



*žene u crnom  
beograd*



# Report

**September, October,  
November and  
December  
2022**

As before, we bring a brief report on the activities of Women in Black in the mentioned period, and if you are interested in more information, you can find them on our web site [www.zeneu-crnom.org](http://www.zeneu-crnom.org) or contact us by mail: [office@zeneu-crnom.org](mailto:office@zeneu-crnom.org)

Thank you in advance

# September, October, November and December 2022

## Report

**Street actions:** In this reporting period we organized sixteen (16) events,

and we also actively participated in other street actions:

- Commemoration/marketing important dates of crimes committed in our names;
- Feminist, anti-fascist, anti-war, anti-racist, anti-militaristic actions...

**COMMEMORATION/MARKING OF IMPORTANT DATES OF CRIMES COMMITTED IN OUR NAME, AS WELL AS OTHER CRIMES AGAINST CIVILIAN POPULATION, DURING AND AFTER THE WARS, IN THE TERRITORY OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA:**

### Belgrade, October 5<sup>th</sup>

#### Belgrade, October 5<sup>th</sup> "We shall never forget the Topčider crime"

On the occasion of the 18<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the crime - the murder of two guardsmen in the barracks in Topčider, on October 5, 2004, Women in Black organized two protests in mourning and silence:

- *Protest in front of the barracks in Topčider, together with the families of the killed guardsmen. The banner "We will never forget the crime in Topčider" was displayed. Flowers with the message We remember – Women in Black" were laid there.*
- *Protest in the city center (Knez Mihailova Street) where the following banners were displayed:*
  - We will never forget the crime in Topčider
  - We remember Dragan Jakovljević and Dražen Milovanović
  - Who killed the guards?
  - Discover the killers of soldiers!

Fifteen (15) activists took part in the protest.



## Belgrade, 22<sup>nd</sup>

## Belgrade, 22<sup>nd</sup> October "We remember the crime in Sjeverin!"

- On the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the crime in Sjeverin, Women in Black organized a protest in mourning and silence, in Knez Mihailova Street.

The following banners were displayed at the protest:

- 22<sup>nd</sup> Oct. 1992 members of the Serbian paramilitary formation Avengers kidnapped **22** residents of the village of Sjeverin from a bus on the Priboj-Rudo line
- Names of abduction victims in Sjeverin
- We remember the crime in Sjeverin
- Solidarity
- Responsibility



Sjeverin was written in salt on the pavement (October 22, 1992-October 22, 2022 – We remember)

The protest was attended by **20** activists of WiB.



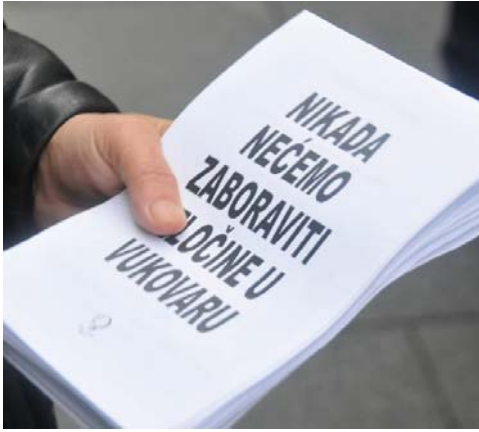
## Belgrade, November 18<sup>th</sup>

## Belgrade, November 18<sup>th</sup> "We will never forget the crimes in Vukovar"

- on the occasion of the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the fall of Vukovar, Women in Black organized a peace action in Knez Mihailova Street in Belgrade – in front of Serbian Academy of Sciences, an institution whose members played a significant part in the 80s







and 90s in the campaign to spread and encourage the ideology of nationalism and chauvinism, and afterwards were the vanguards of denial and relativization of war crimes. Unfortunately, SANU (The Serbian Academy of Science and Arts) never clearly distanced themselves from such dishonorable members.

The following banners were displayed at the protest:

- *We will never forget the crimes in Vukovar*
- *Solidarity*
- *Responsibility*
- *Women in Black*
- *Data on the devastation of the city*

Then the stage action “**We demand accountability for the camps for Croats in Serbia 1991-1992**” was performed, during which the following banners were displayed:

## **CAMPS FOR CROATS IN THE TERRITORY OF SERBIA 1991/92:**

**Camps for Croats in the territory of Serbia 1991/92:** after the occupation of Vukovar on November 18, 1991, the YNA captured a large number of members of the Croatian forces and civilians, who were afterwards transferred, by bus and trucks, to camps in Serbia. The detainees spent from a couple of days to nine months in the camps. About **7,000** people passed through the camps, and about **3,500** people were kept in them for a long time. At least **14** detainees died in camps in Serbia as a result of battering and ill-treatment, as well as a lack of adequate medical care. Only one person was convicted for all these crimes committed in the camps (according to the Belgrade Humanitarian Law Center).

- **Camp Begejci** - located in the municipality of Žitište. The camp was established on September 16, 1991. The Begejci camp was closed on December 21 or 22, 1991. At the time of closure, there were **555** prisoners in it. About **37** women passed through this camp.

**Nobody was held accountable for these crimes!**

- **Stajićevo camp** – located in the municipality of Zrenjanin. The camp was formed on November 20, 1991 in the village of Stajićevo in Zrenjanin, on the farm “Livade”. More than **1,200** prisoners passed through the camp. The camp was closed on December 22, 1991.

**Nobody was held accountable for these crimes!**

- **Correctional Institution Sremska Mitrovica** – the camp was established on November 21, 1991. About **4,000** prisoners passed through the camp, **90** of them women.

**In 2015, Marko Crevar, a member of the Territorial Defense, was sentenced to 18 months in prison for crimes against prisoners of war in the Sremska Mitrovica Correctional Institution.**

- **Camp in Aleksinac** - this transit camp was established on November 22, 1991; was in the YNA barracks in Aleksinac, when **400** prisoners were transferred from the Sremska Mitrovica CI.

**Nobody was held accountable for these crimes!**

- **Camp in Niš** - the camp was established on November 18, 1991; it was located within the Correctional Institution in Niš and was under the control of the YNA Military Police. Detainees from the Sremska Mitrovica CI were transferred to this camp, as well as from the Begejci and Stajićevo camps, which were closed in December 1991. The camp existed from November 18, 1991 to February 26, 1992. **447** detainees were released from this camp.

**Nobody was held accountable for these crimes!**

- **Military Remand Prison (MRP) in Belgrade** – from December 1991 to the beginning of the summer of 1992, several groups of captured members of the Croatian National Guard Corps (ZNG) and the Ministry of Interior of Croatia were transferred from the MRP camp. Indictments were filed against **82** detainees, **25** of whom were convicted before the Military Court in Belgrade. In mid-August 1992, **121** people left this camp.

**Nobody was held accountable for these crimes!**

- **Sexual abuse in camps** – according to the testimony of detainees in camps in Serbia, women were subjected to rape and sexual abuse.

**Nobody was held accountable for these crimes!**

**We demand ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE CAMPS!**

**We demand JUSTICE FOR THE VICTIMS, SANCTIONS FOR THE CRIMINALS!**

During the action, a commemorative plaque/mobile memorial was installed at the SANU building:

**Stajićevo camp – More than 1,200 prisoners passed through that camp.**

**It was closed on December 22, 1991. No one was held accountable for these crimes!**

**This plaque was raised in solidarity by responsible citizens of Serbia**



Reactions of people who were leaving SANU:

"I need to see what this is. Terrible! Shame on you!" (Then that man spat in front of us)

"What in the world is this? Not again!" (a woman)

"We will never forget Jasenovac!" (a woman passing by)

About **(35)** activists took part in the protest.

## FEMINIST, ANTI-FASCIST, ANTI-WAR, ANTI-RACIST, ANTI-MILITARISTIC ACTIONS:

### Antiwar actions "Stop the war in Ukraine":

**Beograd, 21<sup>th</sup>. septembar**



**Belgrade, September 21<sup>th</sup> "Stop the war in Ukraine"**- On the occasion of September 21<sup>th</sup> - World Peace Day, Women in Black organized a protest in mourning and silence.

The following banners were displayed at the protest:

- Stop the war in (in Ukrainian, Russian, Belarusian, English and Serbian)
- September 21<sup>th</sup> – World Peace Day
- Women in Black against war
- Peace (in different languages)

This protest was attended by **17** activists.







**Belgrade, October 11<sup>th</sup>**



**Belgrade, October 11<sup>th</sup>** – a protest against the mobilization was held in front of the Russian Embassy; Russians, Ukrainians and WiB activists took part in this anti-war action, carrying banners 'Putin to The Hague', 'Putin - war criminal', etc. About **50** people participated in the action.



**Belgrade, November 9<sup>th</sup>**



**Belgrade, November 9<sup>th</sup>** "Stop the war in Ukraine!" – on the occasion of November 9<sup>th</sup> – International Day of Struggle against Fascism and Antisemitism, WiB organized antiwar/antifascist action.



The following banners were displayed at the protest:

Žene u crnom, 1991 →





- November 9<sup>th</sup> – International Day of Struggle against Fascism and Antisemitism
- Women in Black against fascism
- Stop fascism
- Stop the war in Ukraine
- Stop rape women in Ukraine (in Serbian, English and Russian)
- "Russian brothers" are aggressors - they kill, burn, rape, demolish, rob, torture - stop
- Stop the occupation of Ukraine
- Let's prevent a nuclear war
- Putin – a war criminal
- Take Putin to The Hague!

Twenty (20) activists participated in this action.

*Reactions of approval and support:*

'Let me congratulate these women!' - because the police practically prevented contact with citizenship, later they moved a little...

I agree with everything he says. Are they (the police) protecting you from us or us from you? – wondered one female citizen.

Hats off to you!

*Reactions against - glorification of putinophilia, violence and war...*

'Putin is our shield' (a woman)

'Did you protest for Odessa? Because of that hole where Russian children were burned and buried?

Do you know who started this? What was left for the Russians?

Do you know that Lech Walesa said that the Russians should be reduced to 50 million and 100 million killed? They chose the Jew Zelensky, and he abolished all parties. They (Ukrainians) are pussy smoke, and the Russians have nuclear weapons. The Russians are not like us, they can't be ordered around like us... (a man)

**Belgrade, December 1<sup>st</sup>**



**Belgrade, December 1<sup>st</sup> "Not a man more, not a dinar more for Putin's army!"** – On the occasion of December 1<sup>st</sup> - the International Day of Prisoners of Conscience for Peace, WiB organized an anti-militarism protest.

The following banners were displayed at the protest:

- Women in Black against militarism
- We support Russian deserters/also in Serbian
- Support International prisoners for Peace Day/also in Russian
- International Day of Prisoners of Conscience for Peace
- We demand political asylum for deserters /also in Serbian
- Not a single man more, not a single dinar more for Putin's army / also in Russian





Fifteen (15) female and male activists took part in the protest.

In this period, we also actively participated in protests against the war in Ukraine organized by the **RUBS** initiative (Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians and Serbs) together against the war in Ukraine. These actions were directed against the mobilization in Russia and the threat of using nuclear weapons.



**“We believe Milena Radulović!”** – Women in Black, the feminist initiative Verujem ti (I believe you), Women’s Solidarity, CK13, and the Autonomous Women’s Center organized a protest in front of the Palace of Justice on the occasion of the trial of Miroslav Mika Aleksić, accused of rape and sexual abuse of students of the drama studio ‘Matter of the Heart’ whose owner he was at the time. The court proceedings against Aleksić began in February 2022, after several delays and completed preparatory hearings. Women in Black has monitored all the hearings so far, and organized a protest before each one. In this period, we held 4 protests:

- September, 12
- October, 19
- November, 29
- December, 20

**Belgrade, September 29<sup>th</sup>**

We held banners that read:

- *We believe Milena Radulović*
- *Those who raped in war, also rape in peace ...*
- *Rape is crime*
- *Justice for the victims, sanctions for the perpetrators*

About **50** activists participated in these protests.



**Belgrade, September 29 “Solidarity with the women of Iran”** – rally in support of women’s protests in Iran; WiB joined the solidarity gathering of female activists - journalists, opposition politicians, civil society activists, art collectives. Dozens of people

participated in the rally, and the following banners were displayed in various languages: Farsi, English, Serbian:

- *Women, Life, Freedom*
- *Solidarity with the women in Iran*
- *Stop terror against women in Iran!*
- *Women against fundamentalism...*



**Belgrade, November 11<sup>th</sup>**

**Belgrade, November 11<sup>th</sup> “All of us are Danas! ”** – Action of solidarity with journalists of the daily newspaper Danas due to death threats (addressed to the editorial office on November 6, 2022) because of ‘their editorial policy’; the email read that the journalists were going to end up like Charlie Hebdo, i.e., that they would be killed. The action was an act of solidarity with the brave and responsible journalists of Danas, a defense of the human dignity of Danas journalists, but also of all of us because it is an attack on all of us who are free-thinkers and who think differently from the regime. Ten WiB activists participated in this ad hoc action, with the support of the Autonomous Women’s Center/AWC. It should be noted that the Prosecutor’s Office for high-tech crime immediately started proceedings, and journalist associations, political parties, and international organizations responded by demanding that the perpetrators be found. However, by the end of December 2022, the investigation had not led to the identity of the person who sent the threats.





**Belgrade, November 14<sup>th</sup>**



**Belgrade, November 14<sup>th</sup>. "Solidarity with civil rebellion in Iran"** - on the occasion of the current political situation in Iran, especially the brutal mass repression against citizens, WiB organized this protest. The following banners were displayed at the protest:

- Crimes in Iran (as of September 17, 2022): 328 killed, 50 children killed, 15,000 arrested - Stop the terror!
- Women against fundamentalism
- Women, life, freedom
- We remember Zahra Sedighi and Elham Choubdar
- Stop terror against women /also in Serbian

Twenty (20) female and male activists participated in the protest.

**Belgrade, December 6<sup>th</sup>**

**Belgrade, December 6<sup>th</sup> "Stop the killing of women!"** – on the occasion of the International Day against Femicide, Women in Black, the Autonomous Women's Center and Dah theater organized a street action 'Stop the killing of women' in Republic Square.

The following banners were displayed at the protest:

- December 6<sup>th</sup> - Femicide Day
- Stop killing women
- Not a woman less
- Women's lives matter
- **24 women have been killed in Serbia in 2022**
- 374 women have been killed in Serbia since 2010
- Femicide means killing women because they are women



- Femicide is the killing of women by men out of hatred, contempt, pleasure or feelings of ownership over women, or sexism
- Femicide is the killing of women by men because they are women
- Stop killing women!
- Stop femicide!





- Women, life, freedom (in Serbian, English and Farsi)
- Stop terror in Iran (in Serbian, English and Farsi)
- Solidarity with civil resistance in Iran (in Serbian, English and Pashtu)
- Solidarity with our sisters in Afghanistan (in Serbian, English and Farsi)
- Stop rape of women in Ukraine (in Serbian, Russian and English)
- Solidarity with the women of : Syria, Yemen, Congo, Myanmar, Kurdistan, Turkey... (in Serbian and English)

On that occasion, the stage action "Stop killing women" was performed: first, **24** red chairs were deployed (a symbol of the absence of women), then **24** pairs of shoes were placed on them (the mark that the murdered women left in our lives), as well as **24** mirrors on which the names of murdered women were written (an act of remembrance for murdered women and a call to citizens to confront crimes against women). At the end, a white rose was placed on each chair (a symbol of mourning for the murdered women).

The action ended with violinist Ljubomir playing a short part from V. Gluck's opera 'Orpheus and Eurydice' on the violin.

The action was attended by **60** women activists from:

- Bosnia and Herzegovina (Women's Association Anima, Đulići, Mother's Movement of Srebrenica and Žepa enclaves, Sarajevo, Women's Association Bratunac/Sarajevo, Association of War Victims Foča 92-95, Sarajevo);
- Montenegro (Bona fide, Pljevlja);
- Croatia (Center for Women Victims of War - Rosa, Zagreb, Protiv Zaborava/Against Oblivion, Novska);
- Serbia (NENA - group for peace and women's rights, Leskovac, Women of Polimlje, Prijepolje, Women's Association Peščanik, Kruševac).





## DEALING WITH THE PAST / TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE - A FEMINIST APPROACH

This is one of the most important activities of Women in Black. It consists of numerous segments: street actions, workshops, lectures, creation of different models of transitional justice from a feminist point of view, cooperation with related organizations in the form of joint actions (campaigns, consultative meetings).

