

Newsletter „Women, peace, security“ May 2012



Dear readers, by publishing this newsletter, we wish to contribute to better information about UN documents on security, demilitarisation, and to the greater influence of women on post-conflict problems solving, first of all in Serbia, and then in the Western Balkans. We hope that this newsletter will be read by those who are interested in the re-examination of the traditional concept of national security, the reform of the security sector, the gender dimension of security, security integrations and feminist antimilitarist concept of security. We expect your contributions on these questions. It is accessible online on the website: www.zeneucnom.org

The editorial board

Chapters

Women in Black and 1325 Resolution

Mihailovic at war again	3
Parliament against Citizens	5

Activities of Women in Black on the demilitarization of the security

Twenty years of white straps	6
Culpability of five years old Refika	8
Visegrad - there are only victims and criminals	10
Bridge over Drina river 2012.	12
Shameful history revision	14
Ravna Gora in Belgrade	15
Denial is a Serbian word for genocide	15
Under the rainbow flag	17
Neither penalties nor fees	17
Female inheritance	18

Experiences from the world

Taylor first former head of state convicted of rape during conflict	18
---	----

Women in Black and 1325 Resolution



Mihailovic at war again

Activists of Women in Black met on 16th of May for the third time with William Infante, UN Resident Coordinator in Serbia. Staša Zajović, Women in Black coordinator moderated this meeting. Tamara Kaliterna noted that during the election silence for the first round, in 2012 on South of Serbia eight Albanians were arrested suspected for war crimes of 2001 although that same year, when the OSCE urged Serbia to provide the evidence if one of those arrested was under investigation, got a negative answer. In the area of three municipalities from which they were arrested, majority is Albanian population, about 63,000, and for decades there are `administrative activities of ethnic cleansing.` Belgrade does not recognize certificates of young Albanians acquired in Pristina, for the residents of this area is very difficult to obtain Serbian citizenship even when if they are born in Belgrade, military vehicles are constantly on the streets of Bujanovac, Presevo and Medvedja, for Albanians is very difficult to be employed in the local police. In this part of Serbia, they have built the largest military base, although the area is demilitarized since 2001. As in the previous session of the parliament of Serbia, so in the Parliament which was elected in 2012, from this area we will have only one out of 250 deputies, which is the total number in Serbian parliament. Some people will have demanded the protection of the rights of political parties and the staff of the Ombudsman, but no one has bothered to help them. In 2001 after the conflict completed, in the Kosovo conflict in this area OVPBM and Serbian forces were involved, but soon the amnesty was declared. Since 1st of January in 1999 until 21st of May 2001, when they declared amnesty, there were killed 11 ethnic Albanian civilians, in the area. The representatives of this three municipalities in August 2009 demanded to be a special administrative area, but it was not allowed. Borka Vasic presented remarks of the media that during the first round of elections Roma population was offered 1,000 to 3,000 dinars, or food, to vote for a certain party or were told that they have received special pens that allegedly recorded for whom they have voted. She said that the Serbian Progressive Party filed a criminal complaint against Vitomir Mihajlovic, President of the National Council of Roma and Zivorad Saitovic, an employee in the Office of the Rome Municipality of Prokuplje because they were `abusing their official position, receiving and giving bribes` and Saitovic is charged with the criminal offense of abusing of the right to vote. She introduced UN representatives in Belgrade with the problem of eviction of Roma population in Belgrade and the fact that Belgrade authorities use the money they receive from the European Investment Bank to help Roma population. They were given money to help 126 families, and the apartments were given only to 53 displaced families. `Serbia is deeply racist, not only differentiated ethnically and nationally but also a racist country. An example are Roma and Albanian national minority in Vojvodina,` said Nada Dabic from Novi Sad. She cited examples from the campaign: preventing ethnic Albanians to vote and organizing voting for members of Serbian nationality. In the election campaign, SNS leader Tomislav Nikolic advocated for the birth of healthy children, which according to her is a discrimination especially of obesity people and people with diabetes. Ivica Dacic was causing national hatred in Pirot against the Bulgarian minority, threatened to Vojvodina citizens because the Constitution which did not pass. Everyday, Serbian nationalist cause the induction of Hungarian nationalism. For example, after the intrusion of Serbian nationalists in the premises of **CAS** Petefi Sandor when they caused the damage, three elementary school pupils of Hungarian nationality was beaten by a boy of Serbian nationality to `charge already made damage.`

Milos Urosevic, activist, spoke about the position of LGBT population in Serbia, noting that the ban on Pride Parade in 2011 violated the state constitution guarantees-the right to freedom of assembly. Frequent physical attacks, which are a denial of the right to life shall remain unpunished. Urosevic, who is on behalf of Women in Black members present at the trials for the leaders of the fascist organization `Obraz` and `1389` - Misha Vacić and Mladen Obradovic who spreaded in 2009 the ideas discrimination and advocated violence against LGBT people, said that the indictment with which they were charged for felony was retread to disorderly conduct at public meetings, for which smoother sentences are envisaged. Obradovic was sentenced to ten months, although a prison sentence for this offense is three years. His impression of the trial to Vacić is that the state still did not perceive LGBT rights as human rights. Members of fascist organisations are freely entering the courtroom with pictures of the Hague indictees Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic, the emblems- `Serb`, `Honour` ... a judge does not sanction their open speech of hate. Urosevic concluded that at these hearings there are unnecessarily trial delaying, activists of human rights organizations often have problems to enter the courtroom as members of fascist groups are pushing, they often call out, but the Constitutional Court still does not ban fascist organizations.

Katarina Golubovic from the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, spoke on the position of defenders and human rights defenders in Serbia on the basis of information provided by NGOs or by legal assistance to human rights defenders.

