

Repression against human rights defenders

Attacks on Women in Black:

May 2016 - August 2016

Dossier No. 7



Women in Black are activist group and network of feminist and anti-militaristic orientation, consisting of women of different generations and ethnicity, educational level, social status, lifestyles and sexual choices. Women in Black have been established on October 9th 1991 in Belgrade.

Since the beginning of work Women in Black (1991) face various forms of repression, both to the state and non-state actors.

From the very beginning until now, very often we were and we are now targets of attacks because of our commitment to human rights of others and different (in ethnic, political, sexual sense). However, as a women's peace group most of the problems we have because of our insistence at all levels of responsibility for war and war crimes committed in our name.

The wave of violence against activists has intensified significantly since 2014.

Reminder: spokesman for the anti-terrorist unit of the MIA Radomir Počuča urged (25. 3.2014.) on his Facebook profile, hooligans to deal with Women in Black, after we commemorated 15 years of war crimes of Serbian forces against Kosovo Albanians.

Ultra-right movement "Zavetnici" held a protest in support of Radomir Počuča, against the "Woman in black", on the premises of "Women in Black". Police abused freedom of assembly, and provided permission for a protest whose motive was defense of incitement to violence. This caused fear and insecurity, both for the "Women in Black" activists, as well as for tenants in the building housing the "Women in Black", with which otherwise we have very correct relations since we moved in (1997). Excessive police powers (tenant harassment by the police during the protest) have sparked resentment of a part of the tenants and encourage their petition for eviction of Women in Black, which is still in progress. This further reinforces social exclusion, fear, insecurity and, of course, the continued media campaign (primarily through social networks) against activists of "Women in Black".

On his facebook profile Boris Knezevic (real name Boris Hasanovic) wrote on March 29, about which we were informed by the police on 13 May 2014.: "I invite all the brothers wherever they see those whores in black to immediately lynched and burned them!!! Justice for POČUČA"; at same time also appeared hundreds of threats and offensive comments, as a direct result of the public lynching which as provoked by Radomir Počuča.

On the occasion of 19th anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica, Women in Black and participants in "Peace activism – cycling activism - Srebrenica 2014" organized on 08.07.2014. at the main square in Valjevo, in black and in silence, peace action "We will never forget the genocide in Srebrenica. From the very start the group of men who wore T-shirts with the inscription "Chetniks Valjevo" as well as T-shirts with images of Ratko Mladic (indicted for genocide in Srebrenica at ICTY) indicated the nationalist-militaristic-misogynistic insults and threats, ferocious shouting, swearing, spitting, throwing eggs at the activists. At the same time the atmosphere of hatred rise and they were becoming increasingly brutal, until finally undoubted lynch atmosphere was created. The increasing number of members of the pro-fascist groups was followed by increased number of police officers who were securing the action. "However, the police failed to prevent puncturing the cordon by the pro-fascist groups and during the attack activists Stasa Zajovic, Ljiljana Radovanovic, Milos Urosevic and Dejan Gašić were injured".¹



1 Saopštenje Žena u crnom, 9. jul 2014.



Police eventually managed to evacuate activists and for security reasons all participants under police escort back to Belgrade. Though earlier it planned to cyclists / activists to lodge in Valjevo, and then continue cycling peace-keeping tour to Srebrenica, the action was continued the next day, with changed route. "Peace activism – cycling activism - Srebrenica 2014" action was organized for the second time this year(2014): From Belgrade went nine cyclists. Participants of the cycling expedition wanted to remind residents of Western Serbia and the Drina valley of Serbia's role in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina mentioned area is often served as logistical support for the campaigns of various military and paramilitary formations that fought on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It should be noted that the Women in Black, despite threats and attacks implemented all the planned activities to mark the 19th anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica.²