### VISITING THE PLACES WHERE CRIMES WERE COMMITTED IN OUR NAME, AS WELL AS OTHER SITES OF CRIMES AGAINST THE CIVILIAN POPULATION DURING THE WAR IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA:

**October 11<sup>th</sup>, Tuzla (Bosnia & Hercegovina)** – WiB activists attended peace protest of Srebrenica mothers:

- **“We are looking for the missing – let us not forget Srebrenica”** - the association “Women of Srebrenica” based in Tuzla (gathers women whose family members disappeared and were killed during the Srebrenica genocide) since 1996, “Women of Srebrenica” every 11<sup>th</sup> of the month, in memory of the Srebrenica genocide, organizes a peace protest, demanding the truth about their killed and missing relatives, as well as justice - punishing all perpetrators of the crimes under the slogan *“We are looking for the missing – let us not forget Srebrenica”*.
- **Tribute to the victims of the ‘Tuzla Gate’** - laying flowers - homage to the victims of the war crime, committed on May 25, 1995, against civilians by the Army of the Republika Srpska; in this massacre 71 people were killed, predominantly young people, and about 250 people were injured.

After these events took place an encounter of: WiB activists with Srebrenica mothers and women’s organizations from Tuzla: “VIVE žene” and “Novi horizonti”.

**Lovas, Croatia, October 18<sup>th</sup>** – The commemoration of the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the crime in Lovas (October 18th, 1991), where Serb armed formations killed 70 civilians of Croatian nationality, attended by four (4) activists of WiB from Belgrade and Pančevo.

**Sjeverin, October 22<sup>th</sup>** – The commemoration in Sjeverin was attended by Women in Black Network activist from Prijepolje, together with the families of the killed Bosniaks, paid tribute and laid flowers in Mioče.

**Stajićevo camp, November 17<sup>th</sup>** – **We remember the sites of crime! Visiting the Stajićevo camp**

On the occasion of the anniversary of the fall of Vukovar, Women in Black, with the support of the Zrenjanin action Zrak and the Zrenjanin Social Forum, organized a visit to the site of the Stajićevo camp, located in the municipality of Zrenjanin, on November 17, 2022.





**Vukovar/ Croatia,  
November 19<sup>th</sup>**

On that occasion, a Mobile memorial/plaque monument was erected that reads:

**More than 1,200 prisoners passed through that camp.**

**It was closed on December 22, 1991.**

**No one was held accountable for these crimes!**

**This plaque was raised in solidarity by responsible citizens of Serbia**

**Vukovar / Croatia, November 19<sup>th</sup> “Responsibility and solidarity”** - on the occasion of the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the crimes in Vukovar, seven Women in Black activists visited Vukovar, where along with the families of victims, as well as with citizens of Vukovar, attended the commemoration of the crimes in Borovo settlement, also visited the memorial on Ovčara. We then attended the commemoration on the Danube.



**December 20<sup>th</sup> Vranić,**



**Vranić, near Belgrade, December 20<sup>th</sup>** – antifascist solidarity action on the 78th anniversary of the crime in Vranić. In the Second World War, on the night between December 20 and 21, 1943, the fascist Chetnik formations killed 68 inhabitants of the village of Vranić, most of the family members of the Pantić family. Six (6) WiB activists, together with activists of Antifascist Union from Belgrade attended an event in the local Culture Center together with locals.

**DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD, MANY TRIALS WERE CANCELED DUE TO THE EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SITUATION, SO WE WILL LIST THE TRIALS THAT WERE HELD.**

### **The trial of Milenko Živanović**

The Prosecutor's Office for War Crimes of Serbia filed an indictment against the former general and commander of the Drina Corps of the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS) Milenko Živanović for war crimes against the civilian population in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1992 to 1995.



Živanović is charged with having ordered and participated in the forced relocation of Bosniak civilians from Srebrenica and Žepa in the east of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In March 1995, he issued an order to «create conditions of total insecurity, intolerability and hopelessness for the further survival and life of the villagers in Srebrenica and Žepa through daily planned and designed combat activities.»

On July 12, 1995, he ordered the provision of 50 buses for the “evacuation of the civilian population from the Srebrenica enclave”. On July 13, 1995, he issued an ultimatum to the Bosniaks that they had to leave, etc.

In this reporting period **three (3)** hearings were held:

At the hearing (*September 12*), the written evidence found in the case file was examined, while in the other two hearings

(*October 31 and November 11*) the accused presented his defense.

### **Trial for the crime in Bratunac II**

The indictment charges *Goran Stjepanović*, a member of the Republika Srpska Army, with crimes against Bosniak civilians in early June 1992 and with raping A.A., a Bosniak woman. The main trial began in January 2021.

In this reporting period **two (2)** hearings were held:

One hearing was postponed (*September 13*) because none of the summoned witnesses appeared, while two defense witnesses, Rade Milovanović and Spasoje Milovanović, testified at the other (*October 18*).

### **Trial for the war crime in Štrpci**

**On February 27<sup>th</sup>, 1993**, the train on the Belgrade-Bar railroad number 671 was raided at the station of Štrpci, when members of the military formation Osvetnici (Avengers), operating as part of the Višegrad brigade of the Army of Republika Srpska, abducted 20 persons from the train (18 passengers of Bosnian nationality, one passenger of Croatian nationality, citizen of the Republic of Yugoslavia and one unidentified person), took them to the village of Mušići first, and from there to the village of Prelovo, in the community of Višegrad, where they were killed. So far, the remains of four persons have been found.

This trial began on March 4, 2019; the following persons were accused of this crime: Gojko Lukić, Ljubiša Vasiljević, Duško Vasiljević, Jovan Lipovac and Dragana Đekić.

In this period, **four (4)** hearings were held:

*September, 14 and 15*) – court experts, two doctors testified about the circumstances of witness Mitrašin Glišić’s procedural capacity, and at the second court expert who testified against the accused Dragana Đekić and the witness Mitrašin Glišić.

October, 25 - defense witness Radmila Stevanović, who was called to give the defendant an alibi, testified.

November 14 and 26 - two witnesses, Mićo Jovičić and Krsto Papić, testified again, and they said that in everything they abide by their previously presented testimonies.

### **Kravica War Crime**

- Eight members of the Special Brigade of the Republika Srpska Army are charged with war crimes (the murder of **1,313** Bosnians, within the Srebrenica genocide, on July 13th, 1995).

*(Let us remind: The Kravica crime indictment was brought at the beginning of 2016. This was the beginning of the most important trial at the High Court in Belgrade / Special Court, because it is a Srebrenica genocide. However, on 14 July 2017, the Court of Appeal ruled to annul the indictment for this crime, which is otherwise not qualified as a genocide, since it was raised at the time when the War Crimes Prosecutor's Office did not have a Chief Prosecutor. The trial continued in November 2017, and the hearings are continually delayed due to non-attendance of witnesses, inaction of the prosecution and the withdrawal of protected witnesses due to threats they receive).*

In this reporting period, three (3) sessions were held:

Two hearings were postponed (*October 5 and 7*) due to the illness of one of the defendants, while at the session held (*November 22*) in the course of which written evidence in the case file was examined.

*(You can find reports from these hearings on the WiB website)*

## **WOMEN'S COURT – A FEMINIST APPROACH TO JUSTICE**

We bring a brief report on the activities of Women in Black regarding the organization of the Women's Court - a feminist approach to justice in this period. Should you be interested in more information, you can find it on our website [www.zeneucrnornom.org](http://www.zeneucrnornom.org) and [www.zenskisud.org](http://www.zenskisud.org) or contact us by mail: [zeneucrnornombeograd@gmail.com](mailto:zeneucrnornombeograd@gmail.com).

**The first Women's Court in the territory of Europe was held in Sarajevo, May 7 to May 10, 2015**, organized by 10 women's groups from the territory of the former Yugoslavia (Mothers of the Srebrenica and Žepa Enclaves, Cure Foundation, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Center for Women Victims of War, Center for Women's Studies, Zagreb, Croatia, Center for Women and Peace Education Anima, Kotor, Montenegro, Gender Equality Council, Skopje, Macedonia, Women's Lobby, Ljubljana, Slovenia, Center for Women's Studies and Women in Black, Belgrade, Serbia). The Women's Court was attended by more than 500 people from all the



countries of the former Yugoslavia, but also from Argentina, Algeria, Palestine, Israel, the United States, Spain, Italy, Sweden, Austria, Belgium, Great Britain, etc.

The final event in Sarajevo was not the end of the process, but on the contrary, an incentive to continue from the feminist perspective towards the creation of new models of justice. It is an obligation first of all to the witnesses, but also the expression of our responsibility towards the enormous burden of the recent past.

In continuation of the Women's Court, Women in Black, Belgrade coordinates the program and other activities, with the support of organizations: Anima, Kotor (Montenegro), Center for Women Victims of War, Zagreb (Croatia), The Foundation CURE, Sarajevo (Bosnia & Herzegovina).

During this reporting period, the following activities were organized:

## **WOMEN'S PEACE MEETING**

### **Public presentation of the Women's Court**



This meeting, held on **November 5 and 6, 2022** in Sarajevo, was attended by **22** women from: Bosnia and Herzegovina (Foča, Sarajevo, Tuzla, Đulići); Montenegro (Kotor); Croatia (Zagreb) and Serbia (Belgrade).

The *Women's Peace Meeting* was organized by the *Association of War Victims "Foča 92-95"*, Sarajevo and *Women in Black*, Belgrade, with the support of organizers, feminist therapists, witnesses at the Women's Court. Workshops, interactive lectures and film screenings were held, of which we highlight the following:

**Mutual support in the process of fighting for justice and the continuation of the process of organizing W'sC – support for the women of Foča** – the most important expectations of the participants.

**Obstacles in serving justice** – in the discussion, the women mentioned the following:

- **The institutional legal system does not work - the institutions are not interested in exhumation, in finding mass graves; people still fear that they will suffer retribution if they decide to testify about the crimes** ('Idleness, negligence, corruption, primitivism, inflexibility, arrogance of employees of state institutions reign; there are still mass graves, as confirmed by some Serb neighbors who know, and the institutions turn a deaf ear to them' (*Halida*); 'Some people want to give information. It is very encouraging that they want to help, but there is a great fear of retaliation in the environment' (*Midheta*) etc.
- **Manipulation of victims:** "Manipulation of all victims by people who have position and power" (*Jadranka*); 'The abuse of victims by religious leaders is catastrophic. And civil society manipulates' (*Ljupka*);
- **Protracted duration of court proceedings:** 'The rapist was released and there he is walking free! I had no material evidence after thirty years, and I was a witness to the event' (*Zenia*);
- **Celebrating war criminals:** "War criminals are the most respected members of society in Serbia" (*Staša*);
- **Lack of regional cooperation regarding war crimes, etc.**

**On Women's Courts and Women's Tribunals as Alternative Models of Justice - Women's Tribunal in Tokyo (2000).**

**At the initiative to organize the W'sC in the territory of the former Yugoslavia - lecture, screening of the film about the Women's Court (2015)**

In the discussion after the screenings, the participants made suggestions:

- **To improve the position of victims in court processes - to encourage witnesses to talk about crimes - to improve the status of protected witnesses;**
- **Getting to know and sensitizing international institutions and the public about all issues related to dealing with the past;**
- **Continue to create alternative models of justice from a feminist perspective - encourage as many women as possible to testify...**
- **Respecting the pain of all victims; passing on experiences to young generations - so that it doesn't happen again, etc.**

**Then experiences were presented - the effects and results of W'sC, especially in connection with the war crime of rape...**

**Nela** referred to the *Law on the Rights of Victims of Sexual Violence*



*in War* in Croatia (2015), based on which 150 women and 44 men received status, and in 2021 the *Law on Civilian Victims of War* was adopted.

It was also stated that based on their testimony at the W'sC, they received the status of victims of sexual violence in the war. There was also talk about other effects of W'sC - material reparations achieved by witnesses in national and international courts, etc.

At the final session, the largest number of participants expressed their **willingness to continue working together - to organize the W'sC on sexual crimes in Foča, etc.**

**Then experiences were presented - the effects and results of W'sC, especially in connection with the war crime of rape...**

### **Regional meeting of the Women's Court – a feminist approach to justice**

The sixteenth (**16th**) Regional meeting of W'sC was held in Radmilovac near Belgrade on **December 4, 5 and 6**. At this meeting - the continuation of the process of the Women's Court - the process of feminist ethics of care and responsibility, **22** women participated - witnesses of the W'sC from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia and Serbia, as well as organizers, therapists, collaborators of the W'sC.

From workshops, interactive lectures, we highlight:

**About the war in Ukraine – “Peace and/or justice?”** – dynamic exercise ‘Where do we stand now?’

The following questions were asked:

- 1.** Is stopping the war more important to you, i.e., to achieve PEACE? or
- 2.** Is it more important to you that JUSTICE be served, i.e., to punish the perpetrators?

The largest number of participants believes that:

- **The most important thing is to stop the war, only after that follows the punishment of the perpetrators of the crime** ('The war should stop, because before the war has stopped, the process of punishing the perpetrators of the crimes is impossible' (*Šehida, Kadefa*);
- **The war does not end with the cessation of armed conflicts -justice cannot be served and the punishment of the perpetrators of crimes must begin during the war** – a number of participants believe: 'We should find a model to start punishing during wars as well. The armed conflict can be stopped, but that does not mean the end of the war' (*Sabina*);
- **The prosecution of perpetrators during the war generally**

**does not bring justice for the victims** - consider the victims of war crimes in BH and Croatia, etc.

**Death penalty:** for or against? - was another question

*There were differences in the answers to this question among women who survived war crimes, but large parts of their families were killed:*

**The death penalty is an adequate solution:** 'I am for the death penalty. 17 members of my family were killed' (*Enesa*); 'I'm also in favor of the death penalty. My 19 family members were killed' (x).

**The death penalty does not bring justice for the victims – life imprisonment is enough, and it is even more important that the perpetrators face the gravity of the crime:** 'The one who killed my husband and who raped me, and who killed my brothers, should be punished and be in prison for life and think about what he did' (*Halida*);

**The death penalty is retribution, it takes away our humanity** - women who are victims of the most serious war crimes or those who did not suffer any human losses in the war are of the same opinion: 'I am against the death penalty, because it protects our humanity both as individuals and as a society' (*Marijana*).

**People's demands for retribution (in the form of the death penalty) show high distrust of institutions, primarily in the judicial system.**

We talked about the legal aspect of the death penalty, but also about the growth of authoritarianism in societies, which is confirmed by research on the increased demands for the reintroduction of the death penalty. This particularly applies to Serbia.

**She left a mark on us – Tribute to Mirjana Učakar (1953-2022),** Ptuj, Slovenia; leader of the 'Deleted' movement in Slovenia, witness at the Women's Court.

Workshop **"Women's Peace Politics": Are women peaceful by nature?** – by unlearning the patriarchy, we create peace - working in groups, reporting.

The discussion showed that there is a good deal of confusion about the concept of non/peaceful. Namely, rebellion against socially desirable female behavior (obedience, patience) is perceived as non-peaceful and not as advocacy for women's rights. In the end, the attitude crystallized that: neither women nor men are peaceful by nature, because this concept is related to gender stereotypes and peacefulness depends on the context/situation, etc.

**Solidarity among women – peace politics** – template for the conversation 'On solidarity' - essay by the Spanish philosopher Amelia Valcarcel



Here are some of the women's statements:

**Hanifa:** I survived thanks to solidarity...feminist workshops enabled me to change myself and the world around me...

**Suvada:** If we stand in solidarity, that means we renounce revenge. My revenge was that I survived it all and that I moved on and that I came back, and that I raised my children so that they don't know how to hate, they don't distinguish between people by nationality. I also gave my contribution to my community. We cross borders.

**Kadefa:** As WiB embraced me with solidarity, when I entered that family, I became even more encouraged and learned to be in solidarity. They give us support. I learned a lot through it all and got stronger.

**Marica:** The Croatian women who helped me the most were the ones who supported me, they were with me at the funeral/burial of my murdered husband, they were with me when it was most difficult for me...

*Some more statements:*

- We have no obligation to stand in solidarity with women who do not stand up for women's rights
- I am concerned that there is not enough solidarity among women victims/survivors of the war crime of rape in Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Solidarity is about crossing all borders: ethnic, state...
- Solidarity is when we don't publicly attack other women, even when we disagree
- Solidarity is when we respect various types of struggles – for gender, economic, political justice...

**Then Nella and Mariana talked about the conference on sexual violence in the war in London; Azra Šeta Hodžić spoke about women's uprisings in Iran.**

**The interactive Performance "Prelo"** performed by "Hleb Teatar" from Belgrade unfolded in an extraordinary atmosphere...

Reader's circle: **"Avengers"** – **presentation of the novel by Svetlana Slapšak**, writer from Belgrade/Ljubljana, feminist theoretician and activist. A romance novel and thriller published by Laguna, Belgrade (2022) introduces the theme of female revenge for the war crime of rape in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The action takes place in Paris, Vienna, Prague, New York and Vermont; the actors of the novel try to solve the case of the mysterious murder of a victim of the war crime of rape (a Bosniak woman) and the organization behind the murder. The author writes a story about women who take justice into their own hands; raises the question of not/serving justice, revenge, etc.

