



*žene u crnom
beograd*



Report

**May, June,
July and August
2020**

As before, we bring a brief report on the activities of Women in Black in the mentioned period, and if you are interested in more information, you can find them on our web site www.zeneucrnom.org or contact us by mail: office@zeneucrnom.org

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During this period, the amount of activities was reduced due to the pandemic virus COVID 19, one of the largest natural disasters that has ever affected the entire planet. State of emergency was imposed in Serbia, unconstitutionally, without Parliament, on March 15, 2020. COVID 19 pandemia was used as an excuse for mass violation of human rights, unlawful detentions, brutal suppression of independent media, political prosecution, intensification of militarization of the state and the society and these tendencies continued after the end of state of emergency, May 6th 2020.

Street actions:

In this reporting period we organized eight **(8)** events, and we also actively participated in other street actions:

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

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

May 22th, Kruševac

We Remember Brave Resistance of Women! – Women's organization „Peščanik“ from Kruševac and Women in Black, Belgrade marked the 21th anniversary of the women's protest against forced mobilization in 1999. This peace action, organized on the occasion of May 24th – International Day of Women's Action for Peace and Disarmament, activists recalled the courageous resistance of women to mobilization and war in Kosovo.



In memory of that day, activists stood on the square holding banners with inscriptions:

- *We remember the courage of the women of the Rasina district*
- *We remember women's resistance to forced mobilization*
- *Women courage*

On this occasion, in the main city square, was made by Aleksandra Beba Jelić (WIB activist)

artistic play *Women courage* – transformation of pain into women's active resistance.

In this action participated fifteen (**15**) activists.

Women's Association "Pescanik", Women's Network of Rasina District and Women in Black Network mark this day since 2014. The mentioned associations send an initiative every year to the City of Kruševac to declare May 24th the Day of Remembrance for the Revolt against Forced Mobilization in Kruševac and Rasina District in 1999.

In the initiative, among other things, it states: "In May 1999, several thousand mothers, sisters, wives and citizens marched day by day in the streets of the city demanding the end of the war in Kosovo and the termination of the mobilization of men. We still do not know who is responsible for 12,000 mobilized during 3 months and 52 dead people in Rasina district. We still do not know who is responsible for the immense losses, suffering, and traumas of women caused by the forced mobilization of their male relatives." So far, the authorities have been silent about this initiative.

**June 19th, Foča
(Bosnia and Herzegovina),**

"We Remember Women Raped in War in Bosnia and Herzegovina"
– On the occasion of the 19th of June - the International Day Against Sexual Violence in War, the action performed by *War victims associations Foča 92-95 from Sarajevo*.



The UN General Assembly declared June 19, 2015, the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in War. During the war, over 3,000 Bosniaks were killed in Foča, of whom one in three victims were women; Foča is at the very top of the scale in terms of the number of raped women; in Foča, girls were also raped, the youngest of whom was only 11 years old, it is stated in the invitation of the Foča Association 92-95.

The following activities were organized within this event:

- *Protest in front of the Partizan Sports Hall* (as one of the many places of detention and sexual violence against women) flowers were laid and honor was paid to all abused and killed women in Bosnia. On this occasion spoke: Halida Konjo Uzunovic, President of the Association of War Victims FOCA 92-95, Staša Zajović, Women in Black, Belgrade, Melika Mahmutbegović, Vicepresidente of Federation of B&H;

Peaceful march on the streets of Foča with banners (from the Partizan Hall to the Main Square);

- *Standing on the Main Square* commemorating all abused women in Bosnia;

- *Continuing our march through the city towards Aladza Mosque backyard* – hanging out/meet up.

In this event participated **50** persons and four **(4)** Women in Black Network activists.





**Belgrade, 10. jul
Srebrenica**

“We will never forget the Srebrenica genocide” – on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, Women in Black and art collective ‘Škart’ organized peace action in black and silence, in Republic Square.

