

solidarnost je naša snaga

Direct action – solidarity aid to refugees from Middle East, park at the Grand Bus Terminal and Faculty of Economics

October 1, 2015, Belgrade

On October 1, 2015, at around 5 pm, four Women in Black activists participated in an action of solidarity with refugees in parks around the Grand Bus Terminal and Faculty of Economics in Belgrade. Refugees were given bananas, water, coffee and sanitary napkins, which were divided in little plastic bags, which was then distributed to children, women and men from different countries of Middle East. Children were also given candy which was sent to us by our dear friend from Lisbon, Marta Correia. That same day we received two kilos of candy which her and her activists are giving out to refugees from Africa.

We gave everyone stickers with “solidarity” written on them in Serbian, English, Arabic and Farsi. None of them refused the stickers and these unfortunate people were more than happy to put them on their shirts, jackets, while some of them stuck them onto their tired but kind faces.

The atmosphere was surprisingly comfortable, relaxed and calm. It was a real fresh fall afternoon which was much asked for after several days of constant rain. They were very grateful for the packages they got as well as the company offered by the activists as they all sat down together in groups making a conversation with each other.

Most of them came from Afghanistan, followed by Pakistan and Iran. What made the strongest impression was the fact that all of them, coming from different countries, shared the same space offering each other full support and so making a real human community which presents the most vulnerable population in the world. These people have “lost their place in the world” (Hana Arent), but they have managed to find it again in the hearts and lives of each other. Even though they are unprotected, they remain positive in their belief that they will eventually reach their goals of arriving to Germany and Sweden. By the way of this certainty and community they are forming a different type of relation with each other, a family where blood relation is secondary.

After that we spoke about them being conscious about the global fact that they live in a moment where migration is a condition for survival. We agreed that this migration is a consequence of the war led in Syria and Iraq, as well as Africa. Many of them have lost their wives and husbands in the war, and some of them still have children in Syria. The activists have spent some time with a family whose numerous members have been delighted by this solidarity so that they wouldn't feel alone in this terrifying and unbearable position which they found themselves in. Running away from war, they are hoping for a better future in some of the western and northern European countries.

At one point during the distribution of the little packages of food, the activists found themselves surrounded by a number of adult men who begged for some food. But when they heard that the packages were intended primarily for children, they backed away saying that they understand that children's needs are a way higher priority.

The ŽUC activists who participated in today's action were Goran, Jana, Staša and Tomislav.



Reported by: Tomislav Perušić