Most of the space was devoted to dilemmas related to revenge, which were discussed by the women who read the book and others; the survivors of the worst war crimes spoke. Attitudes **against revenge** crystallized:

- The worst thing is when the victims take the law into their own hands (*Suvada*)
- No one with common sense can say that revenge is good (*Shehida*)
- It corresponds to men's fantasies that women are avengers; we struggle so much through the institutional legal system; Svetlana Slapšak's fantasy has no basis in reality (*Nela*)
- I am happy because we agreed that we are not in favor of revenge. Regardless of the evil that has been done to us, revenge cannot be justified. It is a matter for those people who have no heart, no courage, no humanity in them (*Zenia*)

**Evaluation:** *What was the most impressive thing about this meeting for me? What did you learn the most about? What touched you the most?* (Mariana)

- **The most valuable was the work method – learning together, questioning one's own prejudices and giving 'ready-made' answers – fostering space for free and open critical reflection and confrontation** – the largest number of women opted for this;
- **Emotional support, overcoming trauma, trust, closeness – congeniality ...**
- **Information about women's struggle in Iran – admiration and support...**
- **The artistic performance "Prelo" delighted all women, showed the importance of engaged art in the fight for justice, women's rights, dignity.**

## VIDEO ACTIVISM: TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE - A FEMINIST APPROACH

In order to improve the visibility of the effects of various models of transitional justice, especially those from the feminist point of view, a group of video activists was created in 2010, which was capable of recording, editing, digitizing and setting up on the Internet video and audio materials collected during the regular WiB activities, so that it, in the form of short films, all this becomes available to the general public. During this reporting period, the group produced the following video material:

- »Stop killing women« (9 min.) – street action in Belgrade on the occasion of December 6 – International Day of Action against femicide.



## CONFRONTING THE PAST – JOINT REFLECTION

(meetings, lectures, book promotions, Zoom conferences, media conferences...) organized by WiB and related civil society organizations. In this period, we highlight the following activities:

**September 13<sup>th</sup>, Ada/  
Vojvodina**

**September 13<sup>th</sup>, Ada/Vojvodina “Remembrance of resistance – 1991/92”** – peace meeting on the occasion of the second death anniversary of *Vera Vebeľ Tatić* (1943-2020), the initiator and organizer of a large number of anti-war protests in Ada and in general in Potisje and Vojvodina. The contribution of Vera Vebeľ Tatić is enormous in helping the rebels against the war (deserters, conscientious objectors, refugees and all others who refused to participate in the war), etc. On this occasion, the promotion of the publication *“Remembrance of Resistance”* published by WiB was held, with the participation of anti-war activists from: Sombor, Ada, Novi Sad, Belgrade. On the same day, WiB activists from Belgrade and Novi Sad visited anti-war activist Julija Teleki in Bečej.

**October 12<sup>th</sup>, Belgrade**



**October 12<sup>th</sup>, Belgrade – opening of the Breaking Free exhibition at NGO HAB** (Youth Initiative for Human Rights); the exhibition was presented for the first time in Belgrade by the association **‘Forgotten Children of the War’ from Sarajevo**; the exhibition was held as part of the educational program *‘Feminist approach to the problem of sexual violence in the war in the former Yugoslavia– For a culture of memory and responsibility* (Youth Initiative for Human Rights, AWC and WiB). The **Breaking Free** exhibition is dedicated to children born because of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina: ‘the exhibition is inspired by the struggle and strength of children born because of the war and their mothers, which has lasted for almost three decades. Until now, the struggle lasted in silence under the veil of stigma and discrimination, but today, with joint forces, with a common voice, they decided to come out and speak about the darkness in which they lived and many still live. (...) Children born from an act of war. Children born from an act of wartime sexual violence clearly express their identity as ‘children of their mothers’, they have never been and will never be ‘children of the enemy’. (...) our *‘Forgotten Children of War’* association.

**October 18<sup>th</sup>, Pristina**

**October 18<sup>th</sup>, Pristina/Kosovo -- International Conference: Documenting Conflict Related Sexual Violence:**



**Standard and Practices**, organized by KRCT - The Kosova Rehabilitation Center for Torture Victim/Qendra Kosovare per Rehabilitimin e te Mbietuarve te Tortures/Kosovo Center for Rehabilitation of Torture Survivors. *Staša Zajović* participated on behalf of WiB.

**October 19-22<sup>th</sup>, Đakovica**



**October 19-22<sup>th</sup>, Đakovica/Gjakova/Kosovo - Regional meeting** of organizations from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia that jointly implement the educational program "Amplifying Voices of Women affected by war-related SGBV in the Western Balkans -



For a culture of Recognition and Reconciliation". Activists from partner organizations from BH participated (medica Zenica, VIVE Women Tuzla); Kosovo (KRCT and medica Gjakova) and Serbia (Youth Initiative for Human Rights, AWC and WiB), as well as representatives of the Medica Mondiale foundation, Germany, who support the mentioned project. *Staša Z.* participated on behalf of WiB.

**"Laughter under the gallows" - Everything you wished you didn't know about the war in Kosovo** by **Rade Radovanović**, a journalist and playwright from Belgrade; the book was published by MOSTART Yugoslavia from Zemun (2022)

Two promotions were held:

**Preševo, October 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Preševo, October 24<sup>th</sup>** –promotion organized by 'Livrit' and WiB. It was held in the premises of the youth organization "Livrit" (Resist) from Preševo, which is mostly inhabited by Albanians.

At this promotion, the following spoke about the book: **Ajdžan Esati**, Livrit, **Staša Zajović**, WiB, Belgrade; **Dragan Stojković**, publisher of a book in Serbian (MOSTART Yugoslavia, Zemun); **Valbona Petrovci**, professor at the Music Academy in Pristina; **Shaip Kamberi**, Member of Parliament in the Parliament of Serbia; Lino Veljak, professor at the University of Zagreb and **Ardita Sinani**, until recently the president of the Municipality of Preševo, now the adviser to the Prime Minister of Kosovo for the south of Serbia. The conversation was moderated by **Nastasja Radović**, a journalist and



WiB activist. This event was followed by an incident because the Serbian police at the Končulj border crossing stopped the guests from Pristina and confiscated 50 copies of R. Radovanović's book in Albanian, published by 'Koha ditore'. The author of the book stated at the promotion: 'Fifty copies of my novel ended up in the police bunker only because it was translated into Albanian and printed in Pristina, it only shows that someone still does not care about open dialogue, but also about the chances that Serbs and Albanians in the south of Serbia should live next to each other normally. Is my novel more dangerous than the weapons we used to kill each other?'. Pianist Valbona Petrovci from Pristina was also taken aback by this, as she stated, 'medieval methods of Serbian police work', while professor from Zagreb Lino Veljak stated that this novel 'deserves to be on high school reading lists for Serbs and Albanians'. About thirty people from Preševo, Pristina, Bujanovac, and Belgrade attended this event.



### Leskovac, October 25<sup>th</sup>

**Leskovac, October 25<sup>th</sup>** – The promotion of the book scheduled in Leskovac was also held, though not in the previously planned area of the Professional Training Center, but instead, in a local cafe.

**Milka Rosić**, organizer of this event, activist of the NGO "NENA - group for peace and women's rights" from Leskovac and activist of the WiB Network, said at the beginning of the promotion that on October 24, 2022, the director of the mentioned educational institution canceled the promotion with the following explanation: 'We are an educational institution, the book deals with political topics, it must not take place, especially not at a time when Kosovo and Metohija is a burning issue for us'. Milka Rosić told the director: 'This book is educational reading. The book will be read regardless of the bans.'

The promotion was held in a local cafe in the presence of **24** people from Leskovac, Vlasotince and Belgrade, and the speakers were: **Dragan Stojković**, publisher; **Bratislav Stamenković**, activist of NGO 'I ja se pitam'; **Vladimir Joić**, NENA; **Lino Veljak**, philosopher, Zagreb; **Svetlana Šarić** and **Svetlana Pešić**, Vlasotince, **Staša Zajović**, Belgrade. The discussion was moderated by: **Nastasja Radović**.

*(The integral report on these promotions can be found on the WiB website)*



**October 31st “Feminist anti-militarism-anti-war engagement of WiB in the 90s”** – online lecture by *Staša Zajović* at Women’s Studies in Zagreb in a course led by *Renata Jambrešić Kirin*, ethnologist and feminist activist. The lecture was attended by **28** people from all over Croatia

**December 15<sup>th</sup>, Novi Sad**

**December 15<sup>th</sup>, Novi Sad “Against wars (Brothers)”/ Protiv (b)ratova** - screening of the documentary film (40 min.) in the premises of the Independent Journalists’ Association of Vojvodina/ NDVD. The film testifies to the rebellion against the mobilization in Trešnjevac, 1992, to the civil anti-war rebellions in Senta, Ada, and Zrenjanin, about civil anti-war uprisings in Senta, Ada, Zrenjanin. After the screening of the film, the actors spoke: *Staša Zajović*, *Nenad Čanak*, the author of the film, *Darko Šper*, etc. about **25** people attended the screening of the film.

## NETWORKS, COALITIONS – MUTUAL SUPPORT AND SOLIDARITY

Women in Black are drivers or active participants of numerous regional networks, coalitions and associations, active participants in the activities of related organizations, in order to strengthen mutual support, solidarity, civil society and democracy in Serbia and the whole region.

In this period, the following activities were realized:

**Women in Black Network meeting** took place by **23<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> September 2022 in Radmilovac, near Belgrade.**

This meeting was attended by **57** activists from ex-Yugoslavia countries: *Croatia* (Zagreb), *Montenegro* (Kotor, Pljevlja), *Bosna and Hercegovina* (Tuzla, Zvornik), *Serbia* (Novi Pazar, Niš, Sombor, Beograd, Prijepolje, Pančevo, Zaječar, Kraljevo, Leskovac, Novi Sad, Kruševac, Sombor, Sremska Mitrovica).







## Friday, September 23

**Part I:** In pictures and words - about the activities of the Network of Women in Black Serbia, in the previous period (since the meetings of the WiB Network - March 2022)

**Part II:** In this segment, activists of the Network briefly presented an activity from the previous period that was extremely important in their environment, in the region, or in the world...

*Engaged art in the fight against violence against women and girls;*

*Youth and facing the past - participation of activists in the peace march for Srebrenica;*

*Presented by: Marija Sebić and Selena Vitomirović,  
Children's Center, Zaječar*

**Selena Vitomirović spoke about the campaign 'I did not report':** she presented the play of the same name, performed from March to May (2022): "In May, we had the first performance in Prizren and Tirana and in June in Belgrade. The play is performed in four languages: Albanian, Bosnian, Turkish and Serbian. The girls performing the show are from Prizren, Peć, Zaječar and Tirana. After all the performances, we organized forums - exchange of experience, but also about the ways in which women can be helped. It was feasible only in Belgrade".

Then she mentioned her experiences from the performances: there were no problems in Prizren, while the performance in Kosovska Mitrovica was accompanied by violence and threats: "I brought posters in all three languages, but they only put them up in Serbian. A few hours before the start of the performance, some kick boxers came, because they heard the Albanian language on stage. They even called the mayor, who phoned me, asking who authorized me to bring Albanian girls to play with Serbian girls? I said that I was supported by Reconstruction Women's Fund/RWF. Even on television I was forbidden to mention RWF, and told that I was only allowed to talk about violence. The mayor told the girl who sings in Albanian that she could sing the song in English?! The kick boxers were ready to beat us and then we ran away to southern Mitrovica..."

*In Zaječar (July 30), the performance was held without Albanian women: "Their parents didn't let them participate, because they were afraid, they didn't feel safe."*

*In Novi Pazar, in July, there were girls from the whole region: "It is the safest place for girls of different nationalities. We created an informal network *Solidarity in Discord*, where girls talk about what's happening to them. The mentioned network has about twenty girls. In the fall, we plan to include lawyers and psychologists in that group, women who will be able to talk to them more concretely and help them".*







Selena explained that the play encourages girls to speak publicly about violence: "Art alone cannot solve the problem of violence, but it can influence girls to start speaking up themselves." The performance is designed so that each girl communicates her story and thus becomes involved in the performance. One day is enough for rehearsal".

**Marija Sebić**, Children's Center, Zaječar pointed out the complete lack of any psychological or legal support for girls who endure violence: "We realized that girls, primarily in rural areas, regardless of whether they are Serbs or Albanians, have absolutely no professional help when it comes to violence".



### ***Youth and confronting the past –participation of activists in the peace march for Srebrenica***

*Marija and Selena emphasized: a complete deficit of young people's knowledge about the war prevails; in Serbia, there is no social context for acknowledging /knowledge about the factual truth about the war...*

"As far as dealing with the past is concerned, during 2021 and 2022 we had two actions:

*A study visit to Sarajevo, in which there were 12 participants (6 Albanian and 6 Serbian) from Zaječar and Bujanovac. During that visit, we realized that young people have no notion about war; the girls from Serbia said that what the Serbs did was terrible. Changes are possible on an individual level, but not on a social level."*



*the history lesson delivered by genocide survivors had a huge emotional and political significance for young people from Serbia; mutual support of young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and other countries: "I took a group of young people to Srebrenica and their parents had nothing against their children going and they welcomed it." In my team, two girls and two boys are members of the LGBT population. It was important to them to have participated in the march. They got the support of all the people around. I am terribly proud of them. The most emotional moment was entering Srebrenica, encountering the mothers of Srebrenica".*

*Marija pointed out the importance of decentralized work with young people – involving young people in activities dealing with the past outside of large centers: "All our experiences related to the local environment are encouraging. The people we know, these young people, are not affected by negative stereotypes and prejudices, they want to listen," said Maria.*

*However, problems arise when the experiences need to be transferred to a wider social community dominated by a conspiracy of silence about the war, and those who insist on confronting it are exposed to accusations: "On the way back, when something needs to be said publicly, there is some reluctance..." Maria concluded.*

***Ljilja Spasić***, Civic Action Pančevo, shared her experience of going to Vukovar with young people - about facing the truth on the spot versus erasing memories in Serbia. *Ljilja pointed out the discrepancy between the interest in going to crime scenes and the lack of donor support for such activities: "Donors are not receptive to that. There is interest, but there is no possibility of financing".*

Šehida Abdurahmanović, Movement of the mothers of the Žepa and Srebrenica enclaves, warned of the dangers and consequences of widespread genocide denial, especially among young people: "I survived the genocide. I fear for future generations. Young generations deny the genocide. If it started tomorrow, it seems to me that it would be worse."

***Women's labor rights in the new Serbian capitalism*** – report from the field: presented by Milica Lupšor, Roza group, Zrenjanin

Milica warned about *the slave position of workers; The Labor Law legalizes unlimited exploitation and discrimination: "The employer can fire workers at any moment, they do not have the right to annual leave, sick leave, union organizing..."*

*The Constitution is a dead letter: "The Constitution states that there is no discrimination, and our Labor Law discriminates against some 750,000 people who work under different contracts, seasonal jobs, etc. The state recognizes about 450,000 such cases".*



*The tendency of constant deterioration of the already minimal labor rights - the law protects employers and punishes workers, condemning them to even deeper poverty; the global context complicates the whole situation: "With the war in Ukraine, with inflation, the number of discriminated persons will grow to a million in the next two years." A law is underway that will be even worse."*

*Educational work with young people about labor rights is extremely useful - young people do not have elementary knowledge about labor rights: "In the survey before the start of the workshop, 97.8% of young people did not know anything." After the workshop, everyone was well informed. We noticed a big improvement in the level of knowledge before and after the workshops" etc.*

*Gender discrimination of women - massive dismissal of women during the Covid epidemic - increased number of dismissals after maternity leave: "In the past year, an increased number of women who are dismissed after returning from maternity leave has been noticed. This was also the case before, but not so many women contacted us".*

*Trade union networking of Roza on a global level: "Roza has become part of an international network of organizations and unions." They deal with textile workers especially in Asia, they follow the entire chain of production and sales. During field work in Romania, Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, several organizations proved that the same thing is happening here as in Asia".*

*Solidarity must be our common imperative - each of the groups has its own priorities, but it is necessary that we act together, support each other in the fight against all forms of violence - in the workplace, in the family, everywhere, because the power of the exploiters is based on the lack of solidarity of the oppressed: "The Labor Law was adopted in 2014. When unions and organizations called for a mass strike, no one responded, no one responded to that Law. When Roza started the film Destitute Pickers in Serbia, in a women's peace organization, when we said that women should be educated about violence in the workplace, those women told us 'That's not our area of work'. I am here to speak about labor rights and that is primary for me, but it does not mean that I will not speak about other types of violence as well," emphasized Milica.*



The following activities took place in the evening:

**"Unconditional peace"** – screening of a documentary film (30 min) - memory of the anti-war resistance; 30 years of the "Spiritual Republic of ZICER", Trešnjevac, May 1992 - May 2022, organized by WiB; production of the film: Group for Conceptual Politics/GCP, Novi Sad and presentation of the publication



***“Trešnjevac – May 1992 – May 2022 – Civil disobedience, female courage, solidarity”*** - presented by: Branka Ćurčić, GCP and Staša Zajović, WiB.

