



*žene u crnom  
beograd*



# Report

**January, February,  
March and April  
2021**

As before, we bring you 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 website [www.zeneucrnom.org](http://www.zeneucrnom.org) or contact us by e-mail at: [office@zeneucrnom.org](mailto:office@zeneucrnom.org)

# January, February, March and April 2021

# Report

## Street actions:

**Street actions:** In this reporting period we organized seven (7) 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 THE CIVILIAN POPULATION, DURING AND AFTER THE WARS, ON THE TERRITORY OF FORMER YUGOSLAVIA:

### Belgrade, 27<sup>th</sup> February

**“We remember the crime in Štrpci”** – commemorating the 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the crime committed in Štrpci, Women in Black organized a vigil in mourning and silence in Knez Mihailova Street in Belgrade.

The following banners were displayed during the vigil:





- The death train number 671 started from here
- The train stopped at 3:48 p.m.
- The kidnapped and killed: names of the victims
- 27<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1993 - Members of the Serbian paramilitary formation Avengers abducted Bosniak passengers from a train on the Belgrade-Bar railway
- We remember the crime in Štrpci (27<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1993-27<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2021)
- Solidarity
- Responsibility

About twenty (20) activists were present at the vigil. The event was accompanied by a couple of nationalist incidents.

**Prijepolje, 27<sup>th</sup> February** – In front of the memorial plaque in Prijepolje, the 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the crime in Štrpci was marked. Activists of the association of women Žene Polimlja from Prijepolje (Serbia) and Bona Fide from Pljevlja (Montenegro), on behalf of the Network of Women in Black, together with the families of the victims, paid tribute to the victims of crimes in Štrpci.



**Belgrade, 6<sup>th</sup> April** “We remember the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina” – on the 29<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the war in BH and the siege of Sarajevo, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1992, Women in Black organized a vigil in mourning and silence, in Knez Mihailova Street in Belgrade.

The following banners were displayed at the protest:

- Women in black
- Solidarity
- Responsibility
- We remember the crimes committed in our name
- We remember the women raped in the war
- Stop celebrating war crimes
- Stop denying the Hague verdicts



Žene u crnom, 1991 →





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

- In the war in BH (1992-1995): 97,207 people were killed; About 20,000 women were raped; The 1,425-day siege of Sarajevo killed 11,000 people; There were about 1,300 camps through which about 200,000 people passed; 8,372 people were killed in the genocide in Srebrenica ...

About twenty (20) activists were present at the protest. On a couple of occasions, a couple of passers-by shouted nationalist insults at the activists.

- **Handing over a protest note to the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin at the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Belgrade** - on the occasion of continued repression against citizens of Russia, especially the Republic of Ingushetia, who peacefully disagree with the policy of the Russian government and local authorities in Ingushetia. In the note, we expressed solidarity with the justified demands of the Center for Human Rights Memorial.

**Belgrade, April 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**“Why?”** – the Radio Television of Serbia / RTS in the NATO bombing (1999), as a sign of sympathy and solidarity with the families of those killed in front of the monument called **Why?** in Tašmajdan Park, activists participated in commemorative rallies on April 23<sup>rd</sup> (at 2:06 and 14:06).

About twenty (20) activists of Women in Black, Belgrade, the Association of Women of Srebrenica from Tuzla, the Citizens' Association “Anima” from Đulići near Zvornik (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and the youth group “Livrít” from Preševo (south Serbia) participated in these commemorative gatherings.



*Žene u crnoj, 1991 →*



**FEMINIST, ANTI-FASCIST, ANTI – WAR, ANTI – RACIST,  
ANTI-MILITARISTIC ACTIONS:**

**Belgrade, March 21<sup>st</sup>**

During this period, we organized the following street actions:

**“Stop racism!”** – on the occasion of March 21 - International Day against Racism, Women in Black organized a protest in Knez Mihailova Street in Belgrade.



The following banners were displayed at the protest:

- Stop to racism
- March 21 - Anti-Racism Day
- Women in Black
- One race - the human race
- The more languages you know - the more you are worth! in Serbian and Albanian
- Against racism
- Stop discrimination and hate speech! in Serbian and Albanian



At the protest, three examples of discriminatory behavior of state institutions and its representatives towards members of the Albanian national community in Serbia we read out. The stage action “Stop Racism” was performed, which took place alternately in Serbian and Albanian.



## MARCH 21ST – ANTI-RACISM DAY

### Stop racism!



The more languages you know, the more you are worth – let's learn Albanian!

Examples of discrimination were given:

1. The ruling of the High Court, in early February 2021, rejected as unfounded the lawsuit of the National Council of Albanians against the former Minister of Defense and current Minister of Police A. Vulin for hate speech and discrimination due to the use of the word 'Shiptar'.

"Whoever incites or spreads national, racial or religious hatred or intolerance among the peoples and ethnic communities living in Serbia shall be punished by imprisonment" - Article 317 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Serbia.

### Stop hate speech!

### Stop hate speech!

21 Mars

21 Mars – Dita kundër racizmit

Ndal racizmin!

Ndal racizmin!

Sa më shumë gjuhë të dini, aq më shumë vleni - ne mësojmë shqip!



- Me aktgjykimin e Gjykatës së Lartë, në fillim të muajit shkurt është refuzuar si e pabazuar padia e Këshillit Kombëtar të Shqiptarëve kundër ish-Ministrit të Mbrojtjes dhe Ministrit aktual të Policisë A. Vulin për gjuhë urrejtje dhe diskriminim për shkak të përdorimit të fjalës " Shiptar".

"Kushdo që nxit ose shpërndan urrejtje ose mos tolerancë kombëtare, racore ose fetare midis popujve dhe bashkësive etnike që jetojnë në Serbi do të dënohet me burgim..." - neni 317 i Kodit Penal të Republikës së Serbisë.

Ndaloni gjuhën e urrejtjes!

Ndaloni gjuhën e urrejtjes!

2. Shqip Kamberi, deputy of the Albanian community in Serbia, addressed the Assembly of the Republic of Serbia in his mother tongue on February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Deputies interrupted him with clamor and shouts...

"The Law on the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia from 2010 determines the right to address in the mother tongue"

## Stop racism!

- Deputeti i komunitetit shqiptar në Serbi, Shaip Kamberi, u drejtua në gjuhën e tij amtare më 9 shkurt 2021 në Kuvendin e Republikës së Serbisë. Deputetët dhe deputetet e ndërprejnë atë me britma dhe ulërime...

“Ligji për Asamblenë Kombëtare të Republikës së Serbisë nga viti 2010 përcakton të drejtën e adresimit në gjuhën amtare”

## Ndal racizmin!

3. Ragmi Mustafi, president of the National Council of Albanians in Serbia, was summoned to the Misdemeanor Court in Vranje, and accused of violating the law on the Serbian flag because on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020, he hoisted the Albanian flag at the headquarters of the National Council of Albanians in Bujanovac.”

“The Constitution of Serbia, Article 79 stipulates that national minorities determine their own symbols and have the right to display them”

## Stop discrimination!

- Ragmi Mustafi, Kryetar i Këshillit Kombëtar të Shqiptarëve në Serbi, është thirrur në Gjykatën për Kundërvajtje në Vranje dhe akuzohet për shkelje të ligjit për flamurin e Serbisë sepse më 28 nëntor 2020 ai shfaqti flamurin Shqiptar në selinë e Këshillit Kombëtar të Shqiptarëve në Bujanoc.

“Kushtetuta e Serbisë, neni 79 përcakton që pakicat kombëtare përcaktojnë vetë simbolet e tyre dhe kanë të drejtë t'i shfaqin/shpalosin ato”

## Ndaloni diskriminimin!

The protest was attended by thirty-odd **(30)** activists from: Đulići, Tuzla (Bosnia and Herzegovina); Pljevlja, Kotor (Montenegro); Preševo, Zaječar, Subotica, Kraljevo, Pančevo, Novi Sad, and Belgrade (Serbia).

## Jagodina, 26<sup>th</sup> April

**“Justice for the victims – sanctions for the perpetrators!”** - Women in Black activists took part in a protest in front of the police station, where Marinika Tepić, vice president of the opposition “Party of Freedom and Justice”, gave a statement. Namely, on April 19<sup>th</sup>, Marinika Tepić stated: “Procuring of women, young women and girls is almost commonplace in Jagodina, the personal town of Dragan Marković Palma, who is the President of the Assembly of Jagodina and a coalition partner of Ivica Dačić and Aleksandar Vučić.” Criminal charges were pressed against Marinika Tepić by 393 women from the Jagodina city administration for allegedly “causing panic and riots.” There is a well-founded suspicion of an impartial investigation, and due to the justified fear of witnesses and pressure on them by D. M. Palma, the proceedings are requested to be relocated from Jagodina.



In the protest held in support of girls and women who survived procuring and were victims of pedophilia, the following participated: Lesbian and Gay Solidarity Network, Let's not drown Belgrade, Women's Solidarity and Women in Black. The following banners were displayed at the protest:

*Justice for the victims, sanctions for the perpetrators*

*Lesbians and gays against pedophilia and procuring*

*You are not alone!*

*Does the state protect its children?*

*Let our voice be heard!*

*No untouchables!*

*Speak from the heart, not out of fear!*

*Your power is greater than the mighty!*

*Stop human trafficking! We are here for you ...*

Women in Black expressed full support for the victims of sexual violence, as well as the hope that the prosecution will initiate court proceedings against the suspect, who will be adequately punished for all his sexual crimes.