On 22.07.2014., around 14h at the bus station, near the main post office (near flower shop "Jelena") in Zemun, dark-haired, tall, corpulent man, between 30 to 40 years, for a few minutes, indicated Stasa Zajovic constant insults and threats "I know you, you're Stasa Zajovic the woman in black. And you know, there's no place for you in Serbia." To her question: "Who are you?" he did not respond and continued: "Are you afraid for your safety? For the safety of your family? You should be afraid, because you hate Serbs and you work for Muslims ... And I will not say my name. We're invisible, we arrive out of the darkness and work in the dark, we are everywhere ... American commandos won't be able to protect you..."³

On March 8th 2016, the march was held on the occasion of International Women's Day. Upon arrival at the Republic Square, where the participants of the march gathered, a group of activists of Women in Black was attacked by a man at the underground passages close to Zeleni Venac Market. The attacker insulted and threaten and then he attacked activist Ljiljana Radovanovic, who wore the rainbow flag "Pace", pushed her, snatched her flag and then fled.⁴

Activists of Women in Black have for years been active in providing assistance and solidarity with refugees and migrants from the Middle East and Africa. During these activities, especially when refugee crisis escalated in the spring of 2015, they were subject of discrimination by state authorities, in particular the Commissariat for Refugees of the Republic of Serbia, which significantly complicates activists work. Activists of Women in Black, by denial of permits, is denied access to official refugee camps.^{5 6 7 8 9 10}



2 "Mirovni aktivizam – aktivistički biciklizam - Srebrenica 2014"
 3 Iz informacije Staše Zajović, 22. jul 2014.
 4 Izveštaj o napadu 08.03.2016.
 5 Izveštaj-Poseta izbeglicama Preševo i Dimitrovgrad 15. i 16.01.2016.
 6 Izveštaj-Poseta izbeglicama Dimitrovgrad 08.2.2016.
 7 Izveštaj-Poseta izbeglicama Preševo 16.02.2016.
 8 Izveštaj-Poseta izbeglicama Adaševci 25.03.2016.
 9 Izveštaj-Poseta izbeglicama Adaševci 28.03.2016.
 10 <http://www.slobodnaevropa.org/archive/news/latest/500/500.html?id=27691415>

The daily newspaper "Politika", in whose ownership structure is Serbian Government is dominant, which is also reflected in the editorial policy, published a series of articles that dealt with the sources of funding of non-governmental organizations in Serbia. The content of these texts, stated that non-governmental organizations, including and Women in Black, are funded by dubious organizations from abroad, backed by the CIA, that money is spent in an unknown purposes and for the unknown objectives. ^{11 12 13 14 15 16 17}

In previous reports on these cases (Dossier No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6) facts were presented about the attacks, the reactions of state authorities, the reactions of local and international human rights organizations, the political context in which violence is happening, etc..

I Chronology / Event List

Attack during the anti-fascist action in Belgrade, May 23rd

During the anti-fascist protest "No to rehabilitation", in front of Higher Court (Timočka 15) Belgrade, where another hearing in the process of rehabilitation of Milan Nedic, a Nazi collaborator was held. As head of the Serbian government during the Nazi occupation in World War II, Milan Nedic is responsible for the Holocaust and crimes against antifascists during World War II. During the protest, members of neo-Nazi organizations were constantly shouted insults and threats to activists of Women in Black and other organizations ("traitors", "mercenaries", "creeps", "ugly lesbians", "you will end up in Banjica" (nazi concentration camp near Belgrade) ...). Police did not warned them and let them continue with this kind of behavior for the whole protest.



11 <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/346224/%D0%9A%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%B5-%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B6%D1%83-%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%B8>

12 <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/346286/%D0%9A%D0%BE-%D1%81%D1%83-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%98%D0%B2%D0%B5%D1%9B%D0%B8-%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B8-%D1%81%D1%80-%D0%BF%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B3-%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%BB%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B3-%D0%B4%D1%80%D1%83%D1%88%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%B0>

13 <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/347217/%D0%9D%D0%B0-%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%88%D0%B5-%D1%83%D0%B2%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%B5-%D0%BC%D0%BE%D0%B3%D1%83-%D0%B4%D0%B0-%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BC-%D1%81%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%BE-%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%98%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%B0>

14 <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/346224/%D0%9A%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%B5-%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B6%D1%83-%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%B8>