**Soldiers who do not exist** (32 min) - screening of a Polish documentary film about the participation of Russian soldiers in the war in Ukraine (2014). Testimonies of the families of the murdered Russian soldiers, who died in Ukraine, buried at night, because the Russian authorities did not allow them to do so during the day. Translation: Katarzyna Kovalewska; subtitle: Group for video activism WiB.

**Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> September**

**Saturday, 24<sup>th</sup> September**

**Confronting the past/transitional justice – a feminist approach**

***“Transgenerational trauma: what traumas are we leaving behind?”***

moderated by *Sanja Pavlović* (Autonomous Women's Center, Belgrade), with the participation of: *Marijana Senjak* (Women's Room, Zagreb), *Augustina Rahmanović* (VIVE žene, Tuzla), *Aida Cipurković* (Vive žene, Tuzla) and *Vladimir Jojić* (NENA - group for peace and women's rights, Leskovac).

• **On trauma**

Trauma is a natural reaction in extreme conditions. Trauma threatens both the psychological and physical integrity of the victim. What characterizes trauma are feelings of helplessness and horror, and threatened bodily integrity. At the end of the therapeutic process with trauma victims, the goal is to integrate them into society. (*Vladimir*)

Trauma is a process. The transition process is still ongoing. It leads us in two directions. It can lead us back to war or it can lead us to a better tomorrow, to a better society. There is no third option. (*Aida*)

The transmission of trauma happens across generations, it is logical that it happens in the first place within families. (*Augustine*). She listed *four types of family trauma*:

- 1.) The victims' families, where the parents of the victims are present and behave that way.
- 2.) The fighters' families, where the atmosphere is that they are fighters.
- 3.) Families of frozen feelings, where depression prevails.
- 4.) The winners' families, where everyone pretends that everything is ok.

*Impact of trauma on children*: stagnation in development due to lack of support, feelings of anxiety, silence in the family, presence of anger, depression, childhood illnesses, colds, feeling of helplessness, feelings of being lost in time (*Augustine*)

*The conspiracy of silence regarding sexual violence, both in war and in peace: Sexual violence is a crime shrouded in secrecy. When that vow of silence is broken, it is no longer a secret, it liberates and brings relief. We often see the way of coping as public speaking. Victims' rights are the path where we as helpers stand with victims and survivors. They will become actors and advocate for their rights. (Mariana Senjak)*

• **On post-traumatic stress disorder - Serbia**

American studies have shown that PTSD occurs in 50% of war returnees. PTSD is characterized by depression, anxiety, anger, frustration. These persons pass it all onto their families. Forced mobilizations began in Serbia in the early 90s. There has been an increase in violence against women, as well as femicide. 30% of women are killed with a firearm in a family context. Serbia is fourth or fifth in the world in terms of weapons per capita". (Vladimir)

**Yet another war in Europe – Ukraine...**

**First session:**

**First session: When a war begins – one can know, but when does the pre-war begin? ('Cassandra' – Christa Wolff, German writer)**

- About the responsibility of the main actors of international politics (EU, USA, UN...), for the imperial campaigns and expansionism of the Russian Federation (Chechnya, Georgia, Syria, annexation of Crimea, Donbass, Ukraine ...); about the responsibility of the region (why is Putin so popular in Serbia?), etc.

*At the beginning, Staša Zajović explained the reasons for organizing debates about the war in Ukraine:*

To reflect together about one of the biggest crises in Europe after the Second World War; to bring disputes to light – at various levels. Both on the left and in the peace movement, because we do not have a consensus on issues related to the war in Ukraine, but we have the need and obligation to create and expand the space for constructive and creative confrontation of opinions; so that we do not provide 'easy' answers to difficult questions, but that we publicly state contradictions within the feminist-anti-militarist movement, etc.

The following persons participated in the discussion:

**Nermin Vučelj**, Novi Pazar, associate professor of Romance Studies at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Niš

**Sonja Biserko**, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Belgrade

**Snežana Jakovljević**, Women's association 'Peščanik', Kruševac

**Srđan Hercigonja**, senior researcher at the Belgrade Center for Security Policy

**Snežana Obrenović**, Kraljevo, activist of the WiB Network

*Moderator: Staša Zajović*

### *At the beginning, **Nermin Vučelj***

*talked about the absence of peace negotiations, referring to the statements of Western politicians and the media: "In these statements and in other performances of Western politicians, there is no mention of negotiations on the end of military conflicts, but only the continuation of the war".*

*Vučelj attributes the greatest responsibility to the USA in accordance with its foreign policy strategy, of which he particularly emphasizes the imposition of EU attitudes, which are in tune with the USA 'singlemindedness': "In the West, political and media hysteria is used to fabricate social consensus and shape controlled public opinion. Anyone who does not fit into the prescribed political orthodoxy is discredited."*

*Vučelj warned of the enormous profits that large oil companies (Shell, Exxon, Chevron, etc.) are making due to the war in Ukraine, supporting his position with the statement of A. Guterres, the UN Secretary General, that it is a matter of 'grotesque greed that punishes the poorest and the most vulnerable'.*

*Vučelj pointed out that there are double standards regarding the responsibility of the USA and Russia: "For Ukraine to join NATO - it is considered normal in the West. It is not clear to the West that Russia feels threatened because of this. It's like that when we look through glasses whose diopter was adjusted by the USA".*

### **Sonja Biserko**

*warned of long-term preparations for war, emphasizing the fact that she believes Russia has the greatest responsibility: "The war in Ukraine began with the annexation of Crimea, not on February 24, 2022."*

*Biserko explained that the goal of Russia's invasion was the 'restoration of the status of a global power' and, resorting to historical revisionism, Russia takes absolute credit to for 'liberating the world from Nazism'. Within Putin's territorial expansion, i.e., claims to conquer Ukraine, Russian propaganda is based on the stigmatization of Ukraine as 'Nazi': Every Ukrainian who says he is Ukrainian, is seen as a Nazi'.*

*Russia's new identity is based on the concept of the 'Russian world', and Biserko believes that it is not 'just' a war against Ukraine, but "against the West and Western values - a clash of two views of the world, liberal and illiberal". In the preparation of aggression, Internal problems in the West - the Trump administration, Brexit, various right-wing movements in France, Germany, Italy, etc. were water to Putin's mill.*

*Biserko emphasizes that Putin had three wrong perceptions:*

*Firstly, it transpired that Russia does not have that military power, that the army is poorly professionally organized; a large number of Russians do not want to participate in the war, which has led to the exodus of the most relevant part of the young generation;*

*Secondly, he underestimated the resistance of the Ukrainians, the motivation of the Ukrainian army to save their country'.*



Thirdly, Putin was taken aback by the fact that Europe nevertheless consolidated and showed a high degree of cohesion: *'The EU showed its solidarity by providing humanitarian aid to Ukraine, but also aid in arming and training the Ukrainian army'*;

Biserko believes that since the beginning of the invasion of Ukraine, there has been talk of the possibility of 'opening a second front', which is usually linked to the Balkans and Serbia: *'Serbia is the main factor of both stability and instability for the entire region, there is Republika Srpska, a large pro-Serbian and pro-Russian bloc in Montenegro, in Macedonia, as well as regime structures in the north of Kosovo'*, warns Biserko.

*She also pointed to the huge financial resources invested by Russia in spreading the ideas of the 'Russian world': 'Russia financed and corrupted a lot of politicians, movements, important individuals in the West, but it also did the same with some structures in Serbia, RS and Montenegro. That's huge money'.*

### **Srđan Hercigonja**

*stressed the great importance of the condemnation of Russia's aggression by Secretary General Antonio Guterres; he also mentioned the activities of various UN committees that deal with collecting and documenting crimes in Ukraine: "All those committees that exist at the UN, which have their own special rapporteurs, have been documenting meticulously and systematically crimes that have been committed in the territory of Ukraine for months now".*

*"The work of the International Nuclear Energy Agency is extremely important in order to prevent a possible nuclear disaster," emphasized Hercigonja.*

*Regarding the export of grain from Ukraine and Russia, primarily to African countries, the greatest credit goes to the FAO (UN International Food Agency), but due to media propaganda, it was attributed to Turkey," Hercigonja believes.*

Hercigonja stated that Russia abuses its position as a permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) and that "we should not fall for those stories that Russia can be suspended from the UNSC".

*Herzigonja concluded that the UNSC cannot be expected to take concrete results in order to end the war in Ukraine in the foreseeable future. There is neither the political will nor the responsibility of the great powers, primarily the USA and Russia, but also other international actors for that."*

### **Snežana Obrenović**

*spoke about the 'Putinization' of all regime media in Serbia, about media support for Russia's war-crime policy: "It is not only support, but justification of all Putin's war actions, starting from 2014 with the annexation of Crimea, until now."*

*Snežana warned that "commentators and analysts" on the regime's media are warmongers, war criminals, generals, colonels: "With their war criminal past in the wars of the bloody nineties in Yugoslavia, for them Putin is on the right track and defending the whole world from the West and his policies".*

*With the coming to power of the SPP, the process of 'Putinization' has been intensified, and at the same time, increased militarization is taking place, primarily through the arming of Serbia." S. Obrenović also believes that "the regime media is waging a war against the citizens of Serbia who, even to the smallest possible extent, want to resist not only militarization, but also growing re-traditionalization and conservatism in Serbia.*

*"The concept of the 'Serbian world' united all these values, and this was particularly evident at the last Gay Pride, the processions in Belgrade that propagated the defense of the family and the nation. This is where these two concepts met - the Russian world and the Serbian world", warned S. Obrenović, concluding that the former, the concept of the Serbian world, "is politically supported, and the latter for Milošević's Greater Serbia".*

### **Snežana Jakovljević**

*spoke about her "activist experience in organizing a protest in Kruševac against the war in Ukraine, pointing out the consequences of the regime's media propaganda through the absence of empathy for the victims and pro-Russian awareness".*

*Snežana drew a parallel with violence in the family context, with the conclusion that "media insanity-brainwashing leads to a disturbed order of values."*

*She gave an example of the media frenzy in Russia: the majority of respondents support Russian aggression, i.e., the fight against Nazism, and when asked if they have met any Nazis in Ukraine, they mostly answer that they have not, that they have 'only good memories from Ukraine and consider it a brotherly nation'.*

*In the end, Snežana warned of the disastrous consequences of the absence, both in Russia and Serbia, of political, collective moral responsibility for the war and crimes committed in our name: "The Russian society, like the Serbian, was channeled for a very long time to have that feeling of helplessness, to have no political opinion, to not get involved politically and to look after some of their petty selfish interests".*

## **Second session,**

**Second session, Views of the war in Ukraine from an activist point of view** (Are peace talks to stop the war in Ukraine (im)possible? Who should participate in them? What are the main obstacles? "Military strategy to peace?": Whether sending huge amounts of weapons in Ukraine can force actors, primarily the Russian Federation, to compromise...)

With the participation of:

**Branka Ćurčić**, Group for Conceptual Politics, Novi Sad

**Ervina Dabižinović**, Anima, Kotor

**Tamara Spaić**, journalist, WiB activist

Moderator: **Nastasja Radović**, journalist, WiB activist

### **Branka Ćurčić**

spoke about peace policy from two perspectives: *state policy* and *"peace policy on the side of the people"*.

*Peace politics on the side of the people*: abstract pacifism cannot be imperative in this particular situation; it is necessary to understand what kind of politics and actions people stand for in both Ukraine and Russia:

*Citizens' revolts in Russia* - refusal of mobilization, which is why many leave Russia; 'it still cannot be called organized anti-war resistance', Ćurčić believes.

*The readiness of Ukrainians for a forceful armed resistance*: it is contrary to the pacifist principle "No to arms" and this raises the question whether armed resistance can be considered as a policy of peace.

*On the participation of citizens in peace negotiations* - these are mostly negotiations between states, in which international institutions can also participate, and almost never in these negotiations do main negotiators pay attention to the complexity of the citizens' interests in achieving lasting peace.

*The relationship between peace and justice*: "Peace that is made between states is usually a peace that is at the expense of justice and the rights of civilians."

*The concept of establishing a "liberal peace"* - includes the cessation of armed conflicts, the promotion of democracy, market-based reforms, the establishment of a number of other institutions that should ensure the implementation of peace after the end of armed conflicts: "In other words, from the perspective of the state, liberal peace also approves humanitarian interventionism, a new form of management of people and territories and states. I think we see that here too," explained Ćurčić, concluding "that's what makes the concept of liberal peace problematic."

*She criticized the statement of the German chancellor, Olaf Scholz*: "Scholz defends the liberal concept of peace, i.e., the old concept of peace where the winner imposes conditions; all concepts and strategies of peace are present in this conflict, and it is really difficult to see how it is possible to achieve peace."

### **Maja Bjeloš**

warned about the following facts:

*The role of citizens in peace negotiations is underestimated and*



*marginalized. Namely, Ukrainian women appealed as early as 2013 for governments to work on the implementation of Resolution 1325: "In 2013, I was at an international meeting in Kazakhstan organized by UN WOMEN and OSCE." It was an international conference dedicated to UN Resolution 1325 'Women, peace, security'. Ukrainian women saw that society was heading towards conflict, they tried, in front of international institutions, to appeal to put pressure on governments and to start a dialogue and a process that would stop the outbreak of conflict".*

*Bjeloš believes that the lack of understanding for the initiative of Ukrainian women activists has harmed Ukrainian society and that the absence of a broad social dialogue has contributed to divisions and the current conflict.*

*"Patriarchal" peace is established after conflicts, and peace agreements are concluded only after the military victory of one side: "I am worried by the speeches of European officials in which the goal is only military victory: punishing the Russians, defeating Putin, reparations, etc., and that they will not talk to "Putin the butcher".*

*Bjeloš believes that without the participation of the parties in the conflict - and that means Vladimir Putin, it is not possible to ensure peace that would have serious guarantees: "Before the war broke out, Putin sent a signal that he wanted to talk to the USA, who would guarantee that Ukraine would remain militarily neutral and that there would've been no conflict in that case. Already then, both Russia and the USA disputed Ukraine's international subjectivity as if Ukraine had no right to choose and make decisions on its own behalf."*

Bjeloš, as she said, is concerned about statements such as that of Ursula von der Leyen (President of the European Commission) that Ukrainians are "ready to die for the European perspective". "Is it a condition for joining the EU? The kind of militarization that is happening in Europe and the strengthening of nationalism prevents the possibility of dialogue and the strengthening of rational discourse."

*Dialogue and negotiations are not encouraged by international organizations and big powers, so even feminists in Russia and Ukraine are in sharp opposition: "As an organization, we suffered harsh criticism because we tried to organize a dialogue between Russians and Ukrainians here in Belgrade." Even donors don't want to support it. All of us are asked to support one side or the other and in the conditions of this propaganda that comes from both the West and the East..."*

### **Ervina Dabižinović:**

"Montenegro is formally, at least according to the statements of most officials, on the side of Ukraine." However, a part of the government openly supports Putin. When you talk to Ukrainians, they wonder why people in Montenegro are for Putin. Most of the Russians I

know renounce Putin and try to maintain the friendships that have been established with the Ukrainians. There are some connections between them even when some actions are taken against the war in Ukraine - both Russians and Ukrainians are with us", Dabižinović explained the complexity of the relationship between the policies of the countries in conflict and the Russians and Ukrainians who now live in Montenegro.