## **DEALING WITH THE PAST / TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE**

### **– A FEMINIST APPROACH**

This is one of the most important activities of Women in Black. It consists of a multitude of 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).

### **ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE CRIMES**

#### **– the path to just peace: monitoring the trials at the Special Court**

– in this reporting period, the trials were closed to the public or canceled, due to the epidemiological situation.

#### **Dealing with the past**

– **joint reflection** (gatherings, lectures...) organized by WiB or other organizations:

#### **8<sup>th</sup> March**

– **Panel on transitional justice 'Reintegration of the victims/ survivors and truth-telling'** (Reintegracion de Sobrevivientes y Decir la Verdad/ focussing on sexual wartime crimes The following women testified about their experiences: *Marina Galjego Sapata*/Marina Gallego Zapata, Peace Trail/Ruta pacifica from Columbia, *Ajna Jusić*, Forgotten children in the war from BiH, *Galuh Wandita*, Asia Justice



and Rights, East Timor/Indonesia and *Staša Zajović*, Women in Black, Belgrade. The online panel was organized by the Humanitarian Law Fund, Belgrade, as part of the project Global Initiative for Justice, Truth and Reconciliation.

### 9<sup>th</sup> March

– **‘On women’s peace activism during the wars of the 90’s in Yugoslavia’**, online panel organized by the association ‘Peščanik’ from Kruševac, with the following speakers: *Igballe Rogova* from Priština, *Nuna Zvizdić* from Sarajevo, *Nela Pamuković* from Zagreb, *Lepa Mladenović* and *Staša Zajović* from Belgrade. The panel was moderated by *Snežana Obrenović* from Kraljevo. The panel was organized within the project of the association “Peščanik” “Women for Peace and Security: towards mapping good neighborly relations between Serbia and Kosovo”.

### 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> March

**“Amplifying Voices of Women affected by war-related SGBV in the Western Balkans- For a Culture of Recognition and Reconciliation”**, working meetings within the regional project were attended by partner activists from Kosovo, BiH, Serbia (Autonomous Women’s Center, Youth Initiative for Human Rights and Women in Black), as well as representatives of the Medica Mondiale Foundation, Germany, who support the project.

### 25<sup>th</sup> March

**“Justice for Sexual Violence in Conflicts: Challenges and Prospects”**; an online panel on restorative / healing justice experiences for victims and survivors of sexual violence. The following activists spoke on the online panel: *Shyamala Gomez*, Center for Equality and Justice (Sri Lanka), *Mona Zeineddine*, Women Now for Development (Syria), *Staša Zajović*, Women in Black (Serbia); international experts *Paolina Massidda* (International Criminal Court, The Hague), *Jehanne Henry* (Consultant to the Sudan Minister of Justice) and *Georgina Mendoza Solorio* (Women’s Human Rights and Gender Section, OHCHR). The panel was organized by Global Fund for Women, USA and Women Rights Action, Sudan.

### 26<sup>th</sup> March

**“On WiB anti-war activist engagement”** (with a focus on gender-nationalism-militarism) lecture online held by *Staša Zajović*, within the framework of *Ženergija - a digital platform of an informal group ‘intended for girls who want to know more’*.

### 16<sup>th</sup> April

**“We remember the anti-war resistance of the nineties”** – a solidarity visit to Ada /Vojvodina, where we met with *Ištvan Vebel*, activist of the Ada Anti-War Action Center, and together with him visited the local cemetery where *Vera Vebel*, an anti-war activist who died in 2020, was buried. Preparations for the realization of a publication on anti-war resistance in Ada during the 1990s - activities of the Center for Anti-War Action - Ada branch were initiated by an archive overview. Joint activities in the coming period have been agreed. The following WiB activists were in Ada: *Violeta*, *Staša* and *Zorica*.

## 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, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> in Radmilovac, near Belgrade**

**The meeting was attended by 39 persons from 18 cities: Bosnia and Herzegovina (3 - Tuzla, Sarajevo and Đulići); Montenegro (2 – Pljevlja and Kotor); Croatia (1- from Zagreb) and Serbia (33 – Belgrade, Kraljevo, Kruševac, Leskovac, Novi Sad, Pančevo, Preševo, Vlasotince and Zaječar) with the participation via Skype of: Magdalena Sztandara, Krakow / Poland, Srđan Knežević Sičko, Munich/Germany and Igor Seke, Mexico.**

#### **19<sup>th</sup> March (Friday)**

After the presentation of participants - an homage was performed to our friends and comrades on the local, regional and global level who died in the previous period '*They left a mark on us*' (**Vera Vebel, Vesna Kesić, Mira Furlan, Đorđe Balašević...**).

*WiB Network activities in the previous period* – information and analysis. In the first part of this session were presented WiB Belgrade activities and joint activities of WiB Network (from September 2020):

- *Dealing with The Past* – street actions, visiting places of crimes (Miloš Urošević, Ramiz Berbić...)
- *Solidarity is our strength* – About the trial in the Court of Ivanjica – workers Milomir Milojevic and Milojko Ignjatovic died in a gunpowder explosion in the factory "Milan Blagojevic-Namenska" in Lučani on July 14, 2017. The Milivojević family has been asking the state authorities to shed light on the circumstances of the tragedy in the factory, etc. (Nastasja Radović)
- *About solidarity actions during the Covid-19 pandemic; solidarity actions with refugees* – spoke *Violeta Đikanović, Ramiz Berbić and Sabina Talović*
- *Women's Peace Activism, Feminist discussion circles – educational programs* (Suvada Selimović, Staša Zajović)
- *Brief quantitative report of WIB activities – 2020*

In second part were presented **activities of groups of WiB Network** – important in their local community or region:



**Art Velju, On the youth group Livrit, Prešovo:** 'The name of our group means Get Up / Move it!/ Get going! In an urban way, we have created a public space for students, high school students, but the space can be used by all residents of Prešovo. We started with a youth club, we formed groups, we meet in our space and discuss topics that are important to us. We also made a film group. We have yoga classes with an instructor. We also participate in joint projects with the municipality. We designed T-shirts with a question mark. We will show you a video to see what our space used to be like, and what it is like now. We took care of it ourselves. The space is from the nineteenth century, one of the oldest buildings in the city center.'

**Bratislav Stamenković: "I ja se pitam" / "I also have a say", Leskovac:** We launched the initiative in 2020, it currently gathers 15 active members, we maintain contacts with a large number of people in the surrounding settlements. The main goal of this initiative is to provide assistance to citizens to represent their own interests, to put pressure on the city government to organize a public debate on the budget in 2020 so that citizens can influence the spending of public funds. At the same time, we operate on two tracks: government control and community contribution through ongoing field contacts. We have launched various activities: educating citizens about the budget and how citizens can influence the budget; on the importance of decentralization for equitable development; strengthening rural communities. The ultimate goal will be to map the needs, opportunities and activities that should be carried out by the village or settlement, in order to have in their hands the tools to fight the problems. We have also launched numerous and successful humanitarian actions.





**Magdalena Sztandara**, professor at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, a feminist activist spoke (via Skype).

“In Poland, the Constitutional Court ruled to ban the right to abortion if the fetus is damaged. Abortion is possible only if it is a consequence of rape or if the mother’s life is endangered. Because of that, women took to the streets and a protest began, thousands of people came out across the country. Unfortunately, these protests did not block the law, but a public debate on abortion was launched.” Magdalena emphasized that there were ‘a lot of young people at the protests, who’d never gone out to protest, now they have taken to the streets and are not afraid to express their opinion.

Protests were held in front of churches and there is one parish priest who is fighting on our side. We are looking for reproductive rights and a secular state, but the demands have spread to other issues.’

**“Kraljevačka pank hronika”/ “The Pančevo Punk Chronicle”** – presentation of the publication by Vojkan Trifunović, a historian from Kraljevo/Kragujevac; ‘History in the Shadows’/ samizdat about anti-war / anti-militarist / anti-nationalist engagement of the anarcho-punk collective from Kraljevo and other cities.

The book was revied by: *Vojkan Trifunović*, the author, *Dragan Jovanović*, a philosopher, Belgrade; *Lino Veljak*, a philosopher, Zagreb; *Igor Seke*, activist, Ruma/Mexico and *Srđan Knežević Sičko*, anarcho-punk collective from Kraljevo and other cities. Hoću? Neću! H?N?, Kraljevo/Munich (via Skype). The presentation was moderated by Staša Zajović.

*Vojkan Trifunović* explained how and why the publication was created: ‘As a historian, I collected information, and as an actor in that scene, I wanted to leave a written trace about it. I found a lot of clues: posters, banners, fanzines. It was not known to the general public, and it was important to me that all these events be gathered in one place and published.’

The book contains 15 chapters: history of the rock scene in Kraljevo; the first, second and third wave-continuity of the development of the punk scene in Kraljevo. The third part of the book is dedicated to political topics that have interested and are of interest to Kraljevo punk bands, above all Hoću? Neću! / H? N! (anti-war actions and campaigns, primarily for the recognition of the right to conscientious objection, anti-McDonald’s campaigns, antifa activities, etc.):

Summary of the presentations of the other panelists:

“True punk nurtured anti-militaristic and anti-war engagement. Kraljevo punk groups were anti-war. That was not the case in Belgrade. Belgrade was a province” (*Dragan Jovanović*).