15 <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/346224/%D0%9A%D0%BE%D0%BC%D0%B5-%D1%81%D1%82%D0%B8%D0%B6%D1%83-%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BB%D0%B0%D1%80%D0%B8>

16 <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/346286/%D0%9A%D0%BE-%D1%81%D1%83-%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%98%D0%B2%D0%B5%D1%9B%D0%B8-%D0%B4%D0%BE%D0%BD%D0%B0%D1%82%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B8-%D1%81%D1%80-%D0%BF%D1%81%D0%BA%D0%BE%D0%B3-%D1%86%D0%B8%D0%B2%D0%B8%D0%BB%D0%BD%D0%BE%D0%B3-%D0%B4%D1%80%D1%83%D1%88%D1%82%D0%B2%D0%B0>

17 <http://www.politika.rs/scc/clanak/347217/%D0%9D%D0%B0-%D0%B2%D0%B0%D1%88%D0%B5-%D1%83%D0%B2%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%B4%D0%B5-%D0%BC%D0%BE%D0%B3%D1%83-%D0%B4%D0%B0-%D0%BE%D0%B4%D0%B3%D0%BE%D0%B2%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%B8%D0%BC-%D1%81%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%BE-%D0%B1%D1%80%D0%BE%D1%98%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%B0>

Attack during the street action in Leskovac on May 24th 2016

On May 24th 2016 in Leskovac was held feminist anti-militarist action “All for peace, knowledge and education, nothing for weapons” on the occasion of the International Day of Women’s Action for Peace and Disarmament, organized by Women for Peace Leskovac and Women in Black, Belgrade, with the support of activists of Women in Black Network from several towns in Serbia. The peace march was attended by about 50 people. From the very beginning of the rally, the group of profascist orientation have continuously insulted and threatens activists by chanting sexist, racist, nationalist, homophobic slogans. All this time the police did not react, even though our action was duly reported. Throughout the action, a group of 15-20 people provoked and threatened participants. Participants were pelted with eggs, and on this occasion, activists Milos Urosevic and Jelena Memet were hit, Jelena in her head. The rally was guarded by about 10 police officers who did not react to insults and threats addressed to the participants of the meeting. Later we came to the information that attackers are members of extreme right-wing organization “Dveri”.¹⁸

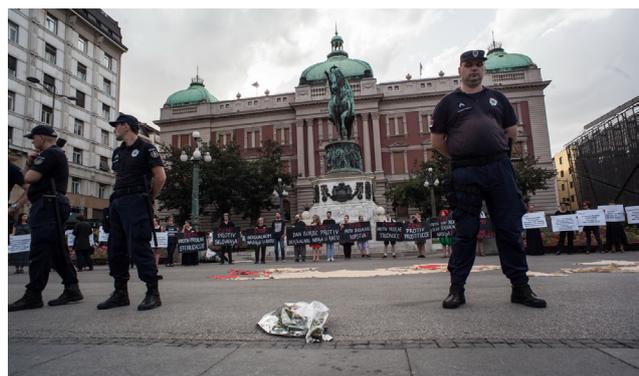


Threats to activist Zoe Gudović

On May 25th 2016 protest organized by the “Ne da(vi)mo Beograd” was held in Belgrade. One of the people who spoke to the people was activist Zoe Gudović. During her speech she condemned the attack in Leskovac, which took place the previous day. After this speech, she received numerous threats through social networks, and one of the major “objections” of those who are obese, was her reference to the Woman in Black.

Attack during the street action in Belgrade on June 17th 2016

On June 17th 2016 in Belgrade, at the Republic Square, the protest “We remember the women raped in war” was organized by Women in Black, on the occasion of the International Day Against Sexual Violence in Conflicts. On this occasion, several persons, some of whom were members of extreme-right-wing organization “Zavetnici” who are already known for attacks on activists of Women in Black, with threats and insults obstructing the protest. One of the attackers approached all the participants of the protest and photographed them individually. Among the attackers was also Nemanja Ristić, who has already been convicted for the most serious crimes (murder, among other things), and against whom there were numerous criminal charges for endangering safety. During the event, the attackers in front of the activists set the wreath of flowers, with a message attached “God rest your soul” The police that was securing the protest, did not react to these actions.¹⁹



Obstruction of the police against activists of Women in Black, on July 11th 2016

On July 11th 2016, the commemoration of the 21st anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica was attended by thirty activists of Women in Black Network from all over Serbia. On the way back, the whole trip through Serbia, Women in Black have been accompanied by heavy police protection, who performed numerous obstructions (not allowing the bus driver to drive the prescribed speed, frequent and unnecessary stopping, etc.). Since we were planning to participate in another commemora-

18 Beleška o protestu od 24.05.2016.

19 Beleška o protestu od 17.06.2016.

tive event - marking the genocide in Srebrenica, in front of the Serbian Assembly (organized by the Youth Initiative for Human Rights with the support of Women in Black) at 8pm, we were disabled, although we depart from Srebrenica on time. It was evident that it was a deliberate obstruction to prevent our coming. This is the way that policing in Serbia exhaust and humiliate our activists onemogavajući both our political engagement. This kind of "protection" that is the militarization serves primarily serves as a strategy of exhaustion and exhaustion, discouragement, deterrence of future activities, intimidation ... In short, to silence critical voices against the regime, particularly in relation to accountability for war and war crimes.

Repression and discrimination against activists during a visits to refugees

The practice of state authorities to act to hinder the activities and discriminate activists of Women in Black, during the campaign of solidarity with the refugees continued. Activists of Women in Black are still not allowed to visit any official refugee camp. Although almost for a year we are seeking for permission to visit, we have never approved. Often, the answers were confused, Commissariat for Refugees, referred to the Red Cross, the Red Cross to the Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Protection ... When we were refused, we never received an explanation, one of the common responses obtained from the Commissariat for Refugees on May 23rd 2016 was: "... Of course, at this moment we are unable to give you permission, you need to postponed your visit. ..." On June 26th 2016 during a visit to the refugees on the border with Hungary, activists of Women in Black brought and shared refugees some water and fruit. Although they were 200 meters away from the official refugee camp on the premises, which is not subject to any restrictions, people from the Commissariat for Refugees came to them. They asked them what they were doing, who they are, from which organization ... They were photographed activists, their car, the license plate number, and then they said they would call the police. Because of their aggressiveness, but also responsibility towards refugees, that they should not be put in a bad situation, activists of Women in Black have withdrawn, although only "offense" committed was giving water to the thirsty people at 35 degrees.



II Legal protection measures taken by Women in Black and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights / Jukom

The following actions were initiated to determine the responsibility of state authorities for violence against Women in Black, and in the direction of legal protection:

1. Letter to the Higher Court in Belgrade from June 29th 2016²⁰
2. Letter to the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Valjevo from June 1st 2016²¹
3. Review of the case files "Valjevo" at the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Valjevo, June 13th 2016²²
4. Criminal charges against Marko Cakić and other N.N. persons from June 9th 2016²³
5. Criminal charges against Nemanja Ristic and other N.N. persons from June 24th 2016²⁴
6. A request for access to information of public importance to PU Beograd from July 29th 2016²⁵

20 Dopis Višem sudu u Beogradu od 29.06.2016.

21 Dopis Višem javnom tužilaštvu u Valjevu od 01.06.2016.

22 Poseta Višem javnom tužilaštvu u Valjevu od 13.06.2016.

23 Krivična prijava protiv Marka Cakića i drugih N.N. lica od 09.06.2016.

24 Krivična prijava protiv Nemanje Ristića i drugih N.N. lica od 24.06.2016.

25 Zahtev za pristup informacijama od javnog značaja PU Beograd od 29.07.2016.

7. A request for access to information of public importance to PU Leskovac from July 29th 2016²⁶

8. Letter to the Public Prosecutor's Office in Leskovac from July 29th 2016²⁷

9. Letter to the First Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade on July 29th 2016²⁸

Yucom legal team, as well as other legal experts and activists from Women in Black are in constant communication with respect to legal remedies and procedures to be undertaken in the coming period regarding the responsibility of the state, communication with international organizations and institutions, as well as further developing the strategies of resistance, mutual support...