Two banners were displayed during the standing:

- *We will never forget the Srebrenica genocide*
- *Responsibility*
- *Solidarity*

The peace action wearing black and in silence was carried out on the Republic Square (near the monument), and consisted of the following segments:

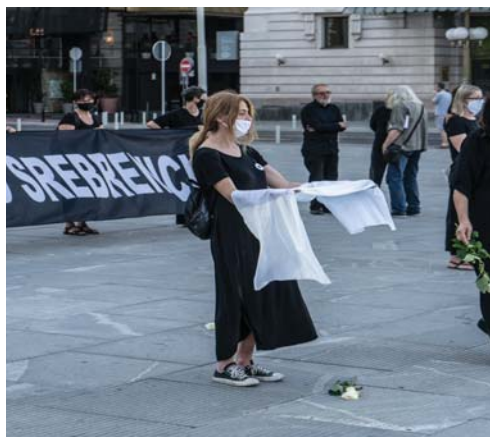
Installation of a symbolic / living memorial - continuation of the construction of a monument to the victims of the Srebrenica genocide. At the beginning of the action, the activists held a black cloth / black flora – a symbol of pain and grief – with the inscription ‘We will never forget the genocide in Srebrenica’. Then, on the highest step of the monument “by the Horse”, a large black banner was placed, which reads **25** years.

Silver foils

- in the continuation of the action, the activists held **25** silver foils / mirrors with the number **8372...** the number of people killed in the genocide. By this act, we present to the public space what is being denied/diminished in the majority public of Serbia - the scale of the genocide in Srebrenica.



White scarves



– white color – a symbol of grief / sorrow of the community of victims, a couple of activists came out to the central part of the Square wearing white scarves - bringing to the public space what the state and society deny; the activists then spread their scarves and held them in wide open arms - an act of commitment to the victims. Then, white scarves were distributed to all participants in the action, and “taking over” white scarves is an act of compassion and responsibility towards the victims. At the end of the action, white roses were laid on the sidewalk – a symbol of tenderness towards the victims of genocide.



The action lasted shorter than the planned time, it was held in a very tense atmosphere, both due to strict epidemiological measures, and primarily due to the attack of a fascist group of men.

They tried to stop the action, the fascists shouted: “Long live Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic”, “Srebrenica is not genocide”, etc. It is obvious that they were instructed by the regime to stop the peace action of Women in Black.

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

Belgrade, May 18th



During this period, we organized the following street actions:

„We remember killed women“ – on the occasion of May 18th, Day of remembrance of women killed in domestic violence, Autonomous Women’s Center and Women in Black organized a vigil on the Republic Square in Belgrade.



On the protest following banners were held:

- *May 18th, Day of remembrance of women killed in domestic violence*
- *Not a single woman less*
- *Why are they not among us?*
- *Stop the pandemic of domestic violence*
- *During the state of emergency domestic violence became much higher*
- *Since the beginning of the year at least 6 women were killed*
We must react until it's too late



About ten (10) women attended the vigil.

Belgrade, June 8th

„Justice for George Floyd – Solidarity with ANTIFA protests in USA“

On the occasion of ANTIFA protests in the USA, Women in Black Belgrade and Civil action from Pančevo organized a peace protest wearing black and in silence.



On the protest following banners were held:

- *Justice for George Floyd / Pravda za Džordža Flojda*
- *Solidarity with ANTIFA protests in USA / Solidarnost sa ANTIFA protestima u SAD-u*
- *Black lives matter / Crni životi su važni*
- *White silence is compliance / Belačko ćutanje = saučesništvo*
- *No justice = no peace / Nema pravde = nema mira*
- *Stop police brutality / Stop policijskoj brutalnosti*
- *Stop racism / Stop rasizmu*
- *Proud to be ANTIFA / ANTIFA ponosna*

Twenty **(20)** activists took part in this action.

**Kruševac, June 10th,
June 19th and July 10th**

„ Justice for Maria Lukic“ – protests in front of the Basic Court in Krusevac in solidarity with Marija Lukic, a victim of sexual harassment committed by Milutin Jelacic Jutka, the former mayor of Brus. Marija Lukic filed a criminal complaint against him in 2018, after Jutka had been sending her thousands of text messages during the period of two years while she was employed as his secretary. The court process ended in May 2019 at the Basic Court in Brus, but Lukic’s lawyer asked for the process to be moved to the Basic Court in Krusevac after the attacks on Lukic. Women in Black participated in the protests together with the Women’s Association of Pescanik from Krusevac.

Women in Black activists participated in the anti-regime „July protests“ in Belgrade.

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).

VISITING THE PLACES OF CRIME COMMITTED IN OUR NAME AS WELL AS OTHER CRIMES AGAINST THE CIVILIAN POPULATION DURING THE WARS IN THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA:

June 19th

– Gathering with family victims, after commemoration act in Foča (BH), on the occasion of the 19th of June – the International Day Against Sexual Violence in War.