The general assessment is that the climate for the operation of human rights defenders remains unfavorable, despite promises of government after 2008. `The lack of open and clear support of politicians for human rights defenders, which is necessary for a twenty year veterans due to stigmatization by the authorities, media and part of society, the impunity of violence against defenders affects the current negative attitude towards the defenders and their activities transferes to the youth, particularly in the area of protection of minority groups. The latest examples of this activism condemnation is the statement of Minister of Interior Affairs-Ivica Dacic during the election campaign that they do not advocate for the rights of women to equal salaries`, Golubovic warned. She says the support of government and media in the development of democratic culture is the key, and for the education on human rights. Although state institutions have brought a series of `European` laws which, among other things, provide education on anti-discrimination, the Ministry of Education did not approve to Committee of Lawyers for Human Rights, Belgrade Centre for Human Rights and the Helsinki Committee human rights education in the high schools, education of school inspectors, advisors in the fight against discrimination. After months of insisting they began working with high schools where they observed lack of understanding and disapproval of affirmative action (so called positive discrimination) to ethnic minorities (for example Hungarians), and intolerance towards sexual minorities. Gordana Subotic from Women in Black pointed out that a law on private security agencies in Serbia, is not adopted, yet. She explained that feminist anti-military point of view of Women in Black is very important, that the labor market of private security agencies, does business with 150 million euros per year, it is important to regulate it by law, and not only their work but also the work of private security of multinational companies in Serbia and in the region. For them, war is a business! Private multinational companies operate in the region since 90-ies. Some of America's largest multinational private security companies like Blackwater, DynCorp, MPRI, G4S have their offices in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and recruit young men for war zones. In Serbia, there are a number of former members of the gendarmerie, police and military who have profited during

the war and today is also rich in brokering private security sector. Lack of political will to adopt this law is yet another proof that Serbia is highly militarized, and the criminal society, Subotic said.

Serbia's refusal to sign the Convention on Cluster Munition is the refusal of Serbia to help the victims of cluster munition and to provide the access to basic human rights. Serbia does not have data on how many people died from this type of ammunition, and during the NATO bombing of Serbia, between 3600 and 5400 cluster bombs were thrown. By signing the Convention, the victim would get financial assistance and protection, and Serbian would receive money for the removal of unexploded cluster bombs. The victims of these munitions are civilians in 97% of cases, this type of ammunition can explode even after 30 years, explained Subotic.

For Serbia, as a post-conflict country, it is important to have records of former soldiers/ police officers who suffer from PTSD, they have small arms and light weapons and are prone to violence. This kind of data is needed to protect women who report domestic violence and to see how war affects women in post-conflict societies, concluded Subotic.

Zorica Spasojevic, from Autonomous Women's Center has reported that last year 29 women were killed in a 'family-law context,' and 58% of them, by weapon. A quarter of women reported violence. She says this femicide, among other things, indicates that there is not adequate control of possession and use of weapons. Last year, 50 children lost their mothers, of which 21 were juveniles. All network data is collected by women against violence through the media, because there are no official statistics on women who are victims of domestic violence, and still no data on the relationship between perpetrator and victim. Also, the Criminal Code is not amended with the offense of harassment, even though it was announced in the November of 2011.

After the meeting, William Infante noted that 'in Serbia, apparently, is threatened any form of security, and the attacks are coming from different sources.' 'Your experience will help me when I communicated with the authorities. And I am concerned about the existence of neo-fascist groups in Serbia, but the failure of 'Doors' and the Serbian Progressive Party in the elections, gives grounds for optimism. In Brussels next week we will discuss Serbia's progress towards EU and UN will participate in the discussion. Last year, Serbia was in the middle of the global scale of human rights. It is good to see each other twice a year to have an insight what are the issues to incorporate them into our work. UN ties with other international organizations active in Serbia and we know what are your priorities, we can be more appropriate to engage,' Infante said.

Women in Black, and the Lawyers Committee on Human Rights and the Regional Center for Minorities, whose representatives took part in the meeting, asked Infante to intervene, so that Serbia signs a treaty banning cluster bombs, adopte legislation on private security agencies and multinational corporate security in Serbia, increases fees for possession of small arms and light weapons and to prevent the enforcement of the law on the rehabilitation of Draza Mihailovic.

Parliament against Citizens

At the consultation for the preparation of the general recommendations of the Committee for the protection of human rights in conflict and post-conflict countries in Eastern Europe and Central Asia,

the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in Istanbul on 11th of May, in the name of Women in Black, Gordana Subotic attended. In total 24 women participated from 13 countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Women in Black pointed out that there is a need to develop mechanisms for reporting on the implementation of international instruments concerning women, peace and security (Resolution 1325 of UN Security Council) in conflict and post-conflict countries through mechanisms such as reporting on CEDAW.

Subotic said that Serbian parliament has never passed a resolution `Women, Peace and Security` of Women in Black, which is adapted to the political context of Serbia since 2005. Also, the viewfinder is monitoring implementation of transitional justice, the participation of soldiers from the post-conflict countries in international peacekeeping missions and the participation of women in peace processes and negotiations in post-conflict countries.

She emphasized the position of Women in Black in understanding of the 1325 Resolution of UN Security Council only as a formal mechanism for the participation of women in the security sector in conflict and post-conflict countries derogating from the concept of human security, a threat and militarized approach to gender and security at the global level. Subotic believes that the training for participants in peacekeeping missions in the post-conflict countries should include dealing with the past of their region. For Women in Black consider that the exclusion of women from peace agreements and peacebuilding process left a negative impact and influence the practices of institutions that exclude women who have campaigned jointly for the peace process from the drafting of important documents concerning women, peace and security as is the case with the draft NAP in Serbia for the SCR 1325. This affects the defenders of human rights and leaves them to the arbitrary will of political leaders in post-conflict countries that make them do what ever they want and encourages offenders.

Women in Black have urged the CEDAW Committee to pay attention to women's human rights and the participation of women in all processes of implementation of international instruments concerning women, peace and security in post-conflict countries.

II Activities of Women in Black on the demilitarization of the security



Twenty years of white straps

On the occasion of 31st of May - International Day of white straps, the date when Bosnian Serb authorities in Prijedor told to non-Serbs to mark their houses with white flags or sheets, and when leaving the house put white stripes on their sleeves, Women in Black have joined the appeal to the Association of Detainees of Prijedor `92 , inmates of Kozarac Association and the Association of Families of Missing `Fount`. Although there are many reasons that the World Day of white straps should be in marked. Serbia was silent that day. At Belgrade's Republic Square Women in Black have broken the silence, wearing white armbands and placards with the inscriptions `31st of May -

World Day of white straps`, `Stop the genocide denial - support the rights of victims to remember.` Women in Black stated that municipal authorities in Prijedor did not provide for victims `in any way an homage for their suffering.` Representatives of this organization distributed to citizens leaflets and straps as a symbol of marking of an ethnic or religious group in the war.

An activist of Women in Black Staša Zajović told reporters that the meeting was organized to commemorate the `mass extermination of those with other names`, but also against the persecution of people of different names and fascism. `This is a cry against the apathy and a call for solidarity. We want to invite the sympathy of people in this town, because the government and institutions are working to organize all the oblivion of the crimes`, Zajovic said.

`These straps we would be able to wear for the situation of Roma population in Serbia too and total social apartheid in which they live. It is a matrix which goes since the nineties and every day we live. If we do not respect the victims of 1992, we will live eternally in Omarska and Srebrenica,` Zajovic added.



`I think regular transfer of Ratko Mladic`s trial through Serbia`s public service could contribute to raising people`s consciousness about the responsibility of the Serbian state during the aggression against Bosnia. But do not expect results if this happens under pressure from the international community. The dominant mood in the society can be changed only with deep review at all levels,` said Zajovic.

About what happened in Prijedor, that in this ethnically mixed Bosnian town shameful history repeated, after 63 years from the beginning of the Nazi genocide against Jews - labeling them just because of their different nationality and religion, and because as undesirable determined for persecution and extermination, and today in Serbia, we know just little about it. If they do know-they do not speak about it.

`On 31st of May started a campaign of extermination in mass executions, concentration camps, rape and other crimes, which resulted in removing 94% of Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats from the territory of Prijedor Municipality. This is the first time since 1939 and the Nazi decree by which Polish Jews had to wear a white strap with a blue Star of David around their sleeves, and as members of one ethnic or religious group were marked for extermination.

Members of the European monitoring mission confirmed that even in August of 1992 during a visit to the villages around Prijedor inhabited by both Serbs and Muslims, they saw white flags of Muslim houses to be distinguished from the Serb ones. The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia established due to the non-Serb population persecution which followed together with

genocide. Thousands of people were killed, imprisoned, tortured, raped and deported out of Prijedor and as a community it changed forever.

Today, Bosnia and Herzegovina operate under the peace agreement signed in 1995 after which Prijedor completed within the Republic of Srpska. Municipal authorities in Prijedor to this day did not pay homage to their suffering and for what they have been through. Mayor Marko Pavic and local governments refuse to acknowledge publicly those crimes committed in Prijedor, despite numerous judgments of international and local courts. Creating a monument in memory of the victims in the town of Prijedor was not allowed, and access to sites where crimes were committed is prevented including Acelor-Mittal, the company that now owns the location were a notorious concentration camp of Omarska was situated - it is said in the statement of four NGO`s, three of them from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Women in Black from Serbia.

The goal of white straps and white sheets on the windows is to raise awareness about the fight for the dignity of millions of victims of mass atrocities and injustices - from Prijedor to Johannesburg, from Jakarta to Lima, a vote against the denial of the truth about crimes committed because of race, ethnicity or political beliefs of the victims. `Wherever you are, on the 31st of May, put a white strap around your arm and at least for ten minutes do highlight with the white sheet on your window! Let victims know in Prijedor and around the world that they are not alone,` it is said in the statement.

Culpability of five years old Refika

The oldest was 91 years old... Refika Bacic just five years old. Dzenanovic Maida, 17 years. Dzenanović Azema, 60. Dzolic Naila, 53. Ecimovic Maria, 59. Marjan Danica, 37. Foric Dula, 77 years. Softic Khaled, 18 years ... are just some of the names of 266 women, we read on 24th of May in the Peace Action of Women in Black on Belgrade's Republic Square. It was organized to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the beginning of Serbian aggression on a sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina and at women, victims of crime. During the two-hour performance activists read names of women killed in Prijedor, and each of them in white clothe placed a red rose. `Zuhra` is the most frequent name of this sad list.

Peace Action `Crimes against women in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina - We remember` was organized with the support of Reconstruction Women's Fund and the Autonomous Women's Center. It was their contribution to the 24th May - International Day of Action for Women, Peace and Disarmament.

As it was announced on the eve of the action, it is supposed to remind on the scope of crimes against women. `Rape is on all sides in the conflict. Mass systematic rape of women during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been an act of male violence against women, but also an act of ethnic cleansing, war booty and territorial expansion. Among the most raped women were Bosnian women, and most of the perpetrators were Serbs. Only in Prijedor region, 266 women were killed, ten of them girls, and those who are still missing leads are 107 women.

Sexual crimes have historically been unidentified and unpunished, and only thanks to the solidarity coalition of feminists and legal expert, these crimes are becoming part of international and national

