuits, rice, sugar and vegetables for soup. We were told that the number of refugees has stabilized at around 2,000 per day. Again we were not allowed to enter the center, police officers were located on the front and at the rear entrance.

On January 16<sup>th</sup> we visited refugees in Dimitrovgrad. They are located in the courtyard of an abandoned military barracks, located about 1km from the city center. We were not allowed to enter the center, and through the fence we saw in the courtyard a few containers and small tents. We spoke with Tariq from I'm from Human Organization and learned that the number of refugees there is 70-150 per day. Some days it was up to 300. Recently women and children started to coming, and they make now 15% of the total number of refugees at this point. We shared a fruit and socks that we brought. We have learned that previously, officials working on the registration of refugees were taking from 10-50 euros for a paper confirming that they are registered and without which they can't leave the center. A month ago, officers were changed, and the situation is now better. Refugees from Dimitrovgrad are going to Belgrade, the train cost 1080 RSD, and the bus 30 euros. Currently another location for the reception of refugees is preparing in Dimitrovgrad, which was supposed to be ready for the winter and opened two months ago, but there are delays in works. What is needed most for refugees at this place is footwear. During our visit to Dimitrovgrad, we were helped a lot by our friend Milka, activist of Women in Black Network from Dimitrovgrad.

*Reported by: Violeta, Mirko*