July 11, Srebrenica

“Solidarity and Responsibility” - commemoration in the Memorial Center Potocari / Srebrenica. In the Potocari Memorial Center where a burial of remains of the killed people was carried out. Four **(4)** Women in Black Network activists attended the ceremony.

July 14 and August 3,

Lucani “Solidarity with the Milivojevic family from Lucani” – on July 14 and August 3, 2020, as a sign of solidarity and sympathy with the Milivojevic family from Lucani (western Serbia), Women in Black activists from Belgrade attended a commemoration at the cemetery in Lucani on the occasion of the third anniversary of the death of Milomir Milivojevic. Workers Milomir Milojevic and Miloško Ignjatovic died in a gunpowder explosion in the factory “Milan Blagojevic-Namenska” from Lucani on July 14, 2017. For more than two years now, the Milovanović family has been asking the state authorities to shed light on the circumstances of the tragedy in the factory. Criminal proceedings have been pending before the Basic Court in Ivanjica since October 2019, and WiB activists followed all the hearings.

WOMEN’S SOLIDARITY FOR THE PUNISHMENT OF WAR CRIMES

– actions of women’s solidarity – feminist ethics of care and responsibility, acts of mutual support, exchange and cooperation in the region in order to build a just peace. WiB activists met with women and families of victims after marking the anniversary of the crime, as discussed in previous sections of this report.

Besides this, WiB activists visited:

**June 25th, Đulići
(Bosnia and Herzegovina)**

– gathering and exchange with women from the Zvornik area.

**June, 26th, Tuzla
(Bosnia and Herzegovina)**

– WiB activists visited Reiha Avdic, a Srebrenica genocide survivor and witness at Women’s Court.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE CRIMES –THE PATH TO JUST PEACE: MONITORING THE TRIALS AT THE SPECIAL COURT

During this reporting period, many trials were canceled due to the epidemiological situation, so we will list the trials that were held.

Trial for the crime in Kravica

– before the War Crimes Chamber of the Special Court in Belgrade (killing 1313 Bosnian Muslims, within the Srebrenica genocide, on July 13, 1995).

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

In this reporting period, two hearings were held: *May 28th and July 7th*

Trial for the war crime in Štrpci

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

For this crime were accused: Gojko Lukić, Ljubiša Vasiljević, Duško Vasiljević, Jovan Lipovac and Dragana Đekić.

In this reporting period only one hearing was held: *June 1st*.

War Crimes Trial in Kalinovik Bosnia and Herzegovina

– The indictment of the War Crimes Prosecutor's Office alleges that Dalibor Krstovic, along with another unknown member of the Republika Srpska Army (VRS), came to the Miladin Radojevic Elementary School in Kalinovik in August 1992 where Bosniak civilians, mostly women and children and a small number of men, were illegally detained, and that Krstović raped a Bosniak woman. After that, she was raped by an unidentified member of the VRS who was with Krstović. The accused Krstović denies these accusations.

In this reporting period, two hearings were held:

July 14

– The public was denied details due to poor video-conferencing with the Court of Bosnia, and then the turning off of the interviewing of the protected witness from the public happened. Namely, the public could not listen to the interview of the first witness (Bosniak) at the Krstović trial.

July 21

– The trial was held at 10 am and not at 1 pm, but the public was not informed about the change of the trial date on the website of the Prosecutor's Office, nor was the schedule updated so that those interested were denied to get a hold of the content of this

hearing. This situation often happens by changing the terms without informing the public. It often happens that trials are postponed or canceled without the public (media and NGOs following the trials) being informed.

Brcko war crime trial (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

On May 28, 2019, the trial against defendant Milos Cajevic began. Deputy War Crimes Prosecutor, Mioljub Vitorovic, read the indictment alleging that the accused Miloš Čajić, a member of the Republika Srpska Army, from May to July 1992 in the town of Brčko commits the following offenses of intimidation and terror; improper treatment and crimes of sexual violence.

The hearing scheduled for *July 13* has been postponed to September 24. The reason for the delay is that the accused was not brought to trial from the prison in Sremska Mitrovica, where he is serving a 6-year sentence for another crime - the murder of a 66 year-old Bosniak woman in 1993.

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

ARTISTIC ENGAGEMENT IN DEALING WITH THE PAST / TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

During this period, the practice of joint work and cooperation between art collectives, professional theaters, artists engaged in artistic design of resistance to war, war crimes, repression, human rights violations has continued. In this reporting period we organized following few working meetings with art collectives: Škart and Dah theater – preparation of street activities regarding 25 anniversary Srebrenica genocide.