*Lino Veljak* je stressed that H? N! had established contacts with anarcho-punk collectives from Croatia in the early 1990s, launched

the famous bulletin '*Against the Walls of War, Nationalism and Evil*'; early in 2000. H? N! had concerts all over Croatia, later in Italy, Greece and everywhere, in addition to concerts, they participated in anti-war / antifa panels.

The contribution of the H? N! collective campaigns is huge for the recognition of the right to conscientious objection (2001-2003) through concerts, tribunes, collecting signatures throughout Serbia together with the WiB, Yukom and other organizations. Although the right to conscientious objection was recognized in August 2003, the regime is currently waging a militaristic campaign to reintroduce compulsory military service ...' (*Sićko and Igor*).

## Discussion corner

**Discussion corner** – on current societal and political developments – locally, regionally, globally...

**Nermin Vučelj**, Ph.D., Associate Professor at the Department of French Language and Literature, presented an essay by French philosopher Barbara Stigler: "On democracy in the pandemic" relating to health, research, education...

The following views were expressed during the discussion:

- *Taking advantage of the pandemic for political purposes - manipulation of fear, horizontal repression, social distance, mutual condemnation and surveillance ...* ('Fear, provocation, condemnation, boycott, paranoia prevailed. A pandemic is a manipulation of fear') (*Jadranka, Sarajevo*);
- *The tightening and mitigation of epidemiological measures is in the function of regime needs (pre-election rallies, organized crime ...) and not health security ...* ("From December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020 to January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021 in BH, on Jahorina, nearly 170,000 visitors were recorded! All the mafia from Montenegro, Serbia and Croatia was there. We had local elections this year. They limited the number of people in public space. We couldn't gather, but party members could do anything.") (*Jadranka*).
- *The concentration camp system in nursing homes most seriously endangers the health of the people in them ...* ('My 86-year-old grandmother was imprisoned for a year. She'd been vaccinated and revaccinated, and she had to see a doctor, but when she returned, she was sentenced to isolation. As a child, she'd been in the Jasenovac camp') (*Margareta, Subotica*).
- *"The imposition of digital communications (online, zoom, etc.) by donors, affects the regime, weakens women's groups, contradictory information and fear often block activists from continuing to work ...* ('These groups stop working, it suits the responds that we are not active. And we are not active because we are afraid, or we don't have money and women are afraid. Donors work from home. They force us to do the same. It's a shame.') (*Snežana, Kruševac*).

- *There are alternatives - disobedience to meaningless, repressive, arbitrary measures is an act of responsibility ... ('We are constantly in the field, and the women, especially in small towns, were overjoyed to see us. We must continue to nurture our disobedience...') (Jadranka, Violeta, Belgrade).*

## Engaged Art – screenings of documentary films

**Charlotte Bunch** – *Passionate politics* – Life and Work of Charlotte Bunch (58 min) – the 2015 documentary is about the life and work of women human rights activist Charlotte Bunch from the United States. She began her activism as an anti-war activist, protesting against the Vietnam war, then in the lesbian separatist collective Furia, and finally the launch of the international campaign 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women

**Neka je što šarenije (Make it as colorful as possible)** – a documentary about the first Gay Pride in Sarajevo, in 2019. (15 min.); presented by Vladimir Joić.

## 20<sup>th</sup> March (Saturday)

### Women and power – a feminist approach – the central topic of this Network meeting

#### *I sesija,*

*I session, 9:30 – 11:00 – The power of language and the language of power* (a critical review of the ruling (structuralist) theories in Serbia about the power of language, questioning linguistic elitism; on an alternative approach from the perspective of language use, unequal distribution of power and its abuse that produces inequality, inequality and discrimination, etc.).

Lecturers: **Svenka Savić**, Novi Sad and **Margareta Bašaragin**, Subotica – Association “Women Studies and Research”; moderated by: *Snežana Jakovljević*, Peščanik, Kruševac

After the keynote address, a discussion was held in which two topics were distinctly profiled:

*Silence vs speech* - subversive silence of WiB as an act of political rebellion and resistance and disobedience; silence as consent, silence about the crimes committed in our name; silence as a strategy of belittling women’s contributions, etc.

*Gender-sensitive language vs. norm* - ‘gender-sensitive language is a contribution to the equality of men and women, the norm should exist, but it must change, the norm is flexible’ (*Svenka*); ‘Language is living matter. Our decision is to be disobedient. We should not be stuck in language, but create our own language’ (*Sanja*), etc.



## II session,

*II session, Is a different power possible – here and now?* (on the participation of women in public power / politics in the Western Balkans: form without content, party task, meeting EU integration standards and / or? ...)

Participants: *Tanja Ignjatović*, Autonomous Women's Center, Belgrade; *Ljupka Kovačević*, Anima, Kotor; *Jadranka Miličević*, Foundation CURE, Sarajevo; *Selena Ristić Vitomirović*, actress and activist, Zaječar, *Sofija Nedeljković*, #1 od 5 miliona", Belgrade

Moderators: *Snežana Jakovljević* and *Stasa Zajović*

Summary of the valuations of the participants of the panel:

### **Tanja Ignjatović:**

- *During the 1990s, broader value-political platforms were created (between women's groups, trade unions, progressive political parties, the media) against the regime of S. Milošević;*
- *After the fall of the regime in Serbia, at the beginning of 2000, working with women politicians and dealing with quotas was mainly imposed by donors: for the sake of future EU integration processes, but also for the purpose of alleviating the power imbalance in the public sphere;*
- *Cessation of work with women politicians since 2006, and complete cessation of communication with women politicians since 2016, because the formal stamping of laws that will never be applied, the adoption of various resolutions and conventions, etc. give legitimacy to the regime in Serbia;*
- *The latest proposals and calls for the so-called social dialogue are a political maneuver of the regime: 'it will not lead to change and the whole situation is aggravated by the consequences of the pandemic';*
- *Regime abuse of gender equality: 'For Vučić, the topic of gender equality and quotas is compensation for the fact that no chapter has been opened, we will not join the EU and we will not solve the issue of Kosovo';*
- *There is no obligation of solidarity with women in positions of power: 'Why would I defend Brnabić, who is the first woman in Serbia? So let her stand up and tell her deputies what she needs to tell them, that will defend everyone else. That is the price of the place where she found herself. I don't want that';*
- *There are alternatives: decentralization, development of critical thinking among young people, value and not project connection, etc.*

## **Ljupka Kovačević:**

- *Alternatives are in connecting and working together with the women who are outside the official scene – women who overcome their gender roles – mothers who have fought for their social rights, Gara from Sinjajevina, who impeded military drills, etc.*
- *The so-called big projects with women politicians failed in Montenegro, in Anima we did not deal with women in politics because it was 'humiliating';*
- *Unfulfilled expectations after Montenegro gained independence (2006) - The EU has forced various women's initiatives of an official nature without any impact on changing the position of women;*
- *After the elections (August 2020), people who advocate clerical fascism are in power, the number of women in positions of power is even smaller, but attacks on women politicians are growing;*
- *By stamping of the laws supported by the EU, civil society was abused in the process of EU accession - it was reduced to writing laws and research, to making 'good' reports in order to provide funds;*
- *Montenegro was among the first to accept the Istanbul Convention - in practice nothing is being done, they are even against that convention;*
- *There is no political alternative in Montenegro for two main reasons: due to the EU accession, organizations are connected by projects, and not ideologically and in terms of values. On the other hand, critical NGOs are repairing the system, not changing it. You cannot get an EU project if you do not cooperate with state institutions;*
- *We have no obligation to show solidarity with all women - 'I don't have to justify myself for that';*
- *Alternatives are connecting and working together with women outside the official scene - women who skip gender roles - mothers who fought for their social rights, Gara from Sinjajevina who prevented military drills, etc.*

## **Jadranka Miličević:**

- *All resolutions, conventions, laws, all of which are first signed by BH as a state, everything is respected, and everything is a mere form that does not change anything;*
- *The image of women in the public sphere, not only politicians, is mostly negative - this also applies to holders of public office, whose image is mostly negative, because many came to power through powerful male relatives (father, husband), due to abuse of power, corrupt practices;*

- *Political parties, both national and the so-called civilian, in BH want women on the lists only for the sake of manipulation, gender issues are used to collect political points - women have lost in political parties, even those independent candidates, which we encouraged. Both male and female citizens have betrayed them...*
- *The alternative is cooperation with certain women politicians - The CURE Foundation has an agreement on cooperation with certain women politicians who are of civic orientation.*

### **Selena Ristić Vitomirović:**

- *A very successful activist experience and strong influence at the local level until the SPP came to power - followed by retaliation in the form of confiscation of the Children's Center, job loss 'I lost my job in the theater where I'd worked as an actress for 28 years, and I can't get a job as an actress anywhere in Timok region';*
- *Continuation of the activist struggle through the Party of Free Citizens / FCP, disappointment because FCP advocated a boycott of the elections (June 2020) - 'then came the directive to go to the polls! I humiliated myself by agreeing to be on the list of candidates. That episode ended last summer';*
- *Launching the civic initiative Zaokret (U-turn) an association of brave people -' we all have the same idea, we know that if the SPP wins at the local level (March 28, 2021) we will not be able to do anything;*
- *The alternative is consistency, constant activism, pestering of the regime, "I will not ask the mayor permission to go out to my square, nothing can stop me from continuing to follow the same principles."*

### **Sofija Nedeljković:**

- *It is very difficult for young people in politics: 'political parties have a hierarchy and young people cannot squeeze in a word; they cannot participate in political decision-making;*
- *Young women are discriminated against in politics: they encounter various condemnations, various derogatory words addressed to them; we are often victims of stereotypes and sexism;*
- *The alternative is the movement # 1 of 5 million #: I chose to fight in that movement, because there is no hierarchy, with us everyone can say what they think, participate in decision making, we all work together and I think that's why we succeed'.*



### **Comments during the discussion:**

"In Montenegro, NGOs connect around projects and research' (*Sabina*); "Ana Brnabić, as a lesbian Prime Minister, did not contribute to lesbians, but worsened their position." It is important to criticize her position of abuse of power. On the other hand, when Ana Brnabić received lesbophobic and misogynistic comments (...) We as feminists have a duty not to defend Ana as an individual, but to react to lesbophobia and misogyny' (*Mina*); "Everything is co-opted, abused, all topics, especially gender equality, and the issue of quota" (*Fahrudin*), etc.