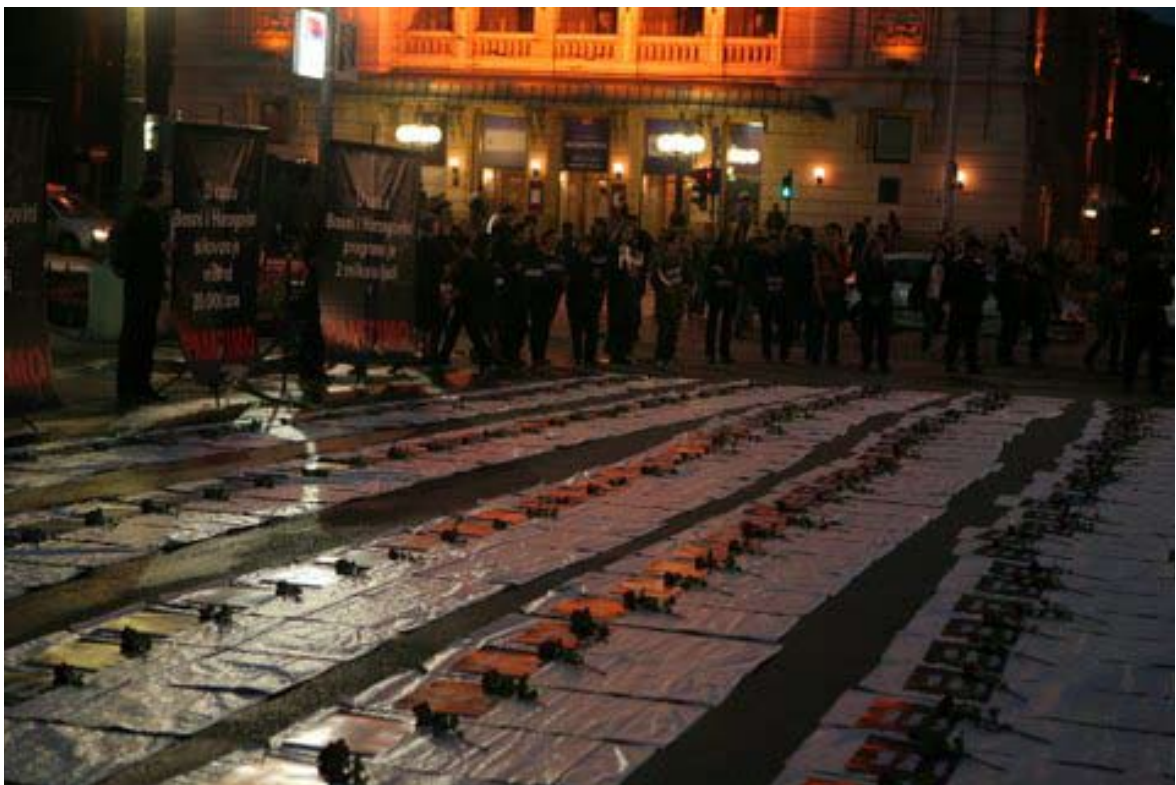
legislation. We will never stop looking for space for the voices of women survivors of sexual violence in war. We will never cease the demand to achieve the justice for victims of sexual crimes against women in war and peace.

We demand the punishment for those who are responsible for systematic mass rape and murder in the death camps of municipality of Prijedor (Omarska, Keraterm, Trnopolje), Serbia should strictly adhere the territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina and stop supporting policy of Milorad Dodik, which threatens peace and security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbian state institutions have to stop the denial, relativization of the crimes committed in our name, with which they will finally acknowledge the dignity of victims.

‘We believe that obligations of Serbian government are to be fulfilled in order to meet the truth and justice. It is primarily our responsibility towards the victims of crimes committed in our name. This action will continue the fight against oblivion which prevails in Serbia, we are building a culture of remembrance, which also contributes to good neighborly relations and peace in the region,’ it said in a statement of Women in Black on 23d of May.

It was intended to simultaneously maintain the same performance in Prijedor, where since ‘91 to ‘95. were killed 5209 of citizens, but Banja Luka authorities would not let it. It was organized by the Association of inmates ‘Prijedor 92,’ Kozarac inmates Association, Association of Prijedor ‘Fount’ and Association ‘Optimists 2004’, Association of Women ‘With heart to Peace’, Women’s Association-‘Bridges of friendship,’ Association of citizens ‘Behar’, Association for the return to the valley of the river Sana ‘Croatian Cultural Centre.’

On this prohibition of the commemoration, Women in Black have reacted with a statement: ‘We express our outrage with the brutal inhumane procedure which offends the dignity of victims of crimes



committed in our name. This prohibition of Serbian government wants to erase the memory of the genocide, which is a continuation of the same policies of the nineties which created Srpska Republic, ethnic cleansing and genocide, when citizens of Prijedor region were expelled, tortured and killed, just because they got different names.

For Srebrenica`s genocide were sentenced by the Hague tribunal: Krstic, Jokic, Blagojevic, Popovic, Beara, while Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic are prosecuted for genocide in eight municipalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina, including Prijedor in front of the Tribunal of Hague.

Stasa Zajovic from Women in Black sees this as `proof of continuity of policies of ethnic cleansing and genocide, which was formed by Republic of Srpska. It was horrible, humiliating, together with the fact that the Muslim population can not go at least once a year in the Omarska camp. This is the very concept of humiliation and death. There is a discrepancy between the total space which given to the executioners and space, even the smallest, which is prohibited to the victims. It is the continuation of the genocidal policies.`

As usual, the meeting in Belgrade was a host of police officers and some reporters. Citizens have passed, some have stood there with headphones on their ears, some have licked the ice cream. Almost all of them were uninterested, or conspicuously uninterested. Some laughed, some smiled. One lady came with the a bouquet of white calla. She was reluctant, and then handed a bouquet which she placed below the list of 20 000 women and girls raped in Bosnia. Mrs. Borka Bozovic is her name and she is a profesor of history of art. We thank her for being there showing a better face of Belgrade.

The older passerby remarked with an oath: `Why you do not read read at least one Serb name!` Two older men accused two friends of Women in Black of being Muslims. Zajovic to comments with the fact that official Belgrade and most of the media are silent about the crimes of Serbia. `There is a moral value and aesthetic disorder that deprives the city of Belgrade of having the postgenocidal status. Cultural and political public has to wonder how we got to this state, not to be shocked with the fact that Toma Nikolic came to power. He is just a technical consequence of such a thought system`, Zajovic said.

According to Zajovic, Belgrade looked the cooperatio with the Tribunal only as the `bureaucratic thing`. The Hague spoke about something as soon as they would finish, as when they delivered Goran Hadzic. They thought this is a package, but those parcels are coming back and it is to be seen in the fact that most of the people voted for the person who is a symbol of the crimes of the nineties. As Brecht said: `You can not build a new house without cleaning the old basement of the previous one,` Zajovic said.

Visegrad - there are only victims and criminals

Representatives of Women in Black in Serbia and Montenegro: Anima (Kotor) and Bonafide (Pljevlja) on 26th of May, attended the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of crimes against Bosnian civilians in Visegrad of 1992. Several thousand of people gathered at the cemetery in Visegrad scaffold, at the funeral of the remains of 66 Muslims who were killed by Bosnian Serb by force and thrown into the Drina river. Hasidim Ohranovic was killed at 86 year, and children were killed at

four and six years old. They have thrown into the Drina River 3,000 roses, out of which 130 white, for many children who were killed in Visegrad. After the burial, memorials for the victims were discovered. The remains of the victims were found two years ago, when they partially emptied Lake Perucac, to repair the dam. In the area of Visegrad Serbian forces executed several thousands of civilians and their bodies were thrown into the Drina river or buried in mass graves.

‘I just got back from the criminal city of Visegrad. Criminal city also has a criminal street, street Uzice Corps. At the end of a criminal street is the cemetery where they buried 66 innocent citizens of Visegrad out of 3,000 missing. At the other end of that same terrible streets criminals were celebrating their victory and danced. The hardest part was when they lowered the cradle into the water full of roses for murdered children. We were not allowed to sleep in Visegrad. It is an indelible impression the way we were welcomed with packaging of food - for the road, as well’, it is how Mara Basic saw it, since she was together with Women in Black, in Visegrad.

‘In April of 1992 Serbian aggression began in Visegrad, led by Uzice Corps of the Yugoslav National Army. During the aggression in the municipality of Visegrad 3,000 people were killed and the entire Muslim population was exposed to state-organized persecution, imprisonment, torture, humiliation ... Proof of the direct responsibility of Serbia for the crimes committed in Visegrad was the recent discovery of mass graves in the Lake of Perucac.

The whole city was turned into a crime scene. On the bridge over Drina civilians - from babies to old women, hundred years old, were tortured, killed and thrown into the river, in the house of Meho Aljic 60 people were burned on 27th of June in 1992. The only survivor of the pyre, Zehra Turjacin, testified at the Hague Tribunal in the trial for war criminals Milan and Sredoje Lukic.

In the house of Adem Omeragic 59 people were burnt alive, on 14th of June ‘92, youngest victim was two days old infant who had no name, of the family Kurspahic. Vilina Vlas Hotel is a place of mass systematic sexual crimes against more than 200 women. The hotel, was the headquarter of Milan Lukic (member of the Visegrad Brigade of Republic of Srpska), women were sex slaves of Serbian soldiers. Women of all ages were raped, including girls. Some of them have committed suicide, and only 30 of them survived. After Foca, Visegrad is a place with the greatest number of the raped Bosnian women. Their names are enrolled in a shameful femicide map - the mass killing of women,’ it said Women in Black, Anima and Bonafide statement.

The statement concludes: ‘We will never stop looking for space for the voices of women survivors of sexual violence in war. We will never cease our demand to justice for victims of sexual crimes against women in war and peace.’

For crimes committed in Visegrad in front of the Hague tribunal were sentenced Milan Lukic to life in prison, Sredoje Lukic to 30 years of prison, Mitar Vasiljevic to 20 years in prison. None is charged with the crime of rape as a tactic of war.

Before courts of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the crimes committed in Visegrad were convicted: Lelek to 14 years, Momir Savic to 17 years, Novo Rajak, for 14 years, Nenad Tanaskovic to 8 years in prison. Only one - Boban Simsic was convicted of war crimes of rape to 14 years in prison.

Bridge over Drina river 2012

For the first time this year I went to Bosnia, the scene of the crime. Once through the city of Bajina Basta we went to Visegrad on the best school excursion, we rejoiced our way to Bosnia. So many people are in the cemetery of Visegrad. Women wrapped with scarves. The organizers offered to us scarves as well but Stasha said: `We do not use scarves. We wear black. By this we are recognized, that is how people know that we came from Serbia, from Belgrade.` The umpteenth time Stasha speaks to the Bosnian and international media. You always have to say something new, but send the same message to those who watch or listen. It's not easy when the lump in the throat reaps. No one from Serbia, no RTS as public service nor B92... News are not interested, the picture is too harsh and the music is too sad and incomprehensible. Women and men approach, render thanks, hear personal tragedies...

They reveal a monument for the victims on the occasion of 20 years of suffering. On white obelisk there is a quotation from the Qur'an: `Whoever kills one who have never killed anyone / and did not conduct riots in the country/ it is the same as if he killed all of the people.`

Over the microphone they read the names of those who are to be buried, and then the names of all of the victims from Visegrad. Rain drizzles, umbrellas are opening. The speaker asks to be heard until all the names are read. At the entrance stairs of the house on the corner, a man is sitting. Asks me to sit down a little, with him. We start talking about the rain, bad weather, May. Then are following questions we raised to each other like where we are coming from? And I answer to him: `I`m coming from Serbia` (it was never more difficult to me to provide an answer for this kind of question). He lives in Germany. He brought a friend to bury his father. Before the war he used to live in Rogatica, `Serbs and Muslims together, no one harmed each other,` he says. `Suddenly, others came and so it began`. I wonder is there Muslim population still living here. He says: `No`. There are no in Rogatica, just old, who had nowhere to go, or want to die where they were born. His father wanted to bury him in Rogatica. This tomb is the only thing that binds him to Rogatica. In Rogatica Serbs remained, but now they are also leaving. He says that poverty drives them away as well as the misery, everything is destroyed in the city.

Visegrad is a dead town, almost unearthly. Houses with more visible traces of the war, the gray facades, here and there an occasional peeping through the window, two old men are sitting on the terrace. The war here is the time where all ends and the time at which all begins. The line of intersection. On Serbs and Muslims, civilians and militarists, the babies and the babies which were thrown into the river, the survivors and the dead ones, the found and those who are not found yet, to those who now go to the cemetery and those who go to the square, only a few hundred meters away.

I can not believe that none of the Visegrad Serbs came to the cemetery. Neither from Republic Srpska. Even if it was pure courtesy and meeting the wishes of donors who in their mandate credit this as a point within the `work on reconciliation`. That is incredible. In Serbia, when a neighbor dies with whom you have adjudicated all your life, fought and swore, you go to express your condolence and light a candle. Here, no one goes to the cemetery, neighbors, even after 20 years.

A man tells his story that he has a small company in Germany, and that he`s best worker is a Serb from Visegrad. They often talk about the war. Serb says: `It did not happen so.` `I did not believe in

Srebrenica, I thought they are exaggerating ... I took my friend to bury his dead relatives in Potocari, 26 of them, the whole family, all male, when you see that there is not one of the male to throw a clod of earth on the coffin, you know they have all been killed. For us, women should not go to the cemetery, unless it is like today. I asked why and he said: `Because women are more vulnerable, it's hard to bear, and you'd better not go.` Who needed this war? We ask ourselves, all the three of us: from Rogatica, Munich or Belgrade. We talk for an hour as we know each other already, though we do not even know even our names. It is important to know how old we are in relation to the war, that's all we need of our `personal information`.

With the public address system we were invited to move toward old bridge of Drina, the rain still falls a bit... I will loose my women,` I say, looking for Stasha`s backpack and purple umbrella. `I`ll give you a ride to Leskovac, it is not so far away` says the man from Rogatica. `Could you send me Qur'an`, I asked, and write the address on the list ripped from notebooks of Women in Black. `I will certainly send you., I am Asim` he said. `I am Jelena`, I said, and ran away. If I did not say the name, we fully recognized, as we know each other for hundred years already. The names are so irrelevant.

The column of people moves towards the bridge, few citizens of Vishegrad are peeping through the windows, few youngsters are at a cafe. They pretend not to see the column. Bar owner removes the mats from the chairs, as the column approaches, probably because of the rain. It did cross to my mind he does it so one of us from the column would not sit there. Two girls walking around sleeked, eye makeup, smiling. And they pretend not to see the column. Where is the basic culture, respect for the innocent who suffered? These young people I saw there might not have even been born at the time the crime against Muslims took place, they are under 20, and are completely insensitive to the suffering around them. It frightens me terribly.

Bridge over Drina river is under the protection of UNESCO. On the bridge are red scarves, and on each of them a rose, 3.000 in total total, white cradle with white flowers and 128 hearts, ready to descend in the river, for children swallowed by the river. A brief ceremony. Stasha, who rarely cries in front of others, cried, asked for forgiveness. I thought, it is terrible for a woman to carry on her back the burden of so much responsibility, for so much evil, that she alone, in front of several thousand of desparate men, women, children, says: `Forgive us, if you can.`

She begs for forgiveness for all of us, for those who do not know even now what have happened in Visegrad during the day for those who work for 12 hours and are sitting at night in front of TV and watch `Grand Parade`, thinking it can always be worse But also for those who in these days battle over armchairs, and ministerial seats in the boards, which is a matter of life and death to them. I see that people just accept our presence as a medicine for their soul, in addition to all this pain that has found themselves due to their huge loss. How it would be if there would be more of us there? It would be easier for us and them, too. If, for example, would occurre several high school buses, ordinary people, workers, peasants. We must be more of us.

T show humanity and compassion, shame for misdeeds committed in the name of the Serbs, would make the suffering of these people and their pain a little easier, and we would feel that we are not so good and have always right as we often think about ourself. To recognize that there is one truth. Not to live in delusions served through the TV screen even after 20 years. We are not just objects,

we are the subjects of that history. We should not pretend that things do not exist, we should face them with our eyes. Otherwise they will, hidden under the carpet, destroy any basis we will set. Balkan is too small to ignore each other, too tight.

I am returning via Cacak. In Cacak are shops with global brands, the square stage, children drive cars, moms running after them, popcorns and pancakes are sold. In Visegrad, there are no children. The square has a bust of a Serbian soldier, with garlands of fresh flowers. Children`s squeal can not be replaced by any bust, or soldier. The contrast between life and death, good and evil, sorrow and joy, Visegrad and Cacak

Before my trip to Visegrad I thought it would be difficult to bear. My duty as citizens, as a woman, as human being is to go there. I`m glad I was there. Another thing is to read newspapers, judgments, and quite another to look people in the eye, take at least a part of the sorrow from their eyes. Sadness dignifies.

Jelena Cakic

Shameful history revision

Judicial rehabilitation of Dragoljub Draza Mihailovic is scandalous and disgraceful. This is a revision and falsification of history that began adopting the Act on the Equalization of Chetniks and Partisans in 2005, then of the Rehabilitation Act in 2006, and should be crowned with the rehabilitation of Draza Mihailovic. There is no doubt that the arguments were ideologically based and it was a political decision of the party in power. One can therefore say that the process of rehabilitation was a move of policy state and the right-wing ideology, said the statement Women in Black on 10th of May 2012.

For Women in Black war criminal rehabilitation of Mihailovich and Chetnik`s movement primarily is stepping out of integrity of the victims of Chetnik crimes during the Second World War and the wars of the nineties, when they are in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and mass crimes were committed elsewhere, inspired by the Chetnik ideology and practice. Rehabilitation, also threatens regional stability and is in the contrary to the alleged intentions of the Serbian authorities to build good relations with neighboring states that have historically been victims of that ideology. It damages the dignity of Serbia and makes impossible to achieve a just peace in the region.

Recent general elections in Serbia lead to power almost the same parties that several years ago voted for the Rehabilitation Act, a few months ago for amendments to the law. If after the elections continues rehabilitation of Chetnik ideology and notorious criminals, it will be clear evidence of the continuity of the right-wing nationalist politics, which continue to afflict innocent victims, and promotes fascism crimes as normal. By protest gathering in front of the court, Women in Black urges the authorities to stop the rehabilitation of criminal ideology and not to allow this terrible mistake, which will deepen the mutual distrust in the region and give rise to new disputes, conflicts and hatred, the statement concludes.

Ravna Gora in Belgrade

Women in Black on 11th of May were in front of the Third Municipal Court in Belgrade to protest against the continued rehabilitation of the Chetnik commander Draza Mihailovic, under the slogan `Stop rehabilitation.` Prior to the trial, in front of the court were already bunch of Chetniks with Chetnik insignia and banners. Cordon of police officers separated them from the activists of Women in Black. Fifty Chetnik Movement supporters were supporting the rehabilitation of war criminal singing Chetnik songs as louder as they could. They looked very messy and non-urban. The crowd was led by the leader of Obraz Mladen Obradovic, who led the fascists `concert` with a fascists roaring of Chetnik songs and shouting: `Women in Black Shiptar whores`, `Fuck you Thaci`, `How many dollars you got for this, drug addicts,` Where is your Tito now? Now he is the king of the White Palace. `Who wants me to tie her red scarf around her neck (read snarl).` Scans for Radovan Karadzic, Ratko Mladic is far less mentioned, `Tadic Ustasha`, `drug addicts where is your Ceda?` Some of us responded to them: `Ceda is yours!` General confusion, others are confused by a few minutes and then continue: `Orthodox Serbia to Serbs`, `Serbia and Russia - Orthodox Union`, `Red gang`, `Ustasha`, `Albanians`, `Muslims`, `Gays` ...

Together with members of Women in Black anti-fascists stood and friends came from Bosnia-Srebrenik and Brcko. They got up very early to be there. Unfortunately again, the fascists were far more numerous. Thanks to the guys from the anti-fascist movement I felt safer. The event was a waiter from Nova Pazova, Mirko Jovic, head of the paramilitary units `White Eagles` which fought in the wars of the nineties. So, everything is like in 1990. The set lasted about an hour. Women in Black held placards saying `Stop the rehabilitation`, `Rehabilitation of the crime is complicity.`

*Noted by
Mara Basic*

Denial is a Serbian word for genocide

In Brcko, on 6th of May was a promotion of the book `The May 92` by Edvin Cudic, whose father was killed at Luka concentration camp. The promotion attended radio journalist from Federal Sarajevo Irena Antic and Milos Urosevic, an activist with of Women in Black, Belgrade. Urosevic initially quoted Hannah Arendt's remark: `There aren't black holes of oblivion. Nothing human is so perfect, and the world simply has too many people to be forgotten. One man will always survive to tell.` `This book, which breaks the silence of denial about the crimes committed in our name, is the story of Edhem (Ekrem) Cudic, he told to his son Edvin. Edvin was a child when Serbian soldiers came into the camp Luka to kill his father. Edwin is still searching for the remains of his father. Edwin is one of those rare people who write in order to survive as writers and as people, for them it is the one. The right to truth for Edvin is `history of searching for their loved ones.` Edvin asks us who come from the aggressor states of Serbia: `If a man deserves to be killed only because of the name, and be buried like a dog in a mass grave?`

We, who come from the aggressor state owe him an answer. We feel ashamed. This is the first step that leads us to deal with crimes committed in our name. The second step is a sense of guilt. The

third step is when you take responsibility for dealing with the legacy of the criminal past of the political community of which we are the part, too. We, the people who come from the aggressor states watch myriads of the orbitals of the victims of crimes committed in our name.´

Urosevic continued: ´According to the United Nations data, Serbian aggressor forces in May and June of 1992 at Luka, killed between 2,000 and 3,000 Bosnian Muslim civilians from Brcko. The Nazis in concentration camps killed six million Jews, Roma, homosexuals and those who proclaimed as others, enemies. The killers were freed of burden of choice. They have achieved defacement of the process of killing and they dehumanized the other and contributed to the psychological distancing that has allowed them to kill. The Germans and the Serbs became the perpetrators.´

Urosevic recalls: ´Edvin tells us about Brcko in the war - Goran Jelusic - Serbian Adolf (camp commander). Every day has killed Bosnian civilians, saying: ´I arrived in Brcko to kill Muslims´. Monika Ilic Simonovic – girlfriend of ´Serb Adolf´. War criminal who is used to rasp wombs of Bosnian civilians in the camp by broken bottle as Nazi Ilse Koch, who passed through Sachsenhauzena through Buchenwald and Majdanek. They called her ´Witch of Buchenwald´, because she used to create objects out of skin of dead Jews.

In the second part of the book Edvin writes about crimes of the Serbian armed forces throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, the bloody path of genocide. Eichmann and the Serb crimes legalized by the state. The range of killing, their dim memories of the individual massacres. Ordinary Germans / ordinary Serbs easily became genocidal killers and they did not even have to. The Germans and the Serbs were able to say ´no´ to mass murder. Both have chosen to say ´yes.´

Edvin is documenting the history of war crimes: Visegrad: Pioneer Street / Bikavac: Serbs in Visegrad burned at the stake Bosnians alive, and in the bags carried their eyes. On the day of the Holy Trinity, Bosnian civilians were burned in Pioneer´s Street. Baby two days old, of Kurspahic family, when Serbs burned it alive yet had no name. On Vidovdan, Serbs turned another bonfire in Bikavac. Zehra Turjacanin, the only survivor of the pyre, in front of the Hague tribunal on the question why she isspeaking in French, says: ´In order to forget.´

In Foca Serbian orgy of mass rape of Bosnian women. The judgment of ´Foca´s Three´ panel found that ´rape was used as a method of war and had an ethnic background.´ Prijedorški death camps (Omarska, Keraterm, Trnopolje, Manjaca) are images of Nazi death camps. For Edvin, Omarska was an echo of Auschwitz. We, in post conflict societies live in a silence about committed crimes. The victims break the silence of denial of the perpetrators.

Edvin says: ´The genocide is not one person´s deed or one group, for it is a whole country, one nation is planning the strategy of destruction of another people. On top of this policy is a leader, in implementing the plan whole party. The difference between genocide and the Holocaust is only one fact, and it´s purpose: the goal of the Nazi German policy was the destruction of the Jewish people throughout the world, a goal of Serbian nationalism was the destruction of Bosnian Muslims on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The genocide is a proven and must be prosecuted.´

Primo Levi, a survivor of Auschwitz, tells us: "You do not have to understand, but we have an obligation to remember,´ Urosevic said.

Under the rainbow flag

Day Against Homophobia was marked on 17th of May in Belgrade's Knez Mihailova Street. Activists of `Labris` and `Women in Black` were distributing books with LGBT message of tolerance and the colorful pieces of paper. A set of about 30 members of the `Labris` and `Women in Black` secured the same number of police officers. There was no clear indication that it is the LGBT population, and Belgrade citizens initially approached without prejudice in order to inform themselves and take free books. Boys and girls in front of `Russian tsar` distributed leaflets, and by the reactions of some of the people for the word `gay` and `lesbian` could be concluded that they are not open for different views. There were those who have made the sign of the cross. But there were people who had additional questions and without hesitation approached the girls.



One girl came over realized what was going on and left. And that's fine. Again, the man took the contact after of our organization,` says one of the organizers. One activist, speaking about how LGBT people are discriminated against in Serbia, said that the meeting went `great` because she `did not get beaten up, or they were not insulted.` Commissioner for the Protection of Equality Nevena Petrusic from her office put down the rainbow flag and showed the support for LGBT people, and the same have done on the building of the Ombudsman and the Youth Center.

Neither penalties nor fees

`Women in Black` called on the 6th May Serbian authorities to apologize to the Croats because on that day 20 years ago they were evicted from the village of Hrtkovci in Srem. They demanded of Serbia to restore them their personal property.

Women in Black have asked in a statement of the highest state officials to publicly communicate the truth about the number of expelled Croats and the circumstances that accompanied this shameful act. `Two decades after the start of the unbearable shame of a nation, in Serbia, we are facing with ignoring the fact that the ethnic cleansing conducted on the territory of the country in which there was no war,` the statement said.

They added that none of the participants in the emigration of Croats did not respond before in front of the domestic courts, and that according to credible estimates from Serbia during the wars of the past almost 30,000 people moved.

Many citizens of Croatian nationality have lost their property, and non of requests for return of refugees, state of Serbia did not resolve, it said in the statement.

Female inheritance

In Dubrovnik since 21st until 25th of May 2012 the course was held: `Women's Heritage: untitled - Feminism in a transnational perspective`, which this year is dedicated to the deconstruction and feminist critique of the concept of inheritance / legacy, mapping and preserving women's / feminist / queer heritage, new forms of feminist politics of memory, increasing the visibility of experience of LGBTQ people and translation of their experiences into the dominant narrative.

Even the feminist organizations do not always record their history, and the participation of women in political and social changes often is not visible. The idea of course is that, from a feminist perspective, explore possible ways of documenting women's lives and memories, emotions, memories and experiences, creating a legacy that is free from the patriarchal politics of memory.

The course was organized by the Center of Women Studies of Zagreb, is part of the regional project `Women's legacy: a contribution to the cultural politics of equality` that is attended by the Center for Women Studies (Zagreb), Women in Black (Belgrade), Serbian Cultural Centre Danilo Kis (Ljubljana), Center for Contemporary Art (Sarajevo) and Casa Internazionale delle donne di Trieste (Trieste).

Women in Black, in the framework of this project, work on feminist mapping in Serbia, historical research in Bajina Bašta, Belgrade and Leskovac, Uzice and Vlasotince. The goal is to introduce deleted experiences of women in the history of space in which they lived. Exploring the lives of individuals, organizations and feminist press, we want to promote and revalued experience and contributions of forgotten antifa feminists, artists, activists and others, and to explore their history and memories.

Project is funded by the European Commission and the activities of Women in Black and funded by Global Fund for Women.

Experiences from the world



Taylor first former head of state convicted of rape during conflict

For the first time ever a former head of state has been convicted of rape and sexual violence during conflict. This took place last week when Liberia's former president, Charles Taylor, was found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the war in Sierra Leone.

I think that many Liberians felt relieved after the verdict. Especially the political establishment, headed by president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who were active in the extradition of Taylor. If he had been declared not guilty and had returned to Liberia, there would have been a great risk of increased instability in the country. At the same time Charles Taylor has many supporters, who see him as the hero who liberated Liberia from former oppression. So far from everyone are celebrating, says Susanna Elmberger, coordinator for Liberia at the Swedish women- and peace organization The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation.

Crimes during the civil war in Sierra Leone

Charles Taylor was prosecuted in the Special Court for Sierra Leone, operating out of the Hague, on 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the 10-year-long civil war in Liberia's neighbouring country Sierra Leone. Taylor was accused of backing rebels in Sierra Leone, as said in the verdict: "by providing them with arms and ammunition, military personnel, operational support and moral support". The war took 120 000 peoples' lives and many more were severely maimed. Taylor was convicted on all counts, for aiding and abetting in, among other, murder, rape, slavery and the forced enlistment of child soldiers.

But he was not convicted of bearing the major responsibility for these crimes, a fact that may lead to strong reactions from the many people who suffered from the war. Judges say Taylor knew about the crimes rebel troops were committing, but prosecutors could not prove that he was actually commanding those troops.

Historical verdict

The verdict is historical since it is the first time since the Nuremberg trials – held after the Second World War – that a former head of state is being convicted in an international court. It is also the first conviction that includes rape and sexual violence, since there were no prosecutions of these types of crimes in the Nuremberg trials. The legal process has taken nine years and Taylor has consistently claimed his innocence.

Taylor has received a 50-year prison term.

(the text is available on <http://www.equalpowerlastingpeace.org/2012/05/02/taylor-first-former-head-of-state-convicted-of-rape-during-conflict/>)

Impresum

The *Women, Peace, Security* newsletter is edited by the editorial board.

Editor

Tamara Kaliterna

Layout and illustrations

Marija Vidić

Publisher: Žene u crnom

Beograd, Jug Bogdanova 18

Tel/fax 011/2623225

email: zeneucrnom@gmail.com

web: www.zeneucrnom.org

The *Women, Peace, Security* newsletter is realized with support of