*Dabižinović considers it a worrying tendency that sees the end of the war in Ukraine only through the complete defeat of Russia and believes that such an approach, if it becomes dominant, will come at a price for Ukraine as well: "Ukraine is a large country, Ukraine is a country rich in resources, and it seems to me that between two evils it will have to choose the lesser, where probably those resources of Ukraine will be some price for the establishment of peace".*

### **Tamara Spaić**

*believes that the mainstream media in Serbia, and especially the tabloids - "including the public service", exploit the sentiment of a large part of the citizens towards Russia, as well as the mythologized image of the historical ties between Serbia and Russia. She referred to a recent study on media coverage in Serbia, which showed that, compared to its neighbors, the media in Serbia are the biggest producers of fake news: "And it's mostly news about Ukraine being a puppet in the hands of the West, and the Russians trying to de-Nazify it, establish some kind of world justice, some kind of peace - which the West, that is, America, does not allow them. We even had news at the beginning of the Russian aggression that, in fact, Ukraine had attacked Russia. Public opinion is 70% against imposing sanctions to Russia. The latest Demostat research shows that over 70% of people in Serbia support this so-called Serbia's neutral position. Neutrality essentially does not exist, 50% of people are against the introduction of sanctions against Russia, only 30% are for the introduction of sanctions".*

## **Third session**

*Third session, **Peace and/or justice?** (Is it more important to end the war or punish Russia for aggression?) - dynamic exercise 'Where do we stand now?'*

**Moderators: Milka Rosić, NENA** – group for peace and women's rights, Leskovac and **Svetlana Šarić, SOS** phone for women and children, victims of violence, Vlasotince

The participants made their decisions with an explanation of their positions, and the largest number opted for an immediate stop to the war, because 'nothing is more valuable than human life', 'to avoid human casualties', etc. It goes without saying that serving justice is important and that peace without justice is a negative peace, but they believe that at this moment the most important thing is to stop the war!

## Fourth session

*Fourth session, Ideological-political disputes and moral dilemmas related to the war in Ukraine* – What disputes and dilemmas are present within the peace movement at the European and regional level? Is there and why is there no organized, global anti-war resistance movement today? What are the dilemmas, doubts, disagreements within the pacifist/antimilitarist/feminist/anarchist movement?

*With the participation of:*

**Zoran Gajić**, Group for Conceptual Politics, Novi Sad

**Mirko Medenica**, WiB, Belgrade

**Nela Pamuković**, Center for Women Victims of War, Zagreb

*Moderator: Stefan Milosavljević*, political scientist,  
WiB activist, Belgrade/Hale, Germany

### **Zoran Gajić:**

*"The peace movement exists only in that situation when the war is waged in our name, that is, in the country that is responsible for causing and waging the war. Based on that, any consideration of a peace movement outside such a framework is pointless: "That's why we cannot expect a peace movement in the West because it would be a kind of betrayal, capitulation, unprincipled agreement and who knows what else. Where I logically expect a peace movement, it can only be in Russia. It is too late for it in Ukraine, because people are fighting in Ukraine."*

The polemic between anarchists shows one peculiarity, which is the misunderstanding of the dictates of reality versus principles and idealism: *"The further an anarchist is from the front lines, the more firmly he sticks to principles, he is doctrinally charged, he is firm in his convictions and objectives to Ukrainian anarchists. Anarchists warn, they speak of the concrete situation, concrete politics, politics on the ground..."*

### **Mirko Medenica:**

Believes that a global anti-war protest is unthinkable in today's world: *"It is very difficult to find a common denominator and talk." Whoever of you tries to talk to someone, we cheer, we don't think, then we argue, as if it's a question of whether someone likes something or not. It is an irrational question of personal affinities, not some facts and arguments. In this sense, there is not too much of a chance to bond over the struggle for peace. From the position of someone from the West, their focus is on capitalism, or NATO, these are the main villains, they cannot understand the position of someone in Ukraine, that for them the rapprochement to NATO, or calls for NATO to intervene, is not a question of ideology, but a concrete question of fear a year ago, and today the question of the survival of those people."*

Medenica warned that the approach of some left anti-imperialists in



the West is equivalent to erasing and not recognizing the experience and life of people in Syria, and today in Ukraine: *"Such an attitude is the ultimate imperial behavior, that is, as they say, the privilege of imperialists and racists, that they always know better than those who are, say, directly present there,"* concluded Medenica.

### **Nela Pamuković**

criticized the position that a peace movement is not possible in an attacked country from the perspective of the experience of the war in Croatia: Every peace initiative is indeed a peace movement, every peace initiative should be validated: *"What happens in Ukraine if we have conscientious objectors? Is it a place for anarchists from Seattle or Ukraine not to brag about who is right, but what concretely can anarchists in Ukraine do? What if Russian books are thrown away at the university in Ukraine? Is it the peace initiative of the professor who was fired because she did not want Russian books to be removed from the faculty? Are these peace initiatives, is it part of the peace movement? I think that in every country in the world there is space for a peace movement".* Nela stated that in Zagreb, 'people from the right joined the protests against the war not so much to talk about the given situation but to equalize Croatia and Ukraine'.

### **Persecutions, swear words and the rest... Stage action**

**Persecutions, curses and the rest – Dossier on attacks against Women in Black** - the book contains, in addition to the introductory text, nine more appendices:

*Chronicle of attacks on Women in Black - 30 years of organized persecution; Srebrenica – a paradigm of Serbian crimes; Their attacks– our defense; Whores and traitors - On misogynistic attacks on Women in Black; Militarization of street actions – repression in the name of "protection"; Court chronicle of 36 attacks-0 convicted (2014–2021); Study of court proceedings and institutional abolition of violence; Human rights defenders in the media – analysis of media reporting on WIB; Afterword. Authors: Staša Zajović, Tamara Spaić, Miloš Urošević, Mirko Medenica, Marijana Stojčić and Lino Veljak. Editors: Staša Zajović and Tamara Spaić; published by: Women in Black, Belgrade and MOST ART JUGOSLAVIJA; Design of the cover: Škart; Layout: Kaligram; this book has 112 pages.*

Activists read selected parts from the mentioned book; stage action was coordinated by: **Fahrudin Kladničanin**, Academic Initiative Forum 10, Novi Pazar/Belgrade

### **FEMINIST PARTY...**

**Sunday, 25th September**

**Sunday, 25th September**

### **To Odri Lord Zami: A New Reading of My Name**

A 1982 bio mythography of African-American feminist and writer Audrey Lorde (1934-1992), in which the author combines history,

myth, and biography. The book was translated by Ana Imširović and published by Reconstruction Women's Fund/RWF.

The following spoke about the book: **Ana Imširović Đorđević**, translator, Đurđa Trajković, publisher, two readers: **Snežana Jakovljević** and **Ervina Dabižinović** and reader **Miloš Urošević**, who also moderated the discussion about the book:

"It is important to read and preserve the knowledge about all the brave women who lived through those experiences that a different world is really possible, women who lived what they really believed in." (*Ana Imširović Đorđević*)

"This is a very important book for younger generations" (*Đurđa Trajković*)

"For me, there are women who love women or women who build friendships with women. It is important to remember our predecessors, because many women incorporated themselves into what we do, live, and have today." (*Snežana Jakovljević*)

"There is a speech in her language that we all hear and understand, but which has been lost in political correctness. These are concepts that have been transformed into something unclear." (*Ervina Dabižinović*)

"This book is a story about lesbianism and racism. This book is the story of childhood in Harlem (New York) during the thirties and forties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, about schooling, the relationship with her mother, relationships and loves, studies, workplaces, travels, the lesbian scene in bars in the 1950s, McCarthyism (witch-hunt)." (*Miloš Urošević*).

## **DISCUSSION CORNER: "Where to and how to proceed"**

**Internationalist corner – International news** (feminist-anti-militarist/anti-racist; transitional justice, anti-fascism...).

*Global South and Rise of the left in Latin America* - **Staša Zajović and Đurđa Trajković**

**The concept of the Global South:** The 'South' is not a geographical designation: the term unites everything that escapes the dominant hegemony of knowledge, that goes against the current and offers the unexpected and the unseen. The 'south' of the planet, as well as the east, gathered most of the 'southern' perspectives of a time when the sides of the world could still produce hierarchy. The global south has become symbolic and can now reside anywhere, including in the north...The epistemological revolution comes from the south, and even from the south-south relationship" (*Rada Iveković, philosopher and feminist activist*).

A new left-wing political wave is sweeping Latin America, after the elections in Argentina, Mexico, Chile and finally on June 18, 2022 in Colombia. Staša Zajović listed some of the facts about the victory of the left in Colombia, Chile, Peru... *Staša listed some common*

*denominators of the new leftist leaders and movements, among other things: they want to build a united front against climate change and generally advocate for the protection of the environment; they advocate for women's rights; in many countries, the participation of feminist movements (especially in Chile and Colombia) in the changes was extremely important; new left-wing leaders and movements are supported by a young, politically engaged electorate, which in recent years has taken to the streets in large numbers across Latin America to protest inequality, etc.*

*Đurđa Trajković singled out the strong penetration of the feminist movement and the ability to unify different struggles (labor struggles and movements, environmental movements, etc.).*

*Đurđa also believes that the feminist movement significantly contributed to the electoral victories of the left in LA, but that it must fight against appropriation/co-optation by the state; she also referred to the way the feminist movement works - alliance with state policies, often to the detriment of the movement:*

She went on to talk about the two waves of the New Left in LA:

*The first wave was Bolivia and Ecuador, it was the team that brought the left back to the table.*

*The second wave of left-wing governments: "Now in LA you have six countries that have left-wing governments in power and they are very serious economies in the world: Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru."*

*Đurđa warned that all left-wing governments continued the policy of extractivism (extraction of natural resources). She pointed to problems related to extractivism and the legacy of the post-colonial oligarchic structure, which led to the return to power of right-wing governments: "You have very rich families who still own entire countries. In 2012, right-wing governments returned to power."*

*Đurđa went on to explain some important differences between the previous and new left-wing governments: It is not about armed conflicts, violent takeovers, but about peace activism;*

*This current left has a program: the old left did not have a program, it had the takeover of power as a utopia, and it seems to me that this one has a realistic approach to power and has knowledge of how to achieve institutional, structural changes.*

**The regime finances criminal organizations and perpetrators of domestic violence from the state budget – Violeta Đikanović** cited the allegations of the Vojvodina Research Center/VOICE, who published information that among the representatives of the association "Četnički pokret Sokolovi/The Chetnik movement Falcons" is Miloš Stanimirović, who was convicted in 2012 for crimes against humanity committed during the 90s in Tovarnik/Croatia. This association also received funding from the municipality. Violeta



concluded: "The regime of A. Vučić finances criminal organizations from the budget, which means that citizens pay taxes to promote war criminals..."

**EVALUATION:** *What was important to you this time? (Ljupka)*

**Discussions/panels about the war in Ukraine are the most important content at this meeting – familiarization with information about the pre-war and the war; confrontation of different views:** 'I didn't know that the war in Ukraine started before we knew' (Rejha); "The views of the left on the war in Ukraine are important to me" (Verica);

**Nurturing space for meetings, exchange, joint reflection and learning – togetherness:** 'The most important thing for me was our togetherness and common space, that original activist way of working' (Marijana, Marija); "I feel at home at these gatherings. That is important to me" (Biljana); "Allowing space for discussion" (Branka); "The space for discussion is the most important to me. I'm sad that it's not the case anywhere else" (Nela); "It is very important to me that here we always have a safe space for dialogue, we can talk about things that are very important to us, especially for us who come from the interior, because we have little space to hear something" (Slavica); 'These gatherings are not only theoretical and practical discussions about the problems that beset us, but also the fight against loneliness and successful therapeutic gatherings. Gatherings teach us that the world cannot be changed by political methods alone. It can be changed, among other things, by feminist concern' (Boris).

**Transgenerational trauma:** 'Transgenerational trauma was very painful, but also cathartic. It is something that left a deep impression' (Nikola, Gordana, Selen, Nastasja) etc.

Of the other topics, the participants singled out the following as important: **internationalist news, the left in Latin America, the concept of the global south** (Ljilja, Snežana, Biljana, Manda...); "The most important thing for me was the presentation of the concept of the global south as the possibility of creating a space of freedom" (Snežana O.); **activities of young people from Zaječar:** 'What I heard from members of the WiB network from Zaječar. I am pleasantly surprised by the type of activities and reach that their organization has undertaken' (Nastasja), etc.

**Proposals for the next meeting of the Network:** Most of the proposals were related to the continuation of the debate on the war in Ukraine; Peace politics/peace negotiations/anti-war/anti-militarist resistance; The Global South, the left in Latin America, in the Balkans, alliances and mutual support of various struggles - internationalism; Involvement of young people in the movement - education, transfer

of knowledge; Continuation of the topic on transgenerational trauma; discussion about the policy of recognition of Kosovo, etc.

*(Integral lectures in BHS languages can be found the report from the Network meeting on the WiB website).*

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

**Feminist approach to sexual based violence in war in ex-Yugoslavia – For a culture of Memory and accountability** – seminars organized by WIB, Autonomous Women's Center and Youth Initiative for Human Rights from Belgrade.

In this reporting period were held four **(4)** seminars:

*The first seminar took place **October, 1 and 2 in Novi Sad** u premises of Youth Center CK13 – attended by **17** persons from 3 towns from Vojvodina.*

*The second seminar took place in Radmilovac, near Belgrade – **November 11, 12 and 13** – attended by **25** persons from 6 Serbian towns.*

*The third seminar took place in **Subotica, November 26** - one daylong seminar, organized together with Women's Studies and research from Subotica; this seminar was held in Gallery of Modern Art Subotica and attended by **12** persons from Subotica and Belgrade.*

*The Forth seminar – took place in Radmilovac, near Belgrade **December 9, 10 and 11**, – attended by **22** persons from 9 Serbian towns.*

Program of these seminars:

- Transitional justice – feminist approach (Staša Zajović)
- Problem of court proceedings pf war-time sexual violence in Serbia (Ivana Žanić)
- „*The end of impunity*” about proceedings on crimes of sexual violence in war at Hague tribunal – documentary movie
- Sexual violence as an act of male violence against women and creation of a caring society (Sanja Pavlović);
- From 'soldiers' rewards to 'crime against humanity' – how the feminist movement changed the meaning and international regulations on war- related sexual violence (Mina Damnjanović)
- Sexual violence during the wars in Yugoslavia – facts on scope of the problem, mechanisms of violence and achieving the rights of survivors - *power point presentation*
- Legal recognition of war-time sexual violence survivors and the fight against stigma – case study Kosovo– Nora Ahmetaj, activist from Kosovo
- „*Return*” (21 min.) on rape in wartime in Kosovo;



- Women's Court – Feminist approach to justice – documentary on W'sC in Sarajevo, 2015.
- *Panel discussion on media reporting on sexual violence in war:* Ana Manojlović (Radio Television Serbia), Mina Damnjanović (WiB). Moderator Sanja Pavlović
- Screening of the film "Do you remember me in slavery" (30 minutes) and discussion - documentary film by author Ana Manojlović (2017), produced by RTS.

**What to do?** – the fourth roundtable discussion was held on November 28 and 29, 2022 in Belgrade, in the premises of Women in Black, with the participation of **33** people: activists of civil society organizations, media, political scene, independent intellectuals from Montenegro (Podgorica, Kotor, Pljevlja, Herceg Novi, Cetinje), Serbia (Belgrade, Bajina Bašta, Novi Pazar, Priboj ), Croatia (Osijek, Zagreb) and guests from Turin/Italy. This meeting, like the previous ones, was organized by *Women in Black*, Belgrade with the support of *Anima - Center for Women's and Peace Education*, Kotor and *Academic Initiative Forum 10*, Novi Pazar. Book promotions and debates were held, among which we highlight:

**Florian Bieber: The Rise of Authoritarian Regimes in the Western Balkans – A New Look at Southeast Europe**, Profil Edition, Zagreb (2022) and Biblioteka XX Vek, Belgrade

In the introductory speech, *Fahrudin Kladničanin*, *Academic Initiative Forum 10*, Novi Pazar emphasized that 'this research represents an interesting chronology of political events from the 90s to these days in Albania, North Macedonia, Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and with a smaller part in Croatia.'

Then **Jaroslav Pečnik**, professor at the University of Osijek (retired), philosopher, a Danas columnist pointed out: 'Florian Bieber (1973), Luxembourgish researcher of international relations, ethnic conflicts and nationalism primarily in the Balkans, describes the circumstances and patterns of democratic decline in seven Western Balkan countries/WB, and the rise of autocratic tendencies'. Pečnikč listed the common features of authoritarian tendencies: weak democratic institutions, an unfinished and captive state, a high degree of internal polarization, political parties that act as interest groups for a narrow circle of elites, a weak, disunited, often corruptible opposition and a fragmented civil society, etc. Pečnik concludes: 'Despite the declarative desire to move closer to membership in the EU, in the last ten years, most governments in the WB have turned more and more strongly to authoritarianism. This is not surprising, since enlargement is no longer a priority for the EU and therefore it is quite understandable that its transformative power has weakened'.

**Deportations and other plays - by Željko D. Vušurović, writer and journalist, Cetinje. Cetinje.** The following persons spoke



about the book: **Dragan Stojković**, publisher, ART MOST Yugoslavia, Zemun, **Gradimir Gojer**, director, Sarajevo/Belgrade and author **Željko D. Vušurović**.

*Dragan Stojković* stated that the performance of the drama *Deportations* was administratively prohibited because it was about a 'state-organized crime' committed by the authorities of Montenegro: Mol, the President, etc. (In May 1992, the Montenegrin authorities deported about 70 Bosniak refugees who sought refuge in Montenegro from Herceg Novi to the Republika Srpska, who were then killed).

*Gradimir Gojer*, the director of the drama "Deportations" stated that the drama could not be performed in Montenegro because he "named M. Đukanović as the main culprit for the deportation". referred to the enormous difficulties surrounding the performance Željko D. Vušurović of 'Deportation', primarily because 'the Montenegrin authorities refuse to face the crimes of the 90s. Participants from Montenegro testified about the refusal to confront the past: "Montenegro refuses responsibility for the crimes of the 90s" (*Ervina Dabižinović*); "It is about the persecution of everyone in Montenegro who fought for the truth about deportation" (*Esad Kočan*); "The drama shows the continuity of refusal to face the burden of crime" (*Duško Vuković*) etc.

**Current challenges, disputes in relations between Serbia and Montenegro** – the discussion was moderated by Lino Veljak, a philosopher from Zagreb:

*Esad Kočan*, editor-in-chief of the Montenegrin weekly Monitor, said that Montenegro is "in the jaws of its own disorientation", that 85% of the Montenegrin parliament consists of "pro-fascist parties and reformed fascists".

The president of the Civic Democratic Forum, *Zoran Vuletić*, accused the Serbian regime led by A. Vučić and the Serbian Orthodox Church/SOC of continuing the policy of Greater Serbian nationalism in relation to Montenegro.

Participants from Montenegro: *Ljupka Kovačević* and *Sladana Kaverić Mandić* pointed to the marginalization and repression of all those in Montenegro who do not support the policies of M. Đukanović (DPS), and even less the interference of the Serbian regime; independent journalists *Duško Vuković* and *Brano Mandić* warned of the dangers of growing clericalization, the influence of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the disruption of interethnic coexistence.

Historian *Vladimir Jevtić* (Bajina Bašta) spoke about the "toxic politics of the Serbian Orthodox Church", especially about the incursion of the Serbian Orthodox Church into the education system in Serbia.

**While reviewing the situation in Croatia, Jaroslav Pečnik** emphasized, in the context of commemorating the anniversary of



the fall of Vukovar, that the abuse of victims is a constant of state policy. Regardless of the numerous problems, Pečnik believes that 'Croatia's membership in the EU is extremely important, regardless of all the shortcomings, and that the alternative is the integration of Serbia and all the countries of the Western Balkans into the EU'.

*(The full report on this meeting can be found on the WiB website)*

## **WOMEN'S PEACE ACTIVISM, Đulići, Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Educational program that the civic association "Anima" from Đulići and Women in Black Belgrade have been organizing since the beginning of 2016. Meetings within Women's Peace Activism are strengthening trust, mutual support and solidarity, wider areas of women's autonomy and self-confidence. This meeting is a continuation of many years of cooperation, friendship, mutual support and mutual cooperation the work of "Anima" and WiB.

In this reporting period, one meeting was organized:

**December 22 - 17** women from ten villages from the Zvornik area participated in the twenty-fifth (25th) meeting; workshops were held:

**We celebrate women's wisdom** - a small women's raffle - an exercise in which women "drew out" and commented on the messages of important women - activists, scientists, artists...

**Let's learn together against sexism, racism, nationalism, homophobia** - a joint scrutiny of prejudices (gender/ethnic/class/

**In honor of Suvada Selimović**, coordinator of 'Anima', peace activist, witness at the Women's Court – who was included in the BBC list of 100 most inspiring and influential women from around the world in 2022! Women in Black issued a publication containing the names and brief biographies of all the winners of this prestigious award and we read it and commented on it together.

In the final workshop, the women particularly emphasized the 'instructive, empowering character' of the workshops that 'strengthen the community of women'.



*In this period, the following events of related civil society organizations were held, in which WiB activists participated. We list them chronologically:*

**12-16 November, Gorizia/Italia “Europe Tomorrow”** - The fourth meeting within the project *“European citizens United in FREEdom and human rights”* was held in Gorizia, Italy, organized by Adriatic GreenNet. Six people from WiB Network participated: Nikola Krstić, Tanja Marković, Jovana Braletić, Azra Hadžić Šeta and Nastasja Radović from Belgrade and Anja Perović and Milana Kovačić from Novi Sad.

**November 29, Bosanski Petrovac/BH: Take on from where we started “AFŽ/AWF 1942...”** – commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Anti-Fascist Women’s Front of Yugoslavia/AFŽ, an event held in the Cultural Center, in which about 100 women activists participated - from all over the former Yugoslavia. Organized by: Women’s Platform for the Development of Serbia in cooperation with feminist collectives from the former Yugoslavia. *Tanja Marković* participated on behalf of WiB.

**December 3, Karlsruhe/Germany “Shaking the Archive - Toward future methodologies”.** The theme of the conference was marginal, fringe, lateral, non-institutional, ‘small’ archives around the world that point to gaps and offer voices to marginalized bodies and realities. Activists from: Palestine, Lebanon, Turkey took part, and *Tanja Marković* participated on behalf of WiB.

**December 15, Belgrade ‘Solidarity for the rights of all’ - presentation of the report on attacks on human rights defenders in Serbia for 2022.** Conference organized by Yucom/Committee of Lawyers for Human Rights, Belgrade Center for Security Policy/BCSP and National Parliament, Leskovac. Panel discussions were held: Protection of human rights defenders in Serbia - presentation of a report in which authors from Yucom and BCBP spoke; Narrowing of the space for human rights defenders to act in the Balkans, The position of human rights defenders in Serbia and the reactions of the international community and Activists as *personas non grata*. The following spoke in this session: *Stasa Zajović*, WiB, Vladan Sindić, Libergraf organization, Ljiljana Nešić, Women for Peace, Leskovac and Dragana Arsić, movement Let’s defend the forests of Fruška Gora, Novi Sad.

**December 23 - online discussion/conference of activists of women’s groups regarding the current situation in Kosovo:** on the role of the Belgrade regime in the tensions in Kosovo; the role of the international community; possible contribution of Resolution 1325 regarding Kosovo, etc. The online conference was organized by the women’s association “Pesčanik” from Kruševac, and the





following activists participated: Belgrade Center for Security Policy, Women for Peace, Leskovac, Alternative Center for Girls, Kruševac, Network of Women Against Violence; Staša Zajović participated on behalf of WiB.

## SOLIDARITY IS OUR STRENGTH

Solidarity actions - with members of vulnerable and disadvantaged minority communities (social-class, ethnic-racial, sexual), citizens whose human rights (working, educational, cultural) are endangered.

**I Solidarity with War Refugees:** Women in Black addressed this situation in 2013, when solidarity campaigns against racist attacks were organized that culminated at the end of 2013, and since then, Women in Black have organized a lot of activities, about which you can find information on the WiB website. Solidarity activities are interconnected, at the same time, they include more dimensions - peace, humanitarian, artistic-activist, informative ...

### Direct actions - solidarity assistance in the field:



**I Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina** - refugees began arriving in June 2018 in this city from the direction of Serbia and Montenegro, as a 'transit' place to Croatia. Thousands of refugees from the countries of the Middle East, but also North Africa, have passed through Tuzla, where informal groups of citizens provide them with solidarity assistance. In this reporting period, several solidarity actions were organized by *Ramiz Berbić*, WiB Network activist: *October 12 and 25 and 16. December 16.*

### II Solidarity support and assistance to Ukrainian refugees

– since the beginning of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, in February 2022, WiB has established contacts with Ukrainian refugees, providing humanitarian aid and support in Belgrade as well as in Vranje:

*Belgrade, October 28th* – an encounter with thirty (30) refugees in the courtyard of Ukraine embassy; this group of refugees, mostly

women and children, are accommodated in the refugee camp in Vranje (350km from Belgrade);

*Vranje, December 18 – A solidarity visit to refugee camp, this visit was coordinated with an association 'Čini dobro/Do good' established November 2022 by Ukraine refugees as well as well as Ukrainian women who live in Belgrade. Six WiB Network activists (4 from Belgrade and two from Vlasotince, 40 km from Vranje) visited the refugees, providing humanitarian aid. In this occasion, WiB organized a cultural event performed by actor Ivan Nikolić. This event was attended by app. 80 persons – refugees from Vranje camp (mostly children and women).*

*Vranje, December 29 – three activists from WiB Network (from Leskovac and Vlasotince) visited Ukrainian refugees in the refugee camp, providing humanitarian aid, etc.*



**III Solidarity aid and support to anti-war activists from Russia in Belgrade** from the Russian Federation, who sought refuge in Serbia, fleeing war or repression in Russia. Solidarity was manifested through support and participation in anti-war protests organized by the **RUBS** initiative (Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians and Serbs together against the war); through involvement in various activities of WiB: protests, debates, gatherings, activist-art events...

## **IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE MENTIONED, IN THIS PERIOD WE MONITORED THE FOLLOWING TRIALS:**

### **I Solidarity with the Milivojević Family from Lučani - The Ivanjica trials**

Criminal proceedings against two executives of the Milan Blagojević-Namenska Arms Factory, Lučani. They are charged with 'committing a serious crime against general security' because on July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017, workers Milomir Milojević and Miloško Ignjatović were killed after a gunpowder explosion.

In this reporting period, five (5) hearings were held:

*September 28* - The trial was postponed at the request of the defendants' defense attorneys, who hired expert advisors who, as they stated, needed time to familiarize themselves with the case, as well as at the request of the family of the victim M. Milivojević, because their lawyer was justifiably absent.

*October 18* - Witness *Zoran Jarić* and expert *Miloš Vukadinović* presented a series of irregularities and deficiencies that existed at the time of the accident in which Milomir Milivojević and Miloško Ignjatović were killed, but they claimed that they cannot be considered the causes of the workers' death.

*November 8* - The examination of the expert *Julius Zinkler* showed through the expert that the court intended to reduce the criminal responsibility of the military factory for the death of the worker.

*November 24* - Both expert defense counsels for the defendants, *Vladimir Kapor* and *Predrag Bogdanović*, referred to the violation of regulations and serious irregularities in work as the cause of the accident in July 2017. However, they find the cause of the accident only in the actions of the deceased Milivojević and Ignjatović, etc.

*December 26* - The main hearing was postponed at the request of the defense of the injured parties, this court hearing was postponed and a new one was scheduled for February 6, 2023.

From the very beginning (October 2019), the trial was accompanied by constant obstructions. The lawyers of the injured parties (the Milivojević family) believe that it is obvious that the experts are working in favor of the defendants from the Lučani factory, they want to shift the blame to the deceased workers. They are trying to adapt the previous expertise to the new expertise and thereby help the defendants from the military factory. The lawyers also justifiably claim that the factory did not follow all safety and occupational safety measures and procedures, which is why the tragedy occurred. M. Milivojević, the father of the deceased Milomir, also believes that the 'goal is to harmonize the opposing expert opinions in order to shift the blame to the dead workers'.

## **II Trial of Miroslav Mika Aleksić for rape and sexual abuse**

**January 2021** - several former students of the "Matter of the Heart" acting school made accusations of rape and sexual abuse against their former acting teacher Miroslav Aleksić.

**April 21, 2021** - an indictment was filed against Miroslav Mika Aleksić. He was arrested and spent eight months in detention, when he was released to defend himself.

**February 2022** - the court proceedings against Aleksić began after several delays and final preparatory hearings.

In this reporting period, four **(4)** hearings were held:

*September 12* - Today's main trial was not held, and as the defense



attorney for the accused M. Aleksić said, his client “ended up in the hospital last night in a pre-infarction state.”

*October 19* - In the continuation of the evidentiary proceedings, Miroslav Aleksić continued to present his defense. The accused defended himself by attacking the victims, questioning both the credibility of their testimonies and their credibility as surviving victims. For example, he stated that the testimony of the victim Iva Ilinčić was a “false” testimony because “she was not threatened by anything.”



Concluding his defense, the defendant referred to the testimony of the victim Milena Radulović, who was the first to publicly accuse him: ‘Milena invents sexual events, but she does it both in her own name and in someone else’s name. That story took her from the status of anonymous to the status of a celebrity. Supported by non-governmental organizations, she has become an icon of the feminist movement. She goes public with traumatic stories and initiates a media reality process, and I am forced to be a part of that process, only formally, because essentially I have nothing to do with it.’

*November 29* - canceled hearing

*December 20* - At today’s main trial, the victim Nikolina Vukićević testified, and said that she stands by her statement given at the prosecution:

“I attended classes at the “Matter of the Heart” school from the age of 7 to 17, I was there for ten years. Mika (Aleksić) would tell us that all women are whores. (...) All classes would start with a prayer...Mika tried to instill awe in each of us...if we didn’t do our homework, we would be punished. I was punished ten times in ten years. I had anxiety attacks before classes, I was vomiting... He told me that I was stupid, that I was fat, that I was nobody and nothing...

His opinion greatly affected my self-esteem and self-confidence’ The witness went on to describe the sexual humiliation she was subjected to by the accused Aleksić.

### III Trial for setting journalist Milan Jovanović's house on fire

Former President of the Municipality of Grocka, Dragoljub Simonović, has been accused of inciting the burning of the house of journalist M. Jovanović, working for Žig Info. On 12/12/2018 somebody set fire to this journalist's house, in which his house burned down. Former president of the municipality of Grocka, Dragoljub Simonović, was sentenced to 4 years and 3 months in prison while the other perpetrators of this crime: Vladimir Mihailović, Aleksandar Marinković and Igor Novaković were sentenced to several years in prison.

However, on December 24, 2021, the Court of Appeals in Belgrade overturned the conviction for setting fire to the house of journalist Milan Jovanović, returning the case to the Second Basic Court in Belgrade for a retrial.

After several delays, the repeated proceedings against four persons began (*Dragoljub Simonović, Vladimir Mihajlović, Igor Novaković and Aleksandar Marinković*).

In this period, four **(4)** hearings were held:

*September 6* - The deputy prosecutor of the Second Municipal Prosecutor's Office in Belgrade, Predrag Milovanović, stood by the allegations of the lawsuit, and the defendants' counsels claimed that there was no evidence for the criminal offense they were charged with.

*October 26* - *Jela Deljanin*, the wife of *Milan Jovanović*, said that she stands by her earlier statement about the circumstances surrounding the burning of their house, which she gave before the Court in June 2020. Deljanin said that after the fire she has been suffering from and is being treated for anxiety, the defense of the defendants tried to put in question her testimony.

*October 28* - three witnesses testified: *Zvonko Grulović, Miloš Mitrović* and *Jelena Mihailović*; the defendants' counsels tried to prove the illegal conduct of the Prosecutor's Office by questioning the witnesses.

*December 14* - Judge *Luka Pantelić* interrupted and postponed the main hearing because the representative of the second defendant, *Vladimir Mihajlović*, requested the exemption of the acting Deputy Prosecutor, *Predrag Milovanović*, because, as she said, he was also proposed as a witness in this proceeding, which "violates the legality of the procedure", etc.

*(Integral reports in Serbian can be found on the WiB website)*

## ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS, LECTURES, DEBATES AT THE WOMEN IN BLACK PREMISES - "WEDNESDAYS AT WIB"



The practice of regular discussions, lectures and joint reflections on important social and political issues in the country and the world, continued in this reporting period, which included **13** lectures, debates, book presentations, film screenings, with the participation of more than **280** persons.

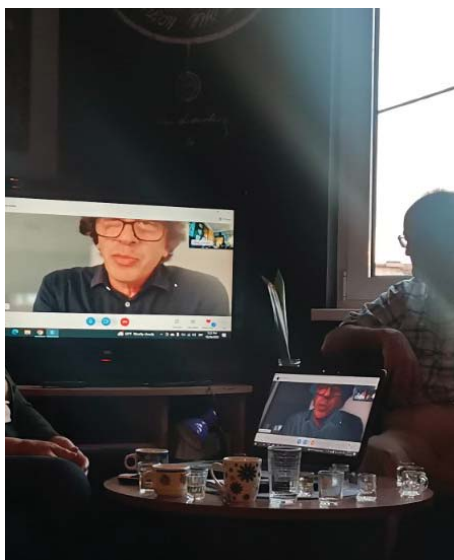
**September 14 'Brnjica za vještice'** (Muzzle for the Witches) - promotion of Dubravka Ugrešić's book published by the Multimedia Institute, Zagreb (2021). The following spoke about the book: **Merima Omeragić**, a theoretician of literature and culture from Sarajevo; the moderator was **Azra Šeta Hadžić**. This book consists of two parts. *The first part* consists of Dubravka Ugrešić's text/review of her own book *Štefica Cvek in the Jaws of Life - How to ruin your own heroine*. *The second part* of the book contains an interview conducted with the author by Merima Omeragić, which is divided into several thematic units: I Deformed optics, II Implantation of cultural memes, III Women's culture of resistance, IV What to do, V Culture of mutilation, VI Map to map – mapping. The conversation was attended by **19** people.