### **III sesija,**

*III session, Women want power, but what kind of power?* (about the importance of women participation, the content of power, changing the structure of power...)

**I part:** *Where are we now?* – a short dynamic exercise in which the participants expressed their attitudes about the stereotypical statement 'As soon as they enter the world of politics, women become worse than men'.

Three basic attitudes stood out:

"I agree with the statement" - because the majority of women in politics are "just a number and a screen" (*Suvada*), "party soldiers" (*Sabina*), "listeners of men's needs", "bearers of male power" (*Snežana*) etc.

"I am indecisive" - "some female politicians have fought for our common rights" (*Zinaida*); 'Unlike current women in positions of power (SPP), some women acted responsibly and we cooperated with them' (*Ljilja*);

"I do not agree with the statement" - "It is a patriarchal matrix to constantly criticize women. There are women who bring about change in positions of power' (*Mina*), etc.

**II part:** - *Why is women's participation in public power important?* – In the course of group work, most participants expressed the belief that women's participation in public power changes the attitude towards the role of women in society, allows women to change their perceptions of themselves, encourages women to become subjects of their own lives, not to be reduced to traditional roles of wife, mothers and housewives. A warning was voiced about religious communities and the state endangering reproductive rights, and the economic crisis, caused by the wars of the 1990s and the global financial crisis in the past thirty years, deprived Yugoslav women of their already realized rights, especially the right to work, reducing them to cheap slave labor, etc.

Moderators: *Tanja Marković*, WiB, Belgrade  
and *Snežana Obrenović*, WiB, Kraljevo

## THEY DARED TO – BOTH THEN AND NOW...

**I part – Three strong women in the male power dominated world:** *Elionor of Aquitaine* (1122-1204); *Joan of Arc* (1412-1431) and *Marguerite de Valois* (1553-1615) - a comparative look at three exceptional women in the world of male domination - a look at French history at three women from three different ages ... presented by: Nermin Vučelj, Ph.D., Associate Professor at the Faculty of Philosophy (Department of French Language and Literature) in Niš.

**II part – A different power is possible...** on women who have made significant moves from the institutional level; the following women were presented:

**Luisa Morgantini – The power of international women's politics** - (former member of EU parliament, former vice-president of the European Parliament, leader of the solidarity movement with Palestine, activist of the International Network of Women in Black)

**Manuela Carmena Castrillo** – the famous mayor of Madrid (2015-2019), her greatest achievements in that position being: participatory budgeting; Debt reduction of the city of Madrid, aid to the poorest suburbs; gender equality 'feminist Madrid'; LGBTQ Pride Day etc.

(Presented by Staša Z.)

**Sana Marin** – Prime Minister of Finland; In 2019, she became the youngest prime minister in the world, leader of the Social Democratic Party. She organized a press conference on the Corona virus intended for children, and answered all their questions.

**Jasinda Ardern** – Prime Minister of New Zealand; since the beginning of the epidemic, the media have called her 'the most efficient leader in the world'. She became Prime Minister in 2017 (Labor Party) and with her actions she has repeatedly proved to be an exemplary stateswoman, compassionate and determined. (Presented by: Miloš Urošević).

**The power of virtue and the virtue of power – Verica Barać (1955 - 2012)** – anti-war activist, amid the bombing (1999) she participated in the founding of the Civil Parliament in Čačak; former President of the Anti-Corruption Council; from that position, until her death, Verica worked tirelessly for nine years on a thorough and uncompromising fight against corruption, which she described as a "systemic disease" in Serbia. (Presented by: Nastasja Radović).

## ART-ACTIVIST PROGRAM

### **„About Conscious(news) – Sanja Krsmanović Tasić and Jugoslav Hadžić (Hleb teatar, Belgrade)**

“About Conscious (News)” is a play about *Dada Vujasinović*, a journalist from the newspaper “Duga” who reported from the battlefield in the first years of the wars of the 1990s, and then wrote openly, clearly and truthfully about events on the political and social scene of our country. She lost her life under unexplained circumstances on April 8, 1994. She was thirty years old.

### **Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> March**

**The first session** was dedicated to the final agreements on the street action “*Stop Racism*” on the occasion of March 21<sup>st</sup> - International Day against Racism; the action took place on the same day, which was discussed in this report.

**The second session** was about agreeing on joint activities of the Network in the forthcoming period and evaluation.

**The evaluation was moderated by Ljupka Kovačević:** *What did this gathering mean to you? And what importance do you attach to this joint work and socializing?*

During the evaluation, the participants presented their observations and impressions:

- **Live meeting – direct communication, overcoming fear, crossing borders, mutual support, friendship, solidarity ...** (‘The most important thing is this direct meeting, no online events can replace live meetings’; ‘We can also work in these circumstances, at a time of restrictions and objective dangers, during the pandemic. This is an historic gathering’; ‘The most important thing for me is that we have faced the fears they impose on us and the injustices we experience by this regime’, etc.
- **Space for acquiring new knowledge, for joint reflection, re-examination ...** (‘At these meetings of the Network I hear things I can’t hear anywhere else’; ‘Very important topics are always selected, which are presented to us by excellent lecturers in a different and informed way’. ‘This type of education is almost non-existent in society’; ‘It’s my first time on the Web, it has helped me to think in other ways, to open my horizons’, etc.
- **Engaged art** – an outstanding theater performance “*On Conscious (News)*”; promotion of the books (‘*Kraljevačka hronika pankarstva*’ / ‘*Kraljevo Chronicle of Punk*’ by Vojkan Trifunović; ‘*Pjesme o istospolnoj ljubavi*’ / ‘*Poems of Same-Sex love*’ by Ramiz Berbić)

*The activists expressed deep emotion, enthusiasm for the play because ‘it is a privilege to watch a play in these circumstances’, gratitude for the effort and skill to Sanja and Jugoslav, and also to Ramiz and Vojkan...*

- **Perseverance, not giving up the struggle ...** (“Not giving up the fight. That filled my heart”); “In the moments when we wear out and when we think that it is a futile struggle, that you are alone, WiB is there and you can come here to build ties and make contacts”;
- **The circle of young activists of the Network has expanded, and the arrival of activists from Preševo kindled special enthusiasm ...**

*(The integral report on the meeting of the Network – 42 pages; can be accessed on the WiB website).*

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

– in addition to the aforementioned, were realized within the Network (women’s peace activism, feminist discussion circles, art-activists’ gatherings...):

### Women’s Peace Activism, Đulići, Bosnia and Herzegovina

*Educational program* that the civic association “Anima” from Đulić and Women in Black Belgrade has 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:

#### Đulići, 2<sup>nd</sup> March

– *the eighteenth (18<sup>th</sup>)* encounter was attended by **24** women from seven places in the Zvornik area (Đulići, Glumina, Đetići, Dugo Polje, Grbavci, Klisa, Sapna), the area of Srebrenica (Bajramovići and Potočari) and from Belgrade.

**At the first workshop** ‘To get to know yourself and others better’, the participants expressed their needs and desires, mainly related to: the disappearance of the crown and family reunification, togetherness, women’s activism, travel, etc.).







### **Second workshop:**

#### **- Pillars of patriarchy – visions of feminism**

The most common connotations women make related to patriarchy are: church community; laws imposed by the powerful, 'conservative patriarchal upbringing, the imposition of rules; many women raped in the war did not speak about it for fear of being rejected' (Šehida).

In the continuation of the workshop, the participants spoke out against the imposed roles and for autonomy and freedom of choice in relation to motherhood and marriage; they rebelled against the inequality of men and women ('women are not the weaker sex, but we didn't have the same opportunities as men did'), as well as the notions of women as victims ('they expect us women war crimes victims to be miserable, to provoke pity... that humiliates us greatly' etc.).

**Đulići Women's Library** – as part of regular exchanges of books read, women commented on the books read in the previous period by the author: Lane Bastašić, Rumena Bužarovska, Emily Brontë, Zorica Jevremović, etc.

During the evaluation, they stated that 'acquisition of knowledge, method of work, relaxed and pleasant atmosphere, etc.

#### **Đulići, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021**

– the nineteenth encounter (19<sup>th</sup>) was attended by 19 women from the following places: Lupe, Kučić kula, Grbavci, Đulići, Šetići, Klisa, Goduš and Belgrade.

**The first workshop** 'Let's protect and nurture nature!' was dedicated to the preservation of the living environment - the world of all living beings, etc.