VIDEO ACTIVISM: TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE – FEMINIST APPROACH

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

During this reporting period, the group realized the following video materials:

– **“We will never forget Srebrenica genocide”** (5:20 min.) – street action on occasion of 25 anniversary of Srebrenica genocide.

– **„Svenka“** – a documentary about a psycholinguist, professor emeritus Svenka Savić (45 minutes) produced by the WUC Video Activism Group; screenplay and direction by *Fahrudin Kladničanin*, cinematographer *Nedjo Gavrić*, editing by *Marija Arandjelović*.

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:

“The corona phantom is circulating around the world ...”

– the meeting of “emergency” of the Women in Black Network (June 12, 13 and 14, 2020, Radmilovac near Belgrade)

There were **32** people from the following cities that participated in this meeting of “emergency” of the Women in Black Network: Belgrade, Krusevac, Leskovac, Novi Sad, Nis, Zajecar, Priboj na Limu, Pancevo. Unfortunately, due to the coronavirus pandemic, this meeting could not be attended by activists from other countries of the former Yugoslavia, or the International Network of WiB. Experts from the academic community, media and art, activists of the Network from all over Serbia participated, and for epidemiological reasons, a smaller number than usual. The meeting took place in the form of lectures, feminist discussion circles - space for acquiring knowledge and joint reflection on important issues that concern us in relations with the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this report, we provide a brief overview of the presentation:

Friday, June 12

From a pandemic to a scientific revolution – said **prof. Dr. Aleksej Kišjuhas**, sociologist, assistant professor at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad, regular columnist for Danas

Kišjuhas believes that: *“A virus is a natural organism, created naturally, by mutation, and not artificially.” He went on to oppose the anthropocentric view of the world: “Man is not the measure of all things. We are not the only species of living beings. Species clash in the process of natural selection, they disappear, without human intervention, and in the function of their own defense ‘.*



Covid-19 affects everyone, especially the most vulnerable: "The virus does not choose race, nation, religion, but our social organization is such that it has made some groups more vulnerable to the virus than others." In the United States and elsewhere, most affected are workers who cannot afford the kind of luxury of staying at home to isolate themselves ... "

Unlike national / sovereign policies within the EU and European countries in general, which were largely guided by the principle of 'my country first', societies and communities *"practiced mutual assistance, respect, trust, kindness and humor throughout the world - empathy and solidarity,"* said Kišjuhas.



Epidemiology in the function of public health protection, and not by order of the regime – said *prof. Dr. Zoran Radovanović*, epidemiologist, regular professor at the Faculty of Medicine in Belgrade, retired. Dr. Radovanović participated in curbing the epidemic of smallpox / variola in SFR Yugoslavia (1972). At that time, he was a regular professor of epidemiology at the medical faculties in Belgrade (until 2000) and Kuwait (until 2007).

At the beginning of his presentation, Dr. Radovanović explained the genesis of the virus caused by the *'ruthless destruction of natural resources in the process of technological progress, which forces man to respond in the form of genetic mutations or other changes... Everything we did to dominate the planet, what we relentlessly destroy, has its consequences. We have that anthropocentric view of the world and then we say we were attacked by viruses. In fact, we attacked them.'*

Regarding the epidemiological measures in Serbia: *"In 1972, I worked on it, we suppressed smallpox, we did not declare a state of emergency and the then law on emergency situations worked great. The current state of emergency was declared for political reasons, to consolidate the power of the absolutist A. Vučić, for the purpose of the election campaign."*

Dr Radovanović explained that the doctors from the Crisis Staff

complied with the regime's orders and not with epidemiological / health reasons, supported the regime's most repressive measures and then abolished almost all epidemiological measures: *'The Crisis Staff in Serbia, together with the regime, carried out a sadistic experiment on people: there is no prison in the world that bans 65+ persons from going outside for more than 40 days'*



As far as *vaccination* is concerned, compulsory vaccination has existed in Serbia since 1839 and was mostly compulsory. *"The problem is that in this unfortunate country, no one trusts the authorities. As soon as the government says something, there is a reservation about the fact that they use the anti-vaccination movement. It would be highly desirable for 80% of the costs to go to the health fund. If the vaccine was formally obligatory, no one should punish those who do not get vaccinated,"* said Dr. Radovanović.

Pandemics and apocalypses in the world of art – *Marta Joksimović*, retired educator from Priboj by Lim River, presented the pandemic in early Renaissance art, which in their works portrayed the horrors of the pandemic: **Hieronymus Bosch**, Dutch artist (1450 -1516); **Peter Brueghel** (1525-1569), Flemish painter; **Albrecht Dürer** (1471-1528), German painter, graphic artist, art theorist; **Francisco Goya** (1746-1828), Spanish painter.

"Until just a few centuries ago, Europe was a place of constant warfare, misery, infectious diseases, the persecution of witches. Europe was also a place of ignorance, even educated people believed that witches caused infectious diseases, shipwrecks and droughts, from the 15th to the 18th century in Europe about 100,000 women accused of witchcraft and having sexual relations with the devil were executed or burned. During the isolation, we were constantly exposed to media pressure, Covid 19 was constantly on the screen, provoking unpleasant emotions, visually disturbing. However, we discovered the importance of art in our lives, it was also an opportunity to activate some of our captive potentials, to awaken our creative abilities. It was a pleasure to dedicate myself to the history of art ... " Marta emphasized.

Saturday, June 13

Legal and socio-economic aspect of the state of emergency (derogation of human rights, repression of refugees and migrants during corona); **repression of independent media** - the case of Ana Lalic

The following spoke:

Nikola Kovačević, lawyer, activist of the NGO **A11** – Initiative for Economic and Social Rights, Belgrade:

“Since the declaration of the state of emergency, the authorities have annulled all human rights. First, they denied us the right to freely inform ourselves. The regime has thus violated all international conventions on human rights and civil liberties, as well as the Constitution of Serbia. For example, 65+ people were not only restricted in their right to freedom of movement - it was deprivation of liberty. There was a lot of illogicality, contradiction and disorganization in the measures they brought. They said to wash our hands, to keep our distance, and at the same time, in Roma settlements, people had neither electricity nor water. The recommendations were that not many people should stay in a small space, and they locked 9,000 refugees in spaces with a capacity of up to 3,000. These people slept like sardines under tents, there were armed soldiers and armored vehicles around the camps (there are a total of 18 in Serbia), wires were placed around the camps. Some of the refugees rebelled, so then the private security started beating people with wooden and metal poles”; Nikola emphasized.

Ana Lalić, journalist of the informative portal Nova.rs, Novi Sad

Ana Lalic was arrested on April 1, 2020, on charges of “spreading misinformation aimed at causing panic.” She was arrested because of a text on the medical staff at the Clinical Center of Vojvodina not having adequate medical care, contrary to what the Crisis Staff claimed. The president and the prime minister have publicly accused her of lying. It was released thanks to the quick reaction of journalists’ associations and international organizations.

Ana said: *“The state of emergency was a violation of all human rights. We lived in a madness that led us to paranoia. It was a mental torture of our minds ...”*



The coronavirus pandemic and the Serbian Orthodox Church / SOC – speech held by **Dr. Vukasin Milicevic**, Assistant Professor at the Orthodox Theological Faculty in Belgrade

On March 28, the Serbian government recommended to churches and religious communities that religious rites be performed without the presence of believers and with respect for protection measures. However, the highest representatives of the Serbian Orthodox Church / SOC stated that communion cannot pose a health risk, etc. Due to inaccurate and contradictory information, the believers attended church rites, especially for Easter (April 2020), but neither the Serbian Orthodox Church nor the state reacted. On TV N1 (the Utisak nedelje show, March 29, 2020), Dr. Milićević spoke about the harmful attitudes of the Synod of the Serbian Orthodox Church towards coronavirus, that 'churches and religious communities should hear the word of experts and society' and after that, the SOC patriarch Irinej forbade Milićević to appear in public, suspended him as a priest, and sent him to the Church Court.

Milicevic emphasized that the Serbian Orthodox Church did not adhere to epidemiological / health criteria during religious ceremonies, especially during Orthodox Easter: *"Accusations of heresy and disobedience followed. I was accused of not respecting the decisions of either the Synod or the Church Council, of denying the church as such, of being a leftist ..."*

Milicevic believes that the principle of secularism in Serbia has been violated for a long time, that *"the Serbian Orthodox Church has been a hostage of the most conservative currents for several decades, not only politically, but also religiously."*

Violence against women in a state of emergency – institutional response and feminist support for women victims of violence - spoke **Dr. Tanja Ignjatović**, psychologist; Autonomous Women's Center / AWC

Initially, she referred to the continuum of violence against women: *"Every year in Serbia, men kill an average of thirty women, and there are about 12 attempted murders, and it is not known how many suicides and suicide attempts as a result of severe violence that women suffer from men they know." The violence in which they live most resembles a state of emergency, that is, curfew every day. This state of emergency is something that every bully would naturally want - to ban a woman or to control both physical and emotional and informative and every other kind of support, every communication. The bullies - controllers and manipulators - have been given "encouragement" so that they can do whatever they want within the four walls."*

AWC stated that in the largest number of cases, women reported various forms of psychological violence that they experienced, and economic violence was more and more emphasized, while the number of reported cases of physical violence was the lowest. However, this does not mean that women do not survive physical

violence during the state of emergency, but rather that women living with abusive partners / family members are unable or afraid to report violence during curfew. Mandatory isolation is detention with a bully: *"Some women go to the police and say that the bully threatens to kill her, and the police take her to a misdemeanor judge, who fines her 50,000 dinars for violating the restraining order,"* Tanja warned.

The evolution of coronavirus – Dr Biljana Stojković, professor at the Faculty of Biology in Belgrade and civic activist

At the beginning of her presentation, Dr. Stojković showed a graphic cross-section of the contents of the SARS-CoV-2 virus (the cause of the Covid-19 disease) and emphasized that the virus is a cell-free organism that *"has something alive"*, although it does not have all the elements of a living cell. She explained *the way the virus multiplies* in a living cell, as well as the specificity of the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which makes it extremely easy to spread.

Dr. Stojković mentioned that there are seven coronaviruses that attack people, but that only three of them are dangerous. In addition to the latest COVID-19 challenge, there are 2002 SARS-CoV-1 and 2009 MERS-CoV. They are, she said, more lethal than the SARS-COV-2 virus, but they are less transmitted. She explained the exceptional infectivity of the new virus with a novelty in its genome in relation to the two previously discovered. Regarding the conclusions of *"conspiracy theorists"* that the virus that plagues the planet was *"conceived"* in a laboratory, Stojković believes that *the virus is not artificial*. Evolutionary biology can trace the origin of this virus, its origin and viral potential. She warned of the political abuse of coronavirus, etc.

Coronavirus and class-social aspect – Đokica Jovanović, professor of sociology at the Faculty of Philosophy BU, retired

He warned of the collapse of the public sector, primarily health care, and now the consequences are at work. In the last few decades, no investment has been made in hospital buildings or medical staff in Serbia and the entire Balkans. Neither the state nor society has responded to the epidemic. Here, autodidactic politicians have taken on the role of doctors, etc.

Explosion of conspiracy theories during the pandemic – in a conversation based on some previously distributed texts, participants pointed out that the coronavirus pandemic, both in our country and around the world, has fostered numerous conspiracy theories: *'the scientists made coronavirus'*, *'the pharmaceutical mafia created the virus so it could sell the vaccine'*, *'the pandemic is a front for migrants to settle across Europe'*, etc. However, it is positive that half of the examinees in Serbia do not believe in conspiracy theories', according to the research of the Center for International Public Policy, April 2020.



Closing session on the same day **'From despair to creative rebellion'** – screening of videos against political abuse during the pandemic and the state of emergency

Sunday, June 14

Elections during the epidemic – Rasa Nedeljkov, program director of the NGO CRTA (Center for Research, Transparency and Accountability)

The elections were scheduled for April 26, but were postponed to June 21, 2020 due to the pandemic. The state of emergency and the pandemic were abused for pre-election activities: 'The entire state of emergency was used by the media for pre-election purposes. Our media monitoring showed that 91% of the time, people from the government were present. In the last two weeks of March, there were 99% of them. Every other of them was President Vučić'. Most opposition parties called for a boycott of the elections because there were no epidemiological or elementary conditions for democratic and fair elections. The elections held on June 21 ended with the absolute victory of the ruling coalition, and for the first time since the fall of the Milosevic regime, the Serbian parliament doesn't have a pro-European opposition MP.

Reflections on the pandemic by writers, philosophers, doctors, activist networks: Olga Tokarčuk, Orhan Pamuk, Arundati Roy, Carlos Martin Beristain, Maja Krek, Hrvoje Jurić, Ivan Đikić, essays were previously sent and then commented on at this session by the activists of the WiB Network.

During the **evaluation**, the following views and opinions crystallized:

–Passing on the knowledge by independent experts, acquisition of knowledge, joint reflection, breaking taboos about coronavirus ...

– Political and emotional significance of meeting up after the period of isolation - a space of solidarity, mutual support, closeness was created...



It was agreed that the next meeting of the Network (September 17, 18 and 19, 2020) will be dedicated to numerