

solidarnost je naša snaga

Visit to refugees in Presevo

October 20th, 2015.

On October 20th, 2015, activists of Women in Black Violeta, Goran and Mirko visited refugees in Presevo. We took a lot of help, cookies, milk, hygiene items, clothing, shoes, bags. In Presevo, we met together with activists of Women in Black Network from Presevo, Sanije and Riva. The reception center for refugees is about a kilometer from the center of Presevo, it is a fenced area, we assume that it was some factory premises near the railway station.

At the entrance, and in front of the camp were members of the police. There is a building in which is conducted registration of refugees, the area where the refugees register is decent, although refugees are waiting outside to get to the space for the registration. We heard that it is sufficient that one member logs all family members, which facilitates the process for women and children. In front of the entrance to the center there are several points where refugees can get tea and food, these checkpoints are organized by foreign organizations.

In the camp there are several large tents where refugees can find shelter, get clothes and some food, partly managed by the Red Cross and the Commissariat for Refugees and their staff, working in that area is quite chaotic and disorganized. The second part was organized by SOS Remar and Mensajeros de la paz, this work is done mainly by volunteers from abroad. That part of the camp is well organized, part of the aid that we prepare, we submitted to them, they took us through the camp, to convince us that the aid will be put to good use. Everything is well organized and very orderly. Unlike police and staff in another part of the camp, who are mostly wearing masks and gloves, in this part of camp no one wears these and it affects the atmosphere in the camp making it more enjoyable. They told us what they need the most is the tea, cookies, coffee, milk, clothes, shoes, plastic cups (in one day they consume 7000). Violeta has their contact.

At the end of the visit, Mirko returned to the part of the camp where the registration is done, to make a couple of pictures, a police officer told him that he was forbidden to take pictures and asked him who he was and from which organization he is and whether he has permission from the Commissioner and the relevant ministries to be in camp, then took his information and told him to leave the camp.

After that we went to the border near the village of Miratovac. A place where refugees entering Serbia's meadow, hence a dirt road leading to the Presevo from the border to the camp in Presevo, is about 4-5 km. There are buses and vans of UNHCR and IOM which offers free ride for refugees along the way, but not many of them, so many refugees there crosses the road by foot. The refugees that we saw on the way looked exhausted and ill.

The help that we took the next to the Women in Black was funded by Reconstruction Women's Fund and Autonomous Women's Center.

Reported by: Mirko, Violeta and Goran