**September 21 "How did we experience Euro-pride?" What did we learn?** - About the circumstances under which the Euro-Pride was held in Belgrade on September 17, 2022: attacks by clerical-fascist organizations, physical violence before the Pride, which escalated on the day of its holding; an official ban and then permission to hold Pride, under pressure from the international and local public. We present a few impressions from the discussion: "Unprecedented degree of propaganda and dehumanization of those who supported Pride" (*Mirko*); "Europride was an example of civil disobedience, not only the rights of LGBT people were defended, but all human rights" (*Stefan, Violeta*); "Pride was a protest against state repression and clerical-fascist darkness" (*Nikola*); "Europride should







also be seen in the context of the war in Ukraine and the Serbian regime's relationship with Russia" (*Goran*); "We, rebellious citizens, have won" (*Tamara*); "Without pressure from the West, this Pride would not have happened" (*Miloš*); "Two factors were important at Euro-Pride: the support of activists from Europe and internal civil resistance" (*Staša*), etc. **18** people participated in this discussion.

**September 28, '35 years since the Eighth Session (1987-2022) - The beginning of the end of Yugoslavia** – at the 8th session of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Serbia, S. Milošević removed all those who opposed his idea of turning the SFR Yugoslavia into Greater Serbia (a synthesis of Stalinism, Chetnism and Orthodoxy). "This session traced the further path of Serbia, which was going to start wars with the environment and sow hatred and backwardness in the people for a long time" (*Aleksandar Kraus*, president of the Anti-Fascist Association of Serbia). About the fact that the Eighth Session is not just a historical fact, that its spirit lives on, full agreement was reached during the discussion: 'The disintegration of Yugoslavia began ten years before the Eighth Session, Milošević began to constrict Yugoslavia - Serbian nationalism caused Croatian nationalism' (*Radoje Stefanović*, president of the Serbian Chamber of Commerce at the time of the 8th session); "We are living in the victorious politics of the Eighth Session, the epilogue of which was the ingression of Serbia into wars, and it also won in the National Assembly of Serbia fifteen days ago when the government (*Aleksandar Vučić*) and the Serbian opposition agreed on almost all issues" (*Zoran Vuletić*, president of the Civic Democratic forums, etc. **19** people attended this debate.



**October 19 "War in Ukraine and Russia"** - lecture by Katja Khazina, anti-war and feminist activist from Moscow. "Ukraine is fighting for its existence as a nation and a state, resisting the aggressive policy of Russia now and the Soviet Union in the past, which manifested itself in many ways: the ban on the use of the language, the assimilation of the population, cultural genocide, the



occupation of the territory in 2014, the annexation of Crimea, the war of 2022. The Russian army is committing war crimes in Ukraine, including the bombing of residential areas, numerous executions, torture and sexual abuse...' Katya emphasized at the beginning.

Then she *referred to the repression* in Russia: "In the anti-war actions of February 24 this year, 19,355 people were detained, at least 250 independent sources of information were blocked," etc. She also spoke about *the anti-war resistance and the regime's reprisals*: "There are two squads of people who shoot those who try to escape from the front line." Military and civilian authorities capture people through surveillance cameras in public transport, come to home addresses, take away people with severe disabilities, pensioners...' According to various estimates, up to one million people, mostly men, left Russia, Katya said. She also mentioned forms of resistance to mobilization: sabotage of the system, organizing the evacuation of people and shelters for them inside Russia; burning of military offices, protests in Dagestan, Buryatia and other republics in the Russian Federation, etc. This lecture was attended by **15** people.

#### **October 26 "Is a policy of recognition of Kosovo possible?"**

- a debate organized by WiB and the Group for Conceptual Policy/ GCP from Novi Sad. Most of the participants in the debate stated the reasons why Albanians from Kosovo do not want to be part of Serbia. *Dejan Atanacković*, a writer and opposition councilor in the Belgrade City Assembly, said that Serbia did nothing to make Kosovo Albanians want to live in it, and that it "did everything" to prevent them from wanting it. *Staša Zajović* drew attention to the expulsion of 862,000 Albanian men and women during the 1999 war, and *Radoje Stefanović*, lawyer, called Serbia's behavior in Kosovo a "crime of genocide". *Zoran Vuletić* from the Civic Democratic Forum believes that the opposition does not recognize the independence of Kosovo, "they think the same as the government" about Kosovo. *Milojko Pantić*, journalist and politician, drew attention to nationalism as a social disease in Serbia since the 90s: "Milosevic amputated Kosovo from Serbia so that he could rob Serbia's budget - which is what the current regime is also doing." *Branka Ćurčić* from GCP 'Albanians denied legitimacy to Serbia with a political act of self-determination. Because of repression and because of crime'. *Aleksandar Kraus* from the Union of Anti-Fascists of Serbia believes that 'today the fascization of society in Serbia has advanced and there is no chance for anything other than the recognition of Kosovo'. *Zoran Gajić* from GCP asked why Serbia does not have an "organized policy of recognition" and "is it possible to think of recognizing Kosovo if you are a Serb", concluding that "we have a problem with reality", etc. This debate was attended by **28** people.

**November 2 "Rise of the Right in Europe"** – keynote speaker Lino Veljak, University of Zagreb, pointed out that contemporary circumstances are extremely favorable for the development of

conservative ideologies and policies, especially for the spread of various forms of right-wing populism. The preoccupation of citizens of contemporary Europe with mass media content that is offered to them from all sides, their attachment to reality programs distracts them from reality and makes them incapable of any critical thinking. He also sees danger in ideological dogmatism, in the desire to be absolutely right, as well as in the “narcissism of small differences”: “That is why the suppression of exclusivism and the syndrome of righteousness and dogmatic spirit can open the perspective for an alternative to growing fascism.” **Nikola Gajić**, Social Center October, Belgrade, as the second keynote speaker, spoke about how events in European politics and society will depend on the course and results of the war in Ukraine. He also warned that the right-wingers will step up their attack on feminism, which according to them is ‘directly working to break the nation’, etc. *Zorica Mršević* problematized the global rise of anti-gender ideology; *Stefan Surlić* warned against the increasing securitization of state policies, both of individual EU countries and of the center in Brussels, and this could threaten the foundations of European democracy. In the end, the focus of the conversation shifted more to global topics (about the reasons for the victory of the left in seven Latin American countries, etc. This debate was attended by **28** people.

**“November 9 - “Bezbrojni”** (Countless) – screening of a documentary film by author **Aida Gavrić**, Sarajevo, produced by Al Jazeera Balkan/AJB about those who do not belong to any of its three constituent nations. They are marked as ‘others’. This film is about children from mixed marriages, derogatorily called ‘mixed’, who are forced to live ‘somewhere in between’, in a position of not belonging, etc. The interview (online) with the author Aida Gavrić was moderated by *Azra Šeta Hadžić*, Sarajevo/Belgrade. She explained that the name of the film was created as a reaction to the very controversial essay of the Bosnian writer *Džemaludin Latić* called “Colorless” (published in the magazine *Ljiljan* on June 10, 1994): “When I first heard about the aforementioned essay by Dž. Latić, I learned that all of us who do not belong to an ethno-confessional model are ‘bastards’, which is an obvious ‘elimination from the social life of all those who do not fit into that model in Bosnia and Herzegovina’. *Aida* also referred to the change in the demographic structure of the population in Sarajevo in the post-war period: ‘There is a very small number of mixed marriages today in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nationalism is the most important doctrine, and the position of us ‘mixed people’ can best be seen from the fact that I have been unemployed for 12 years, that I also got my doctorate... You can’t talk about the public stigmatization of mixed marriages, but in Sarajevo you can talk about the appearance of multiculturalism’. *Aida* also spoke about the policy of pressure on Bosnia and Herzegovina: “Serbia and Croatia took away the political subjectivity of Bosnia and Herzegovina, this was manifested during



the war, and intensified in the post-war period". *Azra* also stated: 'There were many examples of stigmatization of children from mixed marriages at school, but the fact is that many educators opposed it. However, there is less and less mixing of young people belonging to different religions and nations in Sarajevo'. In the following, various aspects of Yugoslav unity were discussed, but also challenges and problems that escalated during the wars, etc. This event was attended by **15** people.

**November 16 "Propaganda from Goebbels - tentacles of the Russian propaganda machine in Europe, in the context of the war in Ukraine"** - opening remarks: **Saša Seregina**, Samara/Belgrade; moderated by: **Dejan Novaković**, activist of the anti-war association RUBS (Russians, Ukrainians, Belarusians and Serbs against the war in Ukraine), Belgrade. *Sasha Seregina* spoke about the roots of Russia's hegemonic policy towards Ukraine: "The conflict between Russia and Ukraine dates back to Imperial Russia (18th century). Soviet propaganda was based on the imperialist principle and the imposition of hegemony on all members of the Union (USSR). That propaganda was based on the erasure of identity - by abolishing the language of autonomy, cultural heritage, etc. So, there has been an imperialist matrix of hegemony for a long time, which culminated with Putin's coming to power'. Then she referred to permanent militarization, which is reflected in the mobilization for war of about 300,000 men, and resistance to mobilization exists mainly in large cities - Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Sasha also spoke about various forms of resistance to Russian hegemony: the *Forum of Free Nations*, the community of numerous peoples living in the Russian Federation - these are mainly Siberian and Caucasian peoples. *Katja Kazina* (who escaped from Moscow to Belgrade) referred to some forms of cultural racism in relation to non-Russian peoples, whose members were massively mobilized and, of course, forcibly taken to the battlefield, for which some Russians attributed collective responsibility and even guilt to members of those nations, etc. Staša referred to the concept of the **Russian world**, which rests on 'Russian values' - nation, family, Orthodoxy, rigid sexual morality, conservatism, traditionalism... The creator is the Russian philosopher, geopolitician **Alexander Dugin**, Putin's 'philosopher', who propagates Nazism and fascism. After Putin came to power, Dugin made a whirlwind career, always sticking to his Nazi and neo-Nazi ideas and connections: he emphasized the notion of Eurasia in the foreground, and he managed to insert these ideas into the programs of Russian higher educational institutions - from universities to military academies. He became an advisor to the Speaker of the Russian Parliament. The concept of the Russian world is also supported by the 'Serbian world', which was once called "*Greater Serbia*", and today is called "*Serbian world*". This policy of the Serbian regime causes fear in the entire region, primarily in BH, because it is associated with crimes, ethnic cleansing and genocide,

etc. *Dejan* went on to look at the matrices of Putin's propaganda ('Putinophily') in Europe and beyond: equating and relativizing the aggressor (Russia) and the victim (Ukraine), which leads to numerous controversies in attitudes in the West. On the left, too, there are splits and unprincipled alignments, *Marija* and *Snežana* emphasized. In the end, they talked about a joint anti-militaristic action on the occasion of December 1 - the International Day of Detainees/Conscientious Objectors - to support Russian deserters, conscientious objectors and all those who refuse Putin's criminal war in Ukraine. The discussion was attended by **16** people.

**November 23, "Against Wars (Brothers)!"** – screening of a documentary film (*41 minutes*) produced by the Independent Association of Journalists of Vojvodina/NDNV, authored by **Darko Šper**. The film talks about the anti-war protests in Vojvodina in 1991 and 1992. Then we talked about each of those events, in which WiB played a very active role. Numerous impressions were voiced about the importance of the anti-war resistance: "The film is a tribute to the anti-war resistance in Vojvodina, a tribute to the Women in Black" (*Darko*); "This kind of resistance in Russia is impossible at this moment. As soon as people gather, the police immediately take them away. The word WAR is also forbidden. However, there are many women in Russia who are at the head of the anti-mobilization movement" (*Katya*, Russian anti-war activist); "The moral principle of resistance in the film is a romantic and authentic utopian practice" (*Goran*); "The film is not just a reminder of the past, it is a memory for the future" (*Stiša*); "We were children at that time, we knew nothing, everyone hid from us - at home, at school, everywhere..." (*Vanja*); "Until I came to WiB, I knew nothing about the anti-war uprisings in Vojvodina" (*Miloš*), etc. The screening and discussion were attended by **15** people.



**29. novembar**  
**Dan Republike**  
**Naš dan!**

**Friendly council**

**November 29 "Republic Day – Our Day!"** - Women in Black, in cooperation with anti-fascist activists and cultural workers, organized a friendly evening and event on the occasion of 79 years of AVNOJ/Anti-Fascist Council of Yugoslav National Liberation on Republic Day. We organized this festive event because: we respect the anti-fascist heritage from NOB/National Liberation Struggle, we celebrate the contribution of women to the NOB and emancipation, we affirm the values of anti-fascism and internationalist solidarity...

On the occasion of this historic date, we organized the following activities:

**About the Second Session of AVNOJ** - opening speech - **Aleksandar Kraus**, Alliance of Anti-Fascists of Serbia

**We remember the important dates for the emancipation of women in NOB**

**The 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Foča regulations - on the political participation of women**

- **80 years since the foundation of the Women's Anti-Fascist Front (AFŽ)**
- The following persons spoke about **the participation of women from Montenegro and Serbia in the NOB/National Liberation Struggle**: *Marija Perković*, Beočin, WiB Network, *Ervina Dabižinović*, Anima, Kotor; *Marijana Stojčić*, Center for Applied History, WiB, Belgrade, moderated by: Tanja Marković, WiB, Belgrade, **Performance of the anti-fascist choir 'Our Song'** - an antifa event led by: **Violeta Đikanović**, WiB and *Dragan Protić Prota*, Škart, Belgrade.

This event was attended by about **60** people from Belgrade, Novi Sad, Beočin, as well as Montenegro.

**December 7 "Why cats?"** - Journalist and writer **Gordana Perunović-Fijat** from Kikinda/Vojvodina told the story of the shared fate of women and cats through their persecution during the Inquisition period. Moderator *Violeta Đikanović* listed a series of facts that connect human civilization and the world of cats from prehistory to modern times, supporting this with examples from mythology, literature and history that connect the world of cats and humans, etc. According to *Gordana Perunović-Fijat*, about 850,000 women and about a million cats were killed by the Inquisition from the beginning of the 13th century until 1792, when the last sentence was passed in Switzerland on killing women for "witchcraft". "Why were women blamed and burned?" Because they were mostly poor, they had no way to defend themselves before the court or to escape, and someone had to be blamed for wars, famine, diseases and other plagues. It was the biggest femicide ever. From Ireland to the Caucasus, Catholics and others burned women. It was practiced not only by Catholics, but also by Protestants and Orthodox, but that the Inquisition left the most records about it," emphasized Gordana. She then cited a long history of women being killed, accused of 'fortune-telling and witchcraft' and the mass hysteria of chasing cats as 'witch helpers'. This discussion was attended by **18** people.

**December 14 - 'Driving someone mad - emotional violence' (Gaslighting).** It is the name of one of the most famous films in world cinema ("Gaslight" - George Cukor's psychological thriller from 1944); more recently, Gaslighting is known in psychology as a form of emotional abuse. **Beba Jovanović**, a civil activist, told us about her experience as a person who was "gaslighted". Namely, as Beba Jovanović introduced us to her private situation as the source of this sophisticated type of abuse in the introduction, she was married to the abuser for 36 years. The discussion continued lively, with "contributions" about related experiences of those present, of both women and men. Then they discussed the forms of long-term and systematic exasperation of the citizens in Serbia by the regime through: media manipulation - brainwashing; misuse of police



repression against political dissidents, creating an atmosphere of fear and insecurity, etc. This discussion was attended by 15 people.

**December 21 “The responsibility of the intellectual elite in times of crisis”** was discussed by *Lino Veljak*, who rejected the generally accepted opinion that an intellectual is someone who has a higher education, a scientific degree or a title. “Formal qualification is not a criterion. They can be top experts, but if they are engaged in their profession - limited by their interests to their narrow profession or poetically limited to their poetry, if they are engaged in research for the sake of research – of which they make a living, they are not intellectuals in the narrow sense”. Veljak believes that in their public actions, intellectuals should represent the truth “putting **the primacy of truth**, the interests of justice and humanity, against the interests of power and private egoistic interests”. Veljak added that this is a “rare occurrence”, about individuals or small groups. Veljak emphasized the importance of the actions of intellectuals in times of crisis when there is a high degree of tension, physical and spiritual violence, and his role is precisely in denouncing that violence. This is evidenced by the film shown after the introduction **“While the War is going on”** (*Mientras dure la guerra*), by the famous Spanish director **Alejandro Amenabar** (2019, lasting 123 minutes). At the center of the film is the behavior of the famous Spanish philosopher and rector of the University of Salamanca - **Miguel de Unamun**, during the Spanish Civil War. As a conservative loyal to the authorities, however, at one point he decisively opposed the crimes of the Falangists. He publicly denounced the criminal nature of the Spanish version of fascism,” Veljak stressed. The screening of the film and the discussion were attended by **13** people.