III Measures taken by the State regarding the attacks

Počuča Case

During the reporting period, there were two hearings in the case against the accused Radomir Pocuca. At the hearing held on May 19th 2016, accused Počuča was examined. He was initially pleaded that he understands for what he is charged and pleads not guilty. In his defense, he made a number of allegations, which have no connection with the subject of the offense for which he is on trial, referring to the work of NGOs, the war in Kosovo, etc. Judge Tatjana Sretenović during the entire hearing was arrogant and had arrogant stand towards the prosecutor and victims legal representative. On the other hand she did not respond to inappropriate gestures and comments of the lawyer of the accused. After questions by the legal representative of victims to accused to explain what does it means in his statement, which is the subject of criminal proceedings, "... hit the cunt" the judge acted improperly, laughing, in which she was joined by the lawyer of the defendant. Through laughter she dictated above question for the record. Taking into account that those statements within the meaning of the predicate offense is a threat that will attack on the life or body of victims (Article 138, paragraph 1 CC), the judges behavior was an insult to the victims, as well as elemental disrespect for the Court. In response to this question, the accused gave an answer that for him this term means "to slap few times someone in the face", which can be interpreted as an implicit recognition that his statement referred to "attack on the life or body of victims" within the meaning of Art. 138, paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code. At this hearing the accused Počuča come accompanied by 7-8 people, some of them wore uniforms. One of the persons who were accompanying him was Nemanja Ristić, convicted for the most serious crimes, including murder, against whom there were numerous court procedures for endangering safety. A month after the this hearing Nemanja Ristić was with a group of people, who came to the meeting of Women in Black and threats and insults participants, for which Women in Black submitted criminal charges against him. About all these events, Women in black informed the judge Sretenović, but she is not in any way declared or did some gesture to convince the victims that they will be free and safe to give their statements at the next hearing.²⁹ At the hearing held on July 19th 2016, activists Stasa Zajović, Ljiljana Radovanovic and Violeta Đikanović gave their statements. The judge, during the interrogation, was clearly hostile to the victims. During testimony of Ljiljana Radovanovic, she mentioned a protest, which was held "on the anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica." The judge insisted that for the record, to be written "anniversary of the crime in Srebrenica." The next hearing is scheduled for October 6th 2016.

Valjevo Case

After nearly two years of "silence" and not responding to letters from the Women in Black in connection with information about how far the process gone, Higher Public Prosecutor in Valjevo approved Women in Black to inspect the files of the case. After examining the case files, we found out the following: Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Valjevo after conducting investigative actions, questioning of suspects, victims and witnesses, on a day March 16th 2015, submitted to the High Court

26 Zahtev za pristup informacijama od javnog značaja PU Leskovac od 29.07.2016.

27 Dopis Osnovnom javnom tužilaštvu u Leskovcu od 29.07.2016.

28 Dopis Prvom osnovnom javnom tužilaštvu u Beogradu od 29.07.2016.

29 Izveštaj sa suđenja od 19.05.2016.

in Valjevo, the indictment against Aleksandar Bošković, Marko Boskovic, Mališa Milutinovic, Ivan Mijailović for criminal offense of Incitement of national, racial and religious hatred and intolerance under Art. 317, paragraph 2 CC, as well as against Nenad Davidovic, Darko Mitrovic, Aleksandar Mijailović and Matija Stojanac for criminal offense of Incitement of national, racial and religious hatred and intolerance under Article 317, paragraph 1 of the Criminal Code.

The High Court in Valjevo with the decision of K.br. 11/15 from May 20th 2015, brought by judge Mitar Đenišić refused indictments proposal for the reasons: "... victims are not of Bosniak nationality or Islam believer, and that is why it can not be the offense under Art. 317 st. 1 i st. 2 KZ". Higher Public Prosecutor's Office filed an appeal against this decision to the Appellate Court in Belgrade, which in the decision Kž.2 1166/15 from June 29th 2015 dismissed the appeal as unfounded. The presiding judge was judge Olivera Andjelkovic. On March 31st 2016, the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office from Valjevo, after the investigative actions, a new questioning of suspects, victims and witnesses, filed to the High Court in Valjevo indictment against Darko Mitrovic, Aleksandar Mijailovic, Matija Stojanac, Aleksandar Bošković, Marko Boskovic, Ivan Milutinović and Mališa Mijailović for the criminal offense Violent behavior at sports events or public gatherings art. 344a Criminal Code. The High Court in Valjevo with the decision K.br.24 / 16 from May 25th 2016, refused the indictment proposal for the reasons stated in Art. 338 st. 1 t. 2 of the CC, stating "... that the indictment is based on the same factual situation, as the previous indictment for the same event, which has already been rejected, that it was" adjudicated "and for that reason can not be proceedings". This decision is brought by judge Mitar Đenišić, the same judge who refused the first indictment. On May 30th 2016, the Higher Public Prosecutor's Office in Valjevo has sent an appeal to the Appellate Court in Belgrade to the above decision. By early September, the Appellate Court has not made a decision. In the event that the Appellate Court dismissed the appeal, will no longer be possible to conduct any proceedings before the courts in Serbia for the incident and the perpetrators will be actually amnestied.³⁰

March 8th Case

Inspectors of PU Belgrade, after the incident, took statements from the victims and said that based on security camera footage, they will find the perpetrator. To one of the activists security camera footage was shown and she recognized the attacker. She was told that soon there will be even more videos and police will notify Women in Black. In an informal conversation with the inspector who worked on the above case, we learned that "they collected more videos, but that they are all poor quality and that it is not possible to identify the perpetrator."

Leskovac Case

During a rally in Leskovac on May 24th 2016, the police did nothing to protect the participants from the group who from the start to the end of the rally, which lasted nearly 2 hours, was in close proximity to the participants, even mixing with the participants of the meeting, shouting threats and insults to participants of the meeting. At the request of the participants to act and to protect them from harassment, and to enable that properly registered gathering takes place normally, the police did not react. After the participants have repeatedly targeted and hit by eggs, the only thing the police did was to "rushed" the participants, that as soon as possible to removed them from public place. At the insistence of activists that they want to file criminal charges against persons who obstructed the meeting and who threw eggs on them, police officers responded indifferently, saying that they don't see the reason for filing the criminal charges. On claims by activists Jelena Memet, who was hit by an egg in the nose, that she feels the pain, they said they don't see that she is injured. In the end they took Stasa Zajović phone number and told her that someone from PU Leskovac will call her and asked to give a statement and filed a criminal charge. After more than two weeks of waiting, nobody called, and Women in Black June 9th 2016. filed a criminal charges to the Basic Public Prosecutor's Office in Leskovac against Marko Cakić, who has since been identified as the leader



30 Izveštaj o uvidu u spise predmeta "Valjevo" od 13.06.2016.

of the group and other N.N. persons for the criminal act of Preventing public assembly. As evidence, photos as well as video recording of the entire event were submitted, where one can clearly see the perpetrators and their actions. At the request of the Women in Black, under the Law on Access to Information of Public Importance, to send us police reports on the events on May 24th 2016, PU Leskovac has submitted official reports of police officers who worked on that day. Of all the events, threats, insults and other disturbing event, police officers saw only that "from an unknown direction someone threw a few eggs," and that "they could not identify who threw the eggs."³¹ In the letter to the Municipal Public Prosecutor's Office in Leskovac, Women in Black asked to inform us about the action taken on the occasion of criminal charges from June 9th 2016, even after a month, there is no reply.



Nemanja Ristić Case

During the event on the Republic Square in Belgrade, on June 17th 2016, police officers did not react to the actions of group of persons, which we later found that some of them belong to the extreme right-wing organization "Zavetnici". Some of the officers were even greeted and shook hands with some of people from that group. It is a group that supports the accused Radomir Počuča and attended hearings in the proceedings against him. About Nemanja Ristic we already stated some of the facts in the preceding sections of this report. Criminal charges for criminal offenses of endangering safety and the prevention of public gathering was filed on June 24th 2016 to the First Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade. As evidence we submitted photos from the event, showing the perpetrators, as well as Nemanja Ristić at the moment when the N.N. female person puts in front of the participants of the meeting wreath with the message "God rest your soul." On July 29th 2016 Women in Black, under the Law on Access to Information of Public Importance, filed a request to PU Belgrade, to send us reports about this event, as well as to inform us about the action taken in connection with that event. On the same day we sent a request to the First Public Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade, to inform us about the actions that were taken in response to a criminal complaint that was filed. By the beginning of September, we have not received responses.



IV Political Context

A suspension of the rule of law

During the reporting period there was a significant deterioration in the rule of law, or better to say that the right condition of rule of law became apparent. From the previous parts of the report can be seen, that in Serbia, it is possible to avoid criminal liability for physical attacks on citizens and the police, although there are dozens of witnesses and video footage of the entire event (case "Valjevo"). In late April 2016, a group of still unidentified persons under the cover of night, demolished several buildings near the Central Bus Station in Belgrade. On this occasion they temporarily arrested several people who were in or near these facilities. They also seized their mobile phones, and some are permanently stripped of their belongings. What is the most dangerous in this case is that the police, as well as communal police failed to respond to citizens' calls for help, as the it is obvious from the report of the Ombudsman, about this event. Despite the fact that the incident occurred in the center of Belgrade, that there were dozens of perpetrators, few big construction machines, the apparent refusal of the police to act, for which there must be somebody's command, the Prosecutor's Office, even after more than 4 months failed to establish anything. On the other hand, the same Prosecutor's Office has initiated the process and promptly within a few hours overhauled activist of Initiative "Ne da(vi)mo Beograd", for allegedly assaulting a police officer during a protest in front of the City Assem-

31 Službena beleška od 24.05.2016.

bly on July 19th 2016. The worst thing is that no attack had happened. The event was filmed by dozens of cameras and not a single video shows any attack. All this shows that the Prosecutor's Office is under total control of the authorities in Serbia and to serve as a mean of pressure to those who criticize the government, as well as the dam to any responsibility of government and those close to them.

The escalation of nationalist rhetoric

The previous period was marked by nationalist rhetoric which had the culmination in the whole region, and the leading role have politicians in Serbia. The ruling political elite, which was itself part of the criminal policy of the nineties, remove any doubts, that their views changed as compared to the nineties. It is amazing how easily and irresponsibly government representatives can give inflammatory statements, how they use "war" rhetoric and all for the sake of gaining petty political points and drawing attention away from the real problems faced by citizens.

Attacks on the NGO sector in Serbia

The process of continuous defamation of NGOs in Serbia lasts for years. And this process in the last period experienced its peak. Due to fear of independent and autonomous movements and initiatives, which are not under the control of the authorities and who boldly and accurately indicate the abuse and criminal conduct of authorities, such as the initiative "Ne da(vi)mo Beograd", which managed to bring together tens of thousands of citizens in the protests, the government through their media went into shameless campaign against organizations and individuals who are rightly or wrongly associated with the initiative "No da(vi)mo Beograd". With absurd lies about millions of euro and dollars that organizations and activists receiving to "destabilize Serbia", that they receive the "orders" from the CIA to "provoke a war in Serbia", the government through its media, targeting activists and bringing them into a dangerous position. It can be said that the current government in Serbia is only one step from open physical violence against those who criticize.



Repression of authorities towards the refugees from the Near and Middle East

During the reporting period there has been a deterioration in the situation of refugees, as well as the first cases of organized violence by the state or the police towards refugees. In the last month, the police and the Commissariat for Refugees have begun to threaten refugees with arrest and deportation and to use force, to driven out them from the park near the Central Bus Station and the Faculty of Economic and to put them in a refugee camp in Krnjaca. About the conditions in the camp, it is sufficient to say that the refugees decide to sleep in the open, in abandoned warehouses, rather than to "feel the hospitality of Commissariat for Refugees in the center in Krnjaca.

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