**At the second workshop, "Pillars of Patriarchy – Visions of Feminism"**, women resolutely rejected the patriarchal prejudice that "a woman's place is at home" and above all expressed the need for

education “so that all women can get an education”. Many expressed outrage that they were unable to go to school ‘I am angry because *they did not let me go to school!*’. As for family relationships and the patriarchal role of women as ‘*the pillar of the family, a woman must make sacrifices, because harmony in the family depends on her*’, most women are war widows who take ‘responsibility for everything’ but strive to raise children in the spirit of equal division of labor in the house. Regarding sexuality, they mostly talked about the war crime of rape - the silenced traumas “*women do not have the space or strength to talk about it, many still keep silent about it mostly for fear of rejecting the environment*”, etc.

**The third workshop** was dedicated to the *vaccination against the Covid-19*. Although there were very few vaccines available in their area at the time, some women said that their basic motive for the vaccination was ‘*to see and meet children living abroad*’. For a great part of the women, the refusal of vaccination is related to the influence of the anti-vaccination movement, which spreads panic and mistrust, etc.

At the reading circle, the women commented on the books they had read, and at the final workshop we agreed on joint activities in the following period.

## FEMINIST DISCUSSION CIRCLES/FDC

Novi Sad, 6<sup>th</sup> March

– **Women Studies as an academic and activist higher education program in our country** – Women Studies and Research (WSR) from Novi Sad has launched a series of consultative meetings on the topic of women studies in Serbia. This is the third meeting since September 2020, organized by Women Studies and Research, Novi Sad, WiB, Belgrade, held in the premises of the association IZ KRUGA / OUT OF THE CIRCLE, Vojvodina, and attended by **13** participants from Belgrade, Novi Sad and Subotica.



Professor Emeritus *Svenka Savić* spoke about the history of Women Studies / WS - in Novi Sad and Belgrade they have been working continuously, while occasionally in some cities (Subotica, Niš, Užice, Valjevo, Kraljevo, Prijepolje, Kotor) lectures were held, meetings, research projects, etc.)





*Daša Duhaček* spoke about the history of WS in Belgrade; *Staća Zajović* made a critical review of the work of WS in Serbia (achievements, challenges, disputes). In the second part of the meeting, the results of the project on the elderly “*What can't 65+ women do in Serbia today?*” were presented. – House confinement for the 65+ generation continues in nursing homes, all in the name of ‘protection’ of health, and it also has a gender connotation - it mostly affects female pensioners. In the end, joint activities in the coming period were agreed.

**Novi Sad, 24<sup>th</sup> April** – the FDC was held in the organization of: Women Studies and Research, Iz kruga... Vojvodina and WiB, Belgrade in the premises of Iz kruga... with the participation of **13** women from Novi Sad, Belgrade and Subotica.

**In the first part**, the final report on the Women Studies and Research project “*What can't 65+ women do in Serbia today?*” was presented.

**The second part** was dedicated to **Neda Božinović** (1917-2001), born near Dubrovnik, graduated from the Faculty of Law in Belgrade in 1939. In the late 1930s, Neda was active in the student and women’s movement. During the Second World War, Neda was an anti-fascist fighter, active in the Anti-Fascist Women’s Front, as well as in the People’s Liberation Struggle. After the war, Neda was a member of the Federal Assembly, and a judge of the Constitutional Court. She retired from political life in 1974. During the war in Yugoslavia, she was an activist of the Center for Anti-War Action, an activist and one of the founders of Women in Black. Neda is the author of the book *Žensko pitanje u Srbiji u 19. i 20. veku / Women’s Issue in Serbia in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (1996), as well as numerous essays on gender, nationalism, and militarism.

Two documentaries of the WiB Video Activism Group were shown:

**“Neda Božinović – Continuity of the struggle for peace and Women’s Rights”** (17.15 min.) – a documentary on Neda Božinović (1917–2001), one of the founders of Women in Black

**.“Neda Božinović – from a partisan to an anti-militarist”** (15.45 min.) – a documentary, interviews with Neda B. about her participation in the Second World War, the causes of the disintegration of the SFR Yugoslavia, etc.

The following activist spoke about Neda, about her anti-war, feminist activism, as well as about her historiographic opus: Svenka Savić, Senka Knežević, Miloš Urošević, Violeta Đikanović and Staća Zajović (WiB).

**Belgrade, 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> April**

### **– ACTIVIST– ARTISTIC ENCOUNTER IN BELGRADE**

Activist-artistic encounter organized by Women in Black, Belgrade and the youth group LIVRIT, Preševo. The purpose of the meeting is to strengthen interethnic and intercultural solidarity, mutual support, cooperation and friendship, fostering a culture of remembrance

and activist-artistic engagement. Six activists from Preševo and WiB activists took part in this meeting. The following events were held during the meeting:

- 21<sup>st</sup> April – participation of activists in the debate on anti-fascism in WiB premises
- 22<sup>nd</sup> April – Visit to the Museum of Contemporary Art - exhibition of the famous photographer Goranka Matić; a joint walk along the Danube quay; attending the March Documentary Film Festival;
- 23<sup>rd</sup> April – *Why?* – attending the commemoration to the RTS employees killed during the 1999 bombing, at 2:06, together with WiB Belgrade activists and the women from BH (Đulići, Tuzla);
- 23<sup>rd</sup> April - Public lesson - Mass graves in the May 13 settlement - tour of the former mass grave in the Belgrade settlement of Batajnica (about 10 km away from the center of Belgrade). The remains of 744 Kosovo Albanians, killed in 1999 in Kosovo, were found in this mass grave. The public lesson was held by *Mirko Medenica*, a lawyer, Women in Black activist.

**During this period, we also participated in the activities of related civil society organizations:**

**January 25<sup>th</sup>**

**“Risk assessment and our responses to the risks”** - online workshop organized by the Swedish Foundation Kvinna till Kvinna / KTK; This meeting was attended by activists of women’s groups / organizations from Serbia supported by the KTK - about fifteen activists and representatives of the KTK from Serbia and Macedonia participated.

**15<sup>th</sup> April**

– **“On the campaign for the reintroduction of military service in Serbia”** - on the consequences of strengthening militarization, nationalism and authoritarianism in society, from the 90’s to this day. It was also talked about forced mobilization during the wars of the 1990s, anti-militarist resistance, campaigns to recognize the right to conscientious objection (2003), etc. At this online forum organized by the Youth Center CK13, Novi Sad. Speakers: *Ivan Đurić* (Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Belgrade), *Željko Stanetić* (Vojvodina Civic Center) and *Stasa Zajović* (WiB, Belgrade) and the moderator was *Laura Pejak* (CK13).

## **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 in Serbia:**





Women in Black started 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:**

- **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: April 1<sup>st</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.



- **Pljevlja, Montenegro (on the border between Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina) – 16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> March** WiB activists (Goran Lazin and Violeta Đikanović) visited the open center Bona Fide and offered humanitarian aid and support to the refugees. “We arrived on Tuesday evening and saw off a group of refugees who’d stayed in Bona Fide for two days. All the things in the house (Bona Fide premises) had been used: bedding, blankets, sleeping bags, so we set to work cleaning and washing the whole house, which has two floors. We also cleaned the basement and classified the wardrobe. The purpose of our arrival was to provide assistance in the form of food and hygiene products, etc.). We also made sandwiches and carried them to the bus station for a group of refugees from Algeria. When we returned from the station, Goran sat down at the sewing machine and made the bedspreads.” (from Goran and Violeta’s report).





- **Pljevlja, Montenegro (on the border between Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina) 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> April**, WiB activists Mina Damnjanović and Violeta Đikanović visited the Bona Fide Open Center, providing solidarity support to refugees accommodated in the Trebovina Hostel, in Pljevlja, as well as in the Bona Fide Open Center. Bona Fide activists have organized aid for refugees as of 2017 and till now several thousand refugees / migrants have passed through this center. In this place, they can get food, clothing and footwear, and large number stay overnight, while some stay for a longer period of time. WiB network activists provided humanitarian aid (food and hygienic articles etc.) and WiB support solidarity activities of the Bona Fide center.

**In addition to this, solidarity with war refugees Women in Black is expressed by other activities** statements - in Serbian and English, for domestic and international networks, to familiarize themselves with the problems of refugees, their position, their human rights, abuse, discrimination, both at the level of institutions and society, especially during Covid 19 pandemic.

## II Solidarity with activists during pandemic (COVID 19)

Since the pandemic started, we established various ways of mutual support and solidarity within WiB Network: Since the beginning of pandemic WiB established different forms of mutual support and solidarity among WiB Networks activists – we already informed in previous reports. In this period, we organized: **Solidarity support** – distribution of modest humanitarian aid for the most socially vulnerable activists in WiB Network.

## III Solidarity with the Milivojevic Family from Lučani - The Ivanjica trials

Criminal proceedings against the Director General of the Milan Blagojevic-Namenska Arms Factory, Lučani - Radoš Milovanović and two executives from the same factory (Vladimir Lončarević and Toma Stojić). They have been 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, only one hearing was held before the Basic Court in Ivanjica:

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

The trial scheduled for December 15, 2020 has been postponed. Former President of the Municipality of Grocka, Dragoljub Simonović,

has been accused of inciting the burning of the house of journalist M. Jovanović of Žig info. On 12th Dec 2018 somebody set fire to this journalist's house and it burned down. The first trial took place in April 2019 and ever since, it has constantly been postponed.

In this reporting period, three hearings were held:

### **1<sup>st</sup> February**

– after a series of obstructions (11 held and 10 unsupported hearings), the Deputy Prosecutor, Predrag Milovanović, gave his closing remarks, speaking, among other things, about the importance of journalism in free societies, as well as the imperatives of justice and freedom, etc.

### **11<sup>th</sup> February**

- In their closing remarks, the defense attorneys spoke about “strengthening the police state”, insisting on “conspiracy of the top police and the state against the first indictee Dragoljub Simonović and police extortion of plea statements of the other two defendants, etc.”

### **23<sup>rd</sup> February**

– At this hearing, verdicts were handed down: Judge Slavko Žugić found three defendants guilty (for the fourth, Igor Novaković, the proceedings were separated): he sentenced Dragoljub Simonović and Aleksandar Marinković (who is on the run) to four years and three months in prison, and Vladimir Mihailović to four because “they committed a serious crime against public safety fully consciously and with intent, and Simonović and Mihailović, according to the verdict, did so using incitement”. The judge said that the trial was “obstructed from the beginning” by the accused and their lawyers, that there was an attack on the dignity of the Court and him personally, etc.

## **V Trial of the Minister of the Serbian Police Aleksandar Vulin for hate talk**

A preparatory hearing was held in the Palace of Justice in Belgrade on April 5<sup>th</sup> on the lawsuit of the Committee of Lawyers for Human Rights / Yukom against the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Serbia A. Vulin for hate speech. During his term as Minister of Defense and then Minister of Police, Vulin continuously publicly called Albanians “Shiptars” and insulted the dignity of the Albanian national minority. Yukom believes that “Serbia’s policy must not be based on hate speech.” Activists present on behalf of the WiB were: Mina Damnjanović, Violeta Đikanović and Staša Zajović. The next hearing is scheduled for September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

*(You can find integral reports from the above trials  
on the WiB website)*

## **DISCUSSION CIRCLES, 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 nine (**14**) lectures, debates, book presentations, film screenings, with the participation about **220** persons.



20<sup>th</sup> January



**“Rosa Luxemburg and the National Question”**, lecture by Associate Professor Nada Sekulić, Ph.D. (Department of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade - homage to the revolutionary and theorist Rosa Luxemburg (1871-1919) was organized on the occasion of the anniversary of the murder (January 15, 1919). It was about the engagement of Rosa Luxemburg against the war, against war loans, nationalism, against the ideas of the nation-state, and for the primacy of class over national, internationalism over the national principle, etc.

The event is held within the cycle **“They dared: about famous women”** - talks, presentations, screenings of documentaries and feature films about famous women throughout history that have left their mark in art, literature, science; who went against their time, the dominant social tendencies, and who paid a sometimes very high price for it, about those who have left a mark. This program is a homage to their courage, beliefs, dedication, passion ... **19** people were present at this event.

**27<sup>th</sup> January – “A military service rattle yet again! Stop!** - about militaristic campaigns for the reintroduction of compulsory military service in Serbia. The latest initiatives coming from the state leadership of Serbia regarding military service have caused great doubts, because in January 2011, the legal obligation to serve military service completely ceased. However, military service was abolished then, but not military obligation. So, in the legal sense, it was a kind of suspension of military service.

The keynote speaker, *Marija Ignjatijević*, a researcher at the Belgrade Center for Security Policy / BCSP, presented the research “Citizens’ Attitudes Towards Security”. According to the BCSP survey, about 73% of respondents are in favor of returning to military service, and 80% of them explain this by the society’s need for “young people to be disciplined and to respect tradition”, and Ignjatijević stressed that there were no significant differences in attitudes between women and men, younger and older people.

*Dejan Milenković*, Ph.D., Faculty of Political Sciences in Belgrade and *Milan Antonijević*, former director of YUCOM, reminded of the campaign led by YUKOM and WiB and which, as he said, “was not only legislative” but also promoted demilitarization. The result of that campaign, he emphasized, was the “legalization” of the right to conscientious objection on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2003. **13** people took part in the deliberation and all of them spoke out against the obligatory introduction of military service.



3<sup>rd</sup> February

*“Locked up and excluded: Informal and illegal detention in Spain, Greece, Italy and Germany”* (Migreurop, 2020) presentation of a report dealing with detention and other types of restrictions on the free movement of refugees and migrants in Spain, Italy, Greece and Germany.

The findings of this research were also analyzed in the context of the proposed so-called “New European Pact on Migration and





Asylum”, by which the European Union wants to regulate the field of migration in the future. The report was presented by *Mirko Medenica*, who participated in the research and writing of this report, and **13** people were present.



**10<sup>th</sup> February**

„Kćeri, zar ne vidiš da gorim“ / “My daughter, can’t you see that I am burning” - Jelena Nidžović, editor at the Kontrast Publishing House, Belgrade, presented the book by **Ivana Maksić** (1984, Kragujevac, writer and translator, author of several collections of poetry and essays, editor of several poetry anthologies, as well as two magazines). According to Nidžović, Ivana Maksić belongs to the “invisible, non-existent” currents of *women’s literature*, engaged poetry, topics and language practice used by the author”; The discussion was moderated by *Mina Damnjanović* and the presentation of this book was attended by **8** people.



**17<sup>th</sup> February**

– “Jefimija: a woman who is waiting” – by *Minja Marđonović*, a ‘love, travel and political novel’. The author of the novel (born in 1989) is a political scientist by education. In addition to numerous

authorial texts and columns, she is also the author of the short documentary *Kismet*.

Staying, by coincidence, on the island of Bali, Indonesia, Minja M. had the opportunity to place her knowledge and experiences from that period of life, in the context of “*issues of gender, class and race*.” She named the main heroine of her novel (in whose character there are also autobiographical elements) after a historical figure - *Jelena Mrnjavčević* (monastic name: *Jefimija* - “the first Serbian poet”). That is how her heroine - the modern *Jefimija*, a “radical, uncompromising feminist”, met with a ban on abortion and illegal abortions, arranged marriages, etc.

Minja Marđonović combines ‘*fiction and anarcho-feminism*’ and in her first novel “explains feminist themes in an understandable, lyrical, receptive way and language”.

The discussion, moderated by *Mina Damjanović*,  
was attended by **16 people**.

## 24<sup>th</sup> February

“**Reality shows as a current cross-section of society**” (according to the scientific works of Dr. **Jadranka Božić**, anthropologist and culturologist and other authors). In the introduction to this conversation, **Lino Veljak** spoke about the very current dominance of reality programs in the media space in Serbia and their current social function, noting that reality is not the latest phenomenon of media globalization, but that it had its “predecessors” in ancient times. Veljak also explained the *coupling of capital, media and politics*, which is the basis of the production of reality, as “the production of systematic aggression and vulgarity”, etc. It was emphasized that the important goals of hyperproduction of reality programs and tabloids in Serbia are: nationalism / racism, misogyny, slander of political opponents of the regime and praise of the leader, diversion of attention from crucial social problems, state organized crime, etc. **16** people took part in the debate.

## 3.mart “Prostitucija

– **a criminal activity (violence against women, human trafficking, etc.) or a source of income and gray economy of oligarchic groups in Serbia? ”- debate** stimulated by the report of Eurostat / European Statistical Agency) which obliged Serbia to include revenues from illegal criminal activity in its balance sheet from the legal economy. Among these incomes are those from prostitution. Dr. **Marija Obradović**, Institute for Recent History, Belgrade, referred to the history of prostitution, caused mainly by ‘poverty, unemployment and the expression of male power over women’. **Jelena Hrnjak**, NGO *Atina*, emphasized that “the growth of prostitution is worrying, and even more worrying is the state’s decision to consider prostitution through the prism of economy and income - a criminal activity in which women and girls are exposed to violence, abuse and trafficking. Instead of talking about how much prostitution and other types of crime “bring” to the economy, we should talk about how much money

the state and all citizens “lose” due to the inefficient response of the state to violence and abuse of girls and women, etc. The debate was attended by **11** people.

### 10<sup>th</sup> March

– **Living against the Current: The life and work of Zagorka Golubović (1930-2019)**, prof. Dr. Nada Sekulić (Department of Sociology, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade) spoke about the work of the famous sociologist and anthropologist, associate of WiB; a documentary film about Zagorka Golubović will also be shown, parts from her autobiography *‘My Horizons - I Think, I Work, I Exist* (2012), etc. have been read. The event is held as part of the cycle **“They dared: about famous women”**. This event was attended by **15** people.

### 17<sup>th</sup> March

**“In the fade”** (2017), directed by Fatih Akin (Turkish-German); about the racist bombing of a Turkish-German family, about the non-satisfaction of justice in court and the search for Katja (whose son and husband were killed) for neo-Nazi perpetrators of crimes; film screening cycle, discussion on the occasion of March 21 - International Day against Racism and Anti-Semitism; 8 people took part in the screening of the film and the discussion that followed.

### 24<sup>th</sup> March

**“Social distancing of ethnic communities in Serbia”** – research of the Institute of Social Sciences was presented by Dr. Goran Basic. The research was conducted on a sample of **2130** Serbs and **759** representatives of other ethnic communities in Serbia (Albanians, Slovaks, Hungarians, Roma ...). The research dealt with both social relations (closeness-distance) and integration potentials, satisfaction with the realization of the rights of national minorities and discrimination. As an example of great ethnic distance, Basic cited relations between Serbs and Albanians. Similar percentages appear in this survey when it comes to Roma women and their attitudes. One of the most important items of this research was discrimination. According to the results, Serbia is burdened with a fairly high degree of discrimination (in informal contacts, when looking for a job, seeing a doctor, at the police, in court, at school). Serbs themselves feel discriminated against, and not only members of national minorities. The most common discrimination occurs in informal contacts, at school or at work, and it is less common in public authorities’ agencies said Bašić. This discussion, moderated by Stasa Zajović, was attended by **17** people.

### 31<sup>st</sup> March

**On the phenomenon of support for the Balkan stabilocracies and their ‘princes’, unhindered progress and ‘ossification’ of authoritarian rulers, with reference to Florian Bieber’s book “The Rise of Authoritarianism in the Western Balkans”** (published by Biblioteka XX vek, Belgrade 2020). The keynote speaker was **Dr. Dušan Vučićević**, assistant professor at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Belgrade. He emphasized that Florian Biber presents the situations in several countries of the Western Balkans (*Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Northern Macedonia, Kosovo, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina*), as

examples of countries whose systems are characterized by distinct or less distinctive features of competitive authoritarianism and stable government. Vučićević, like Biber, to some extent singles out Croatia from that “flock”, and of Northern Macedonia and partly Montenegro, he says that they have ceased to be stable countries, after the changes in the 2017 and 2020 elections. He also expressed suspicion that it is possible that similar changes will take place in Serbia in the near future ... **14** people participated in the debate moderated by *Nastasja Radović*.

## 7<sup>th</sup> April

**“On the Opposition in Russia”** – **Dr Jelica Kurjak**, former ambassador of Serbia to Russia, emphasized that the authoritarian and even totalitarian regime of Vladimir Putin controls not only all state institutions, but also society. Kurjak stated that there are two types of opposition in Russia: the systemic one, which gives legitimacy to the government (KP, *Vladimir Zhirinovsky’s* Liberal Democratic Party) and the non-systemic one (*Jabloko-Grigorij Javlinski, Navalny*).

**Elena Vilenskaya**, activist of the International Network of Women in Black from St. Petersburg (via Skype) commented on the position of Navalny, who is in prison and has health problems, but added that in prisons “there are much more serious cases of political prisoners with much longer sentences, but no one pays attention to them”. Regarding the possibility of coming to power through elections, Elena said: “There are no fair elections. Authorities are immediately there to beat them, kill them... Nobody cares...” She added that the propaganda in Russia is “horrendous”, and when asked what she thinks about the decline of Putin’s popularity, she answered that it is a matter of worsening of the economic situation under the pandemic and that Putin “only twice gave some small money to the people.” However, she also noticed that, unlike the older ones “who only watch TV”, the young people also follow the movements from independent sources.

The conversation, moderated by *Stefan Milosavljević*, was attended by **17** people.

## 14<sup>th</sup> April

**14<sup>th</sup> April “Joint reflection about the consequences of the pandemic”** a discussion within the cycle of the same name. In the first part, the research **‘Assessment of the effectiveness of the institutional response to the COVID-19 pandemic in multiethnic communities in Sandžak / southwestern Serbia and in the south of Serbia’** was presented. The research was presented by Fahrudin Kladničanin, the Academic Initiative ‘Forum 10’, who, together with SeCons - a group for development initiative - conducted the research (from October 2020 to January 2021).

At the very beginning, he referred to the situation that prevailed in Sandžak during the summer months of 2020, when this region was affected by the highest number of patients and deaths from Covid-19. He emphasized *the unreliability of official data on that*, and the persistence of a group of citizens who have been protesting



continuously for seven months. He also mentioned the great lack of medical staff (only two sick anesthesiologists per 125,000 inhabitants, during the outbreak of the pandemic).

According to the research, the following was noticed: major omissions in the organization of defense against the pandemic (especially in Novi Pazar), lack of medical staff, those who contributed the most in the supply of medical materials and other means for the treatment of patients were: NGOs, citizens, diaspora. *"It was in the interest of the state, political parties in power and religious communities to show a smaller number of deaths," said F. Kladničanin, adding that "there is great corruption in Novi Pazar institutions, including health care, with 90% of patients treated at home." Private clinics also thrived because of the fear and distrust that people had in public health. Kladničanin also pointed out that "Citizens of Preševo and Bujanovac (predominantly Albanians) have no confidence in the health system, do not want to be treated in Vranje, prefer to go to Gnjilane / Kosovo" because, as Kladničanin explained, "they are afraid that something could happen to them."*

In the second part of the debate *"Dangerous pandemic of the anti-vaccination movement in Serbia"*, Kladničanin mentioned the leader of the Sandžak Party of Democratic Action / SDA, *Sulejman Ugljanin*, as the leader of the anti-vaccination campaign in Sandžak. Kladničanin said that he believes that the reserves of citizens towards vaccination have nothing to do with their religion, that distrust comes from the manipulation of the victims and that it is clear that the top of the state knew that people were dying in large numbers. *Stasa Zajović* quoted data from a survey on the pandemic in the Western Balkans, which shows that 77.1% of the population of the Western Balkans believe in "conspiracy theories". In Serbia, the low level of vaccinated health workers is worrying, as well as the fact that the anti-vaccine lobby has existed for a long time, has its regular space in tabloids, in national media, that, as in other countries, it is mostly ultra-right nationalists that fuel panic and distrust in vaccination among the citizens. This debate was attended by **17** people.

**21<sup>st</sup> April**

**"On historic revisionism, on anti-fascism in Serbia"** – Prof. Dr. Duško Radosavljević, President of the Alliance of Anti-Fascists of Vojvodina, spoke about this topic. The reason for this conversation with Professor Duško Radosavljević was his text *"Continuation of Politics by Literary Means"* published in *Danas*, in which Radosavljević deals with a critical review of *Vuk Drašković's* novel *"Neither War nor Pact"* (Laguna, 2020). *"The novel itself functions on the principle of combining "conspiracy theories", Serbian national stereotypes and gossip about the pre-war and post-war Belgrade marketplace." During the discussion, they talked about fascism through "falsifying the truth", "equalizing fascists and anti-fascists, rehabilitation of war criminals from World War II and the wars of the 1990s, erasing the anti-fascist heritage from the education system, etc." The debate was attended by **24** people.*

*(Extensive reports in Serbian language from these debates can be found on the WiB website)*

## 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.

### Support to all women victims of sexual violence!

– On January 17, 2021, actress Milena Radulović accused Miroslav Aleksić, the owner of the acting school, of rape. Four more women have pressed the same charges against the suspect. The survivors, two of whom were juveniles at the time of the crime, have charged the suspect with rape and sexual harassment. “Women in Black provide support for the courage shown by women with the trauma of surviving the experience of sexual violence, they believe that the most important thing is to talk about crimes against women that are surrounded not only by silence, but also burdened with guilt and shame. Women in Black call on the judicial institutions of the state of Serbia to take their share of responsibility, and to move from declarative convictions to concrete prosecution and sanctioning of the suspect. In that way, the state would send a clear message not only to the victims that what they are saying is not in vain, but also to the perpetrators that their behavior will not be tolerated; on the contrary, that he will be severely punished”, it is emphasized in the announcement of January 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

### Solidarity with ‘ROG’ in Ljubljana

– WiB condemned the barbaric and illegal demolition of the ‘Rog’ Social Center. Namely, on January 19, 2021, a private security company, with the support of the police, broke into the Social Center ‘ROG’ in Ljubljana and started demolishing buildings and evicting the users of this area. There was brutal physical violence against activists within the demolition area. The old bicycle factory “Rog” was converted more than 15 years ago into one of the most important points of activist - anti-fascist / anti-racist / internationalist resistance not only in Ljubljana but in the entire region and beyond. The ‘Rog’ social center was a center of alternative artistic creation and critical social engagement. The social center “Rog” was a primary refuge for all persecuted, written off, marginalized, oppressed - “The Erased”, victims of ethnic cleansing in Slovenia; war refugees from the Middle East, Africa, Asia ... In recent years, Women in Black from Belgrade have organized numerous activities in the area of ‘Rog’, together with activists of that collective - feminist workshops, meetings of solidarity with refugees, the Erased... The Rog social center has become on the map of an altered Europe, one of the most important points of

internationalist solidarity and anti - fascism, a symbol of resistance to privatization and the relentless plunder of public property. The fight of the Social Center "Rog" is also our fight! ", reads the announcement of January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

## **Against Vulin's racist hate talk**

– Women in Black reacted most vehemently against the verdict of the High Court in Belgrade, by which the current Minister of the Interior, Aleksandar Vulin, was acquitted of the charges of discrimination, insults and hate talk against Albanians. "The court also gave legal and institutional power to hate speech, intolerance and xenophobia against Albanians, especially those living in Serbia. "This legalizes chauvinistic and racist hate speech, which is expressed in the use of the derogatory term 'Shiptars' for Kosovo Albanians", warning that "Such speech of Vulin and his ilk deeply humiliates all citizens of Serbia who do not want to accept the division of human beings into human beings into first and second class citizens, nor the division of peoples into more valuable and less valuable ones", states the announcement of 9<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021.

## **A military service rattle yet again! ENOUGH!**

" - on the occasion of militaristic campaigns for the reintroduction of compulsory military service Women in Black remind that the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia adopted in early 2011 the Decision on the suspension of compulsory military service, and only young men and women who wish to do so are sent to military service. In the past 11 years, there were only 11,000 people on voluntary military service, which indicates a low level of interest of young people in doing military service.

Women in Black unequivocally oppose these campaigns, and there are numerous obstacles to the reintroduction of military service because: The Constitution guarantees the right to conscientious objection, so there is no possibility of introducing military service for those who do not want it, and those who wish that, can do so through voluntary military service; the reintroduction of military service would cost the state enormous resources - instead it is necessary to invest money in human security - health, education, environmental protection, protection of women from violence, etc. "Conscientious objection is a right guaranteed by the Constitution - it is our right to choose, to disobey all forms of militarization of society!" Everything for peace, health and knowledge - nothing for weapons! "It is emphasized in the announcement on February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

## **We remember the crime in Štrpci 27<sup>th</sup> Fer 1993 – 27<sup>th</sup> Fer 2021!**

– WiB statement on the occasion of the 28<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the crime in Štrpci, when members of the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS),

took out and killed 20 passengers, non-Serb civilians, at the railway station in Štrpci (BH), from train number 671, which was traveling on the Belgrade-Bar route. Proceedings before the courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia are currently underway for the crime in Štrpci. On this occasion, the WiB also warned of the discriminatory attitude of the state of Serbia towards the families of victims: "The Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, although responsible for caring for civilian victims of war, has ignored the victims' families for years, most of whom were citizens of Serbia. The legal framework in Serbia is discriminatory, so family members of the victims of this crime were denied their rights only because they died outside the territory of Serbia. They cannot obtain the status of family members of civilian victims of war, even though they were its citizens. That status would provide them with material monthly compensation. Through this act, the state would take responsibility for the crime committed."

### **A pandemic of violence against women**

- on the occasion of March 8, International Women's Day, the Autonomous Women's Center and Women in Black remind of the fact that over the past year, women around the world, faced with new problems in addition to the long-standing ones, due to the Corona virus pandemic and that their labor and reproductive rights were most affected, as well as being exposed to increased domestic violence. "We testify that it increased during the pandemic, but also that at the beginning of this year, many women spoke about the (sexual) violence they'd experienced or were experiencing - inside the home, school, college, workplace, on the street ... We witnessed the historic moment of breaking the silence about sexual violence, which must not be left without the reaction and societal and state support!", it was emphasized in the statement.

### **Stop to racism! Ndal racizmin!**

- In its announcement on the occasion of March 21<sup>st</sup> - International Anti-Racism Day, WiB reiterated its condemnations of hate talk, intolerance and xenophobia against both the Albanian community in Serbia and Kosovo Albanians. The highest representatives of the state of Serbia are introducing the racist and discriminatory term "Shiptar" into official communication. This legalizes chauvinistic and racist hate speech and violates the Constitution and applicable laws, etc.

### **KRIK, CRTA and Open Parliament**

**The crackdown on independent media and civil society organizations (KRIK, CRTA and Open Parliament)** - in the latest appearances of members of the ruling coalition in Serbia, in the regime's tabloids and television, the well-known scenario from



the 1990s is repeated. The current regime uses obscure statements and false information to “marginalize” the marginalized: the few independent media and civil society representatives. “As a civil society organization with decades of experience of being persecuted, Women in Black demands that the institutions of the Republic of Serbia stop persecuting the critical public and that those who prepare us for the ‘dark’ 1990s be sanctioned,” the statement of 24<sup>th</sup> Feb 2021 announced.

## **Démarche to the President of the Russian Federation V. V. Putin**

- Women in Black are protesting to the president of the Russian Federation regarding the continuation of repression against the citizens of Russia and especially the Republic of Ingushetia, who peacefully express their disagreement with the policy of the Russian government and local authorities in Ingushetia. We stand in solidarity with the justified demands of the Memorial - Center for Human Rights.

The peaceful protests that have been taking place since the fall of 2018 in the Republic of Ingushetia, by which the citizens are trying to prevent the manipulations of the formal head of Ingushetia Yunusbek Evkurov and the federal government in Moscow, are being suppressed by force.

Since the beginning of the peaceful protests, dozens of demonstrators ended up in prison due to the alleged conflict with the security forces, although prosecution witnesses also testified in their favor.

These days, seven leaders of this protest Akhmed Barakhoev, Malsag Uzhahov, Barakh Chemurziev, Musa Malsagov, Zarifa Sautieva, Bagaudin Khautiev, Ismail Nalgiev decided to go on a hunger strike in detention, when Zarifa Soutieva, by the decision of the local court, was returned from house arrest to prison. They also stated through their lawyers that they would not participate in the court proceedings.

The Memorial - Center for Human Rights defended them, defining them as political prisoners. According to the Russian law on the activities of non-governmental organizations, this organization is labeled as a “foreign agency”.

The repression has spread abroad as well, as evidenced by the fact that Ingush journalist and activist Izabela Evloeva, who herself provided support to those arrested in front of the Russian Embassy in Prague, was questioned by Embassy staff and then, when she said she was protesting because of the “Ingush case”, she was forced to stop her protest, after the arrival of the Czech police.

Preventing a referendum on how to draw the border between Ingushetia and neighboring Chechnya will allow the seizure of property of citizens of the small republic of Ingushetia, and the announced administrative unification of the two neighboring republics of the Russian Federation will restrict their freedoms and rights guaranteed by international law and the European Convention on Human Rights and Freedoms.

Women in Black as a feminist and anti-militarist organization that opposes abuses of state power, especially against marginalized groups such as the small Ingush people, is seeking support for peaceful protestors in Ingushetia's prisons. Dictatorship regime unites and separates peoples against their will, which is unpleasantly reminiscent of the fate of the people of Ingushetia, who were moved To Kazakhstan during the time of Joseph Stalin.

We will hand over the protest note against the repression of the Russian authorities to the Embassy of the Russian Federation on March 29<sup>th</sup> this year.

## **We remember the beginning of the siege of Sarajevo**

### **– the beginning of war in Bosnia and Herzegovina!**

– On the occasion of the 29<sup>th</sup> anniversary (April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1992-April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021) of the beginning of the war in BH, WiB reminded of the enormous responsibility of the Serbian regime for the war in BH. Demands were repeated: that the state of Serbia stop interfering with the internal affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that the President and Prime Minister of Serbia and all other representatives of the state respect court-established facts about the war in BH and stop denying genocide and all other war crimes in BH; to stop glorifying and rehabilitating convicted war criminals - to establish by law the criminality of denying genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes; that instead of obstructing trials before the Special Court, fair and efficient proceedings should be conducted against those responsible for war crimes; to establish regional cooperation in order to efficiently prosecute war crimes and eliminate the consequences of war, the statement insisted.

## **Who brought in the publication about Srebrenica?**

– in the temporary Covid-19 hospital in Arena, Belgrade, patients have three publications at their disposal, including *Srebrenica - the official lie of an era*. In that brochure, in the edition of "Pečat", it is written that the number of 8,000 victims in Srebrenica was "built up", the evidence of the Hague Tribunal, the testimonies of witnesses and forensic findings are disputed. In the announcement from 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Defense are required to determine who enabled the delivery of a large number of copies of the said publication, and the withdrawal of that publication from the hospital, as well as all other public and state places where it is exhibited. The April 8<sup>th</sup> statement was signed by: Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Women in Black, Belgrade Center for Human Rights, Helsinki Committee for Human Rights, Center for Practical Policy, Center for Applied Policy, Sandžak Committee for Human Rights, Vojvodina Civic Center and Civil action Pančevo.

## Serbia is impelled to extradite Serbian Radical Party officials to The Hague

- Women in Black strongly condemned the Serbian regime's refusal to extradite two Serbian Radical Party officials to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Courts in The Hague. The International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Courts in The Hague has repeatedly asked the Serbian authorities to extradite high-ranking officials of the Serbian Radical Party, Petar Jojić and Vjerica Radeta, but the state of Serbia has always refused to fulfill its international obligation to cooperate with the successor to the Hague tribunal. Petar Jojić and Vjerica Radeta are charged with contempt of court, because they intimidated, threatened and offered bribes to witnesses in the procedure against the leader of the Serbian Radical Party, Vojislav Šešelj, in the Hague Tribunal. Šešelj is a legally convicted war criminal because he encouraged the persecution, deportations and forced displacement of Croats from Vojvodina. The President of Serbia and the SNS, Aleksandar Vučić, a former high-ranking official of the Serbian Radical Party, from which the Serbian Progressive Party was formed, refused to cooperate under the pretext that the two indictees were not charged with war crimes, but with contempt of court. "With this hypocritical act, A. Vučić is trying to hide his role as a colluder who opposed the delivery of war crimes indictees to the Hague Tribunal, he wants to wash away his own responsibility for crimes in which he was not a mere observer but an active participant. "Women in Black demands that competent institutions of the Republic of Serbia respect their international obligations, because international law takes precedence over domestic legislation, and deliver two officials of the Serbian Radical Party to The Hague as soon as possible," it was emphasized in the statement from April 20<sup>th</sup> 2021.

### We remember!

- On the occasion of the 22nd anniversary of the murder of 16 RTS workers, WiB reminds that on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1999, in the NATO bombing of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the building of the Serbian Radio and Television, in Aberdareva Street, in Belgrade, was also hit. At that time, there were 16 workers in the building, who died on that occasion. According to the court-established factual truth, the former director of RTS, Dragoljub Milanović, is responsible for their death. Despite having clear knowledge that the RTS building was going to be bombed, he did not inform his employees about it.

WiB expressed sympathy and solidarity with the families of those killed and reiterated the request to the authorities of the state of Serbia to compensate the families of the victims and to admit their responsibility for this crime.

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**Women in Black, May 2021**