*(More detailed reports in Serbian can be found on the WiB website)*

## **PUBLISHING ACTIVITIES**

In this reporting period, we published the following publications:

**We remember the anti-war resistance - the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the anti-war resistance in Serbia (1991/2 - 2021/22)** – Remembrance of important acts and dates from the history of the anti-war resistance in Serbia, initiatives and acts that were mostly silenced, suppressed or marginalized. In addition to the introduction, *in the first part*, there are also the following texts: *Brief overview of activities; We remember the anti-war resistance - Vera Vebel Tatić and the Center for Anti-War Action Ada* - about the publication; *Promotion of the publication “We remember anti-war resistance - Vera Vebel and the Center for Anti-War Action Ada”*; Maps of anti-war resistance 1991/92 - promotion; *Let’s remember the anti-war resistance - words of the participant from the promotion of the book “Vera Vebel Tatić and the Center for Anti-War Action Ada” and the Map of Anti-War Resistance; “Trešnjevac - May 1992 - May 2022 - Civil disobedience,*

women's courage, solidarity/Oromhegyes - 1992 májusa - 2022 májusa - Polgári engedelsenség, női bátorság, szolidaritás". In the second part, there are texts about marking 30 years of anti-war resistance in the media - in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The publication was edited by: *Staća Zajović* and *Miloš Urošević*, cover design: *Škart*; layout: *Nebojsa Čović*; the publication has 42 pages.

In this reporting period, we published the following publications:

**Reader The war crime of rape** - The reader was prepared for the seminar "*Feminist approach to the problem of sexual violence in wars in Yugoslavia: For a culture of memory and responsibility*" organized by Women in Black as part of the project "Strengthening the voices of women affected by wartime sexual and gender-based violence in the Western Balkans - For a culture of recognition and reconciliation". In addition to the Introduction, the Reader contains 10 (ten) texts by foreign and domestic authors: *Susan Brownmiller*, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, Rape*, *Catherine MacKinnon*, *Turning Rape into Pornography: Postmodern Genocide*, *Vesna Kesić*, *Answer to the text by Catharine MacKinnon "Turning rape into pornography: postmodern genocide"*, *Ronda Copelon*, *Women and war crimes*, *Olivera Simić*, *Sexual abuse of women and exploitation of children by peacekeepers: The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Democratic Republic of Congo*, *Vesna Nikolić Ristanović*, *Trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation: The impact of war, militarism and globalization in Eastern Europe*, *Staća Zajović*, *"War always returns home" or about the continuity of sexual violence in war and in peace...*, *Sanja Pavlović*, *Sexual violence in war: The least talked about crime*, *Prepared testimony of Vasvia Krasniqi Goodman*, *Myths and facts about sexual violence in armed conflicts*. The reader was edited by **Miloš Urošević**, and the layout and design were done by **Zinaida Marjanović**. The book has **70** pages.

### **Bridges of peace and cooperation/ Mostovi mira i saradnje/ Urat e paques dhe te bashkepunimit**

*Kosovo – survey of WiB activities*: as of its inception in October 1991, as an antimilitaristic-feminist group, Women in Black had a clear attitude towards the official policy of Serbian regime at the time and was resolutely against the policy of apartheid that was being conducted against Albanian population in Kosovo. The contacts of WiB with civil society activists in Kosovo had different forms and aspects. This publication presents very concise survey of activities since 1991: solidarity visits; conferences/seminars; street actions; monitoring trials; educational programs; coalitions, peace platforms, declarations; campaigns; visiting places of crimes; publishing activities and video-activism. This publication has **36** pages in Albanian, Serbian and English; prepared by *Staća Zajović* in cooperation with *Miloš Urošević*; design and layout: *Zinaida Marjanović*. (You can find the full version on the WiB website)



**Mirjana Učakar**



### **She left a mark on us - Mirjana Učakar, Ptuj, Slovenia**

(1953-2022). Mirjana was a victim of ethnic cleansing and one of the founders of **The Erased** movement. (After recognition of independence of Slovenia, on February 26, 1992 - 25,671 non-Slovenian inhabitants were erased from the register of permanent residence of the Republic of Slovenia. Erasure, a systematic violation of human rights, has left people on the brink of survival and pushed some to their early death. Many were left with severe health problems and other consequences etc.). Mirjana testified at the Women's Court/W'sC in Sarajevo (2015) about ethnic cleansing in Slovenia. The publication is a tribute to Mirjana - a rebellious woman, a fighter against ethnic cleansing (**The Erased**), a responsible citizen, a consistent anti-fascist. The publication has **40** pages and contains Mirjana's testimony at W'sC, her active participation in the process of organizing W'sC, tribute to Mirjana by witnesses at W'sC, memory of Mirjana by her associates, etc. The publication published by WiB was prepared by: *Staša Zajović*, in collaboration with: *Nela Pamuković* and *Miloš Urošević*; design and layout: *Zinaida Marjanović*.



### **The 100 most inspiring and influential women from around the world in 2022**

– the BBC published this list, and among the 100 women is **Suvada Selimović**, the coordinator of 'Anima', from Đulići/BH, a peace activist, a witness at the Women's Court. Women in Black published a publication (**19** pages) containing the names and brief biographies of all the winners of this prestigious award.

### **Women's Peace Agenda 2023**

*The Women's Peace Agenda for 2023* - represents anti-war activists who have left an indelible mark in the fight against war, nationalism, and militarism. The anti-war activists presented in this agenda worked within the Women in Black Network in Serbia or closely cooperated with WiB. *Women's Peace Agenda for 2023* - presents a short 'list' of continuous repression against Women in Black activists for insisting on all levels of responsibility for war and war crimes committed in our name. The *dates* presented in this Agenda bear witness to violence by state and non-state actors, as well as impunity for the perpetrators of violence, etc.

Prepared by: *Staša Zajović*; in cooperation with: *Ildiko Erdei*, *Miloš Urošević*, *Violeta Đikanović*; design and layout: *Studio Čavka*; Photos: *Vesna Pavlović*, *Biljana Rakočević*, *Srdjan Veljović*, *WiB Archive*; *Women's peace agenda 2023* has **168** pages.



**Peace calendar 2023** – photos from WiB street actions in 2022 were taken by: *Srdjan Veljović* and *Marija Janković*; the calendar has **26** pages; the layout and design were done by Studio Čavka.



## CAMPAIGNS, APPEALS

In addition to the above initiatives in this reporting period, we have also initiated or actively participated in numerous campaigns, first of all in relation to requests for dealing with the past - responsibility for war crimes, violence against women, against repression of political opponents; in relation with the refugees, etc.

In this reporting period, WiB launched two important campaigns:

**Appeal on Kosovo, October 26** - in which, among other things, it is stated: In addition to the above initiatives in this reporting period, we have also initiated or actively participated in numerous campaigns, first of all in relation to requests for dealing with the past - responsibility for war crimes, violence against women, against repression of political opponents; in relation with the refugees, etc.

Slobodan Milošević's regime implemented apartheid in Kosovo against the non-Serb (especially Albanian) population and systematically turned members of the ethnic majority there into second-class citizens; starting in 1998, it organized and carried out mass crimes against Kosovo Albanians. The government that came to power in Serbia after the changes on October 5, 2000, failed to face the above-mentioned facts, and thus missed all the opportunities to establish relations of trust with the Albanian majority in Kosovo; the current regime renewed its chauvinist and racist rhetoric, thus losing the last chance for any form of state union that would include Kosovo in its borders, whose independence was recognized by most democratic countries in the world.

**WiB launched an appeal** to the domestic and international public to **face reality and put pressure on the current government in Serbia** so that it should abandon its suicidal policy that does not take into account the fact that the citizens of Kosovo do not want to submit to the sovereignty of the state in whose name all those who wanted to shape relations between Serbs and Albanians on a new basis, without discrimination and repression were persecuted and killed. The appeal **demands** that the authorities in Serbia 'stop preventing Kosovo's accession to international organizations and institutions. In this way, Serbia would make its contribution to good neighborly relations and regional stability in a clear and unambiguous way'.

This Appeal was supported by **20** NGOs and about fifty (**50**) public figures from all over Serbia (activists, scientists, journalists, artists).

**Not one man more, not one dinar more for Putin's army!**

– In the appeal on the occasion of December 1 - the International Day of Prisoners of Conscience for Peace, WiB and the Committee of

Lawyers for Human Rights/Yucom stated, among other things, that 'the escalation of the war conflict of Putin's Russia is being transmitted to the whole of Europe and that due to the invasion of Ukraine, the Russian regime decided to expand the mobilization for war and declare a state of war; in Russia, measures of brutal repression and persecution are carried out against of all those who refuse to go to the battlefield, as well as all those who dare to spread information or news about the true state of affairs in connection with the war' with the request we demand to: **'grant political asylum** to citizens of the Russian Federation who refuse participation in the armed forces, being sent to the battlefield in Ukraine, as well as those who deserted'

The appeal was joined by **23** NGOs from Serbia and Montenegro, as well as dozens of public figures.

In addition, we have published the following announcements and appeals:

**Discover the soldiers' killers!** - On the occasion of the eighteenth anniversary of the murder of two guardsmen in Topčider (October 5, 2004-October 5, 2022), WiB reminded that the two soldiers were killed on guard duty on October 5, 2004 in the Topčider barracks in the immediate vicinity of the "Karaš" military facility. WiB warned that the investigation is still in the pre-trial phase. Requests to the state top leadership (first of all to the Ministries of Police, Defense and Justice) were repeated to "immediately stop the obstruction of the investigation into the murder of **Dragan Jakovljević and Dražen Milovanović**; to finally reveal the real truth about the murder of the soldiers, as well as about the hiding of the war criminal Ratko Mladić in the facilities of the Serbian Army; that the competent institutions punish all the commanders and perpetrators of crimes in Topčider and ensure justice for the families of the victims!"

**Solidarity with the women of Srebrenica and the victims of crimes at the Tuzla Gate** – In a statement regarding participation (October 11, 2022) in the peace protest in Tuzla "We are looking for the missing - let's not forget Srebrenica" in Tuzla, WiB states 'And with this act we express our sympathy, solidarity and deepest respect for the brave and persistent fight of women from Srebrenica for a just peace and the punishment of crimes'. Once again, on this occasion, we repeat that we will continue to put pressure on the institutions of Serbia to recognize the genocide in Srebrenica, to mark July 11 as the Day of Remembrance of the Genocide in Srebrenica, to declare the denial of the genocide a criminal offense, to remove the murals celebrating the war criminal Ratko Mladić. Unfortunately, the competent institutions not only turned a deaf ear to all the demands of Women in Black and related civil society organizations, but also intensified the denial of genocide and, in general, the celebration of war crimes and convicted war criminals. Murals celebrating the

war criminal Ratko Mladić, convicted of genocide in Srebrenica, are found all over Serbia. With that, the regime has completely exposed itself - until now it has never condemned war criminals, and now it openly supports and protects them. This represents not only a violation of the decisions of the international institutions of justice, peace and trust in the region, but primarily an insult to the dignity of the victims of genocide, as well as all citizens of Serbia who express compassion, solidarity and responsibility towards the victims of genocide,' the statement reads. On the occasion of the crime at the **Tuzla Gate** (committed on May 25, 1995, against civilians by the Army of the Republika Srpska; in this massacre 71 people, mostly young people, were killed, and around 250 people were injured), WiB warns that 'Novak Đukić, commander of the Army Republika Srpska was sentenced to 20 years in prison by the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina for this crime. Convicted war criminal N. Đukić is in Belgrade because the state of Serbia refuses to extradite him to BH to serve his prison sentence, which confirms the continuity of impunity for crimes and endangerment of good neighborly relations by the state of Serbia.

**“We remember the crime in Sjeverin”** - on the occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary (October 22, 1992-October 22, 2022) of the kidnapping and murder of 17 Serbian citizens of Bosniak nationality from the town of Sjeverin near Priboj. This crime was committed by members of the “Avengers” unit, which during the war in BH cooperated with the Army of the Republika Srpska (VRS) and the local police, and consisted of members of the Višegrad Brigade of the VRS. The *Humanitarian Law Fund (HLF)*, *Women in Black* and the *Sandžak Committee for the Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms (the Sandžak Committee)* remind that the multi-year search of the families for the remains of the victims is still ongoing and that it is unacceptable that for three decades the institutions of Serbia should refuse to provide compensation, support and recognition to the families of the victims. During the multi-year struggle for the recognition of the rights of victims of war crimes, the HLF, Women in Black and the Sandžak Committee witness the continuous ignoring and discrimination of the Sjeverin victims by the institutions of Serbia, both in terms of finding the remains of the victims and in terms of fair compensation. *“We demand from the institutions of Serbia to abandon the policy of avoiding responsibility for the crimes committed in the 1990s and finally take meaningful steps towards the recognition and fair compensation of all victims,”* the statement reads.

**Stop terrorizing the free media!** – In a statement (November 7) regarding the latest threats to the editorial board of *Danas*, Women in Black strongly condemns the brutal threats addressed to the editorial board of the daily newspaper *Danas*, one of the few free and independent media in the Republic of Serbia. In solidarity with the editorial staff of the newspaper *Danas*, WiB appealed to all friends of

Serbia in the world to 'put additional pressure on the regime led by A. Vučić, which destroys all traces of freedom of speech, and strives to turn Serbia into a fascist dictatorship'.

**Lynch is always preceded by the language of lynching!** – In a statement (November 15) regarding the threats to *Rada Trajković*, a Serbian politician from Kosovo (president of the European Movement of Kosovo Serbs), Women in Black and the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia strongly condemn the threats made by convicted war criminal Vojislav Šešelj (president of the Serbian Radical Party ). "It is not the first time that the political regime in Serbia led by President Aleksandar Vučić uses V. Šešelj, his political father and mentor, to intimidate his political opponents. Vojislav Šešelj is nothing more than a regime clown who is being used by his political son to deal with political opponents'.

**We will never forget the crimes in Vukovar!** - in a statement on the occasion of the 31<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the crimes in Vukovar, WiB reiterated the request to the competent institutions of the State of Serbia to:

- establish the responsibility of the leadership of former Yugoslav Popular Army for the armed attack on Croatia and to initiate legal proceedings for the crime of uricide in Vukovar;
- establish the full truth about the missing by opening the archives of the Serbian Armed Forces and discovering the graves of Croatian victims in Serbia;
- initiate court proceedings for the establishment of camps and for the killing and torture of Croatian civilians and soldiers in camps in Stajićevo, Begejci, Sremska Mitrovica, Aleksinac, Niš and Belgrade;
- acknowledges the request of Women in Black and the Art Clinic, signed by more than 30 civil society organizations, to erect memorial plaques at camps in Stajićevo and Begejci and to support other forms of symbolic reparations to victims and their families;
- initiate a legal ban on glorification and rehabilitation of war crimes convicts committed in Vukovar and all other places" (WiB statement November, 18).

**Initiative for naming a street in Belgrade after Dejan Nebrigić** - December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, 22 years have passed since the death of Dejan Nebrigić (1970-1999), gay activists, pacifists and antifascists. Dejan was killed in 1999. As a declared anti-fascist, anti-nationalist and antimilitarist, he refused a military obligation, and was publicly reprovved for being a homosexual, which at the time was treated as a disease for which he was permanently released from military duties. In early 1992, he joined Women in Black, and gave a very significant contribution to the anti-militarist and feminist





engagement of Women in Black. He participated in launching the Network of conscientious objectors. We demand that “one of many streets in Belgrade be named after Dejan Nebrigić, one of the first fighters for human rights of LGBT people, feminists, antifascists and antimilitarists”. The relevant institutions have not yet answered this many-year request.

## PRIZES AND AWARDS:

- **“Conquering Freedom” for 2022:** On 9/24/2022, the “*Maja Maršičević Tasić*” Fund from Belgrade awarded **Staša Zajović** “for the affirmation of the principles of human rights, rule of law, democracy and tolerance in society”. *Maja Maršičević Tasić* (1965 - 2001) was a distinguished politician, journalist, and activist who contributed significantly to the electoral victory of democracy in Serbia with her persistent and courageous work. The award was conferred on September 24, the day when the regime of S. Milosevic was toppled in the elections.
- **“Mostar Peace Connection 2022”:** On October 29, the *Center for Peace and Multi-Ethnic Cooperation Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina* conferred an award to **Staša Zajović** ‘for contribution to the rapprochement of cultures and civilizations, for contribution to building peace and dealing with the past’.



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