

# solidarnost je naša snaga

## Visit to refugees / migrants in Tuzla (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

December 11th 2018

On December 11<sup>th</sup> 2018 a group of activists of Women in Black visited Tuzla. On that occasion, we met with Nihad Suljić, a citizen of Tuzla who is helping refugees / migrants who are passing through Tuzla for months. In Tuzla, there is no organized assistance from state authorities or organizations.

Refugees / migrants can only count on Nihad and some of his fellow citizens who, in accordance with their possibilities, are helping. Nevertheless, almost every refugee / migrant who finds themselves in Tuzla will be taken care of, at least in terms of basics.

Tuzla is a transit point on the road between Serbia and Sarajevo, and further to Bihac. Refugees / migrants entering Bosnia and Herzegovina from Serbia are coming to Tuzla, where they can find transport for their desired destinations, further west.

At this moment it is possible to go from Tuzla only in the direction of Sarajevo. Although there are direct trains and buses from Tuzla to Bihac, refugees / migrants are prevented from using them. According to the police order, at the bus station, the tickets for the Bihać lines are not sold to the refugees / migrants. The use of the train is prevented by the police of the Republika of Srpska, because on the road to Bihac, the train stops in Doboj, which is on the territory of the Republika of Srpska, and the police force them out of the train and return in the direction of Tuzla.

Refugees / migrants in Tuzla are located at the bus and railway stations, located next to each other. Station staff and locals are generally benevolent towards them, and refugees can stay, sometimes sleep in stations spaces.

Refugees/migrants testify daily about the torture they are experiencing, especially from the police in Croatia, who beat them, takes away their money, mobile phones, and then, despite their declared intention to seek the asylum, they are being returned without any procedures to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Winter in Bosnia and Herzegovina is very harsh and, according to the information of activists from Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are currently free places in camps, around Sarajevo and Bihac.

During our stay we saw several groups of refugees. Some of them went from Serbia to Bihac, others came back from Bihac, going to Serbia.

Lately, a large number of people are returning from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Serbia, exhausted with months of failed attempts to cross into Croatia.

Written by: Mirko Medenica  
December 14<sup>th</sup> 2018

