

# solidarnost je naša snaga

## Visits war refugees from the Middle East in Adaševci

March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016

On March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Violeta Djukanovic and Mirko Medenica visited a refugee center in Adaševci near Šid. Reconstruction Women's Fund has provided money for a pregnant woman to help her buy whatever is necessary for her stay in hospital.

Upon arrival we went to the tent with refugees, Hiba, from outskirts of Damascus, who was about to give birth, was among them. During the previous visit, we agreed to bring her things she told us that she needs. In the tent we saw that they were gone. We started to make inquiries at the camp and to ask where can we find here, but soon appeared one of the workers of the Commissariat and asked us who we are and what are we doing here. His attitude was hostile, we estimate that as activists of Women in Black will not go through, so we told him that we are citizens who have brought aid to a pregnant woman, and he said that "it can go like that, you need to announce your coming, to obtain a permit"... we had to go with him to the manager of the center and we waited for half an hour in front of his office.

While we were waiting for an interview with a manager, in one of the rooms they numbered the refugees, some were upset about it, because they did not know what was going on, so they asked us, unfortunately, we did not have an answer for them. Refugees are constantly kept under tension, they don't get any information.

I (Violeta) went into the manager's office (employees address him with the "boss"), he was quite rude and gave me a lecture on "how not anyone whom it comes on mind, can just come and enter the camp. Ma'am, all you bring, they will take it, and then they will throw away, Arabs are like that." Since I was determined to do what I'd come for, I spoke politely but persistently demanded to see Hiba, a woman who will give birth any day now. He told me there are a lot of pregnant women also need and that it would be unfair one to receive help and others not. He suggested that I leave everything to the Red Cross. I categorically refused, saying that I had a bad experience with this organization since the '90s. He suggested me then to give help to the Czech volunteers and that they will take it to Hiba.

After that, we learned from a refugee who shared a tent with Hiba and her family, that the day before they, with two other families, left the camp and went with a cab to the border with Hungary, where they will try to cross the border illegally.



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We were surprised by what we heard, but it was clearer after we spoke with an employee of a foreign NGO that helps refugees. He told us that workers of Commissariat behave very arrogant and unfriendly towards refugees, he talked with them and heard that they were there "to defend the interests of the state and that is their job." His attitude is that everything that is done in the camp by the State is aimed at creating an atmosphere in which the refugees themselves will decide to leave, it is already happening. It is noticeable absence of police, we did not see them this time. He also told us that people working in the Commissariat have a rough attitude towards refugees when they are alone, but they change their attitude when there is announced visit by a delegation of international organizations, they behave kind and considerate and give the impression that they are human.

In the petrol station parking lot, which is located fifty meters from the center, there are taxi drivers. We asked for the cost of transportation, it is 85 euros for four to the border with Hungary.

We also learned of the event from a few days ago, when a group of women traveling alone with children, were placed on the bus and with no explanation why and where, they were driven to Tutin to a center for asylum seekers. After two days they returned to Adasevci, on their own. This caused anger of workers Commissariat, so they punished them with putting them in tents, although for women with children there were empty rooms in the part of the motel, which was suitable for residence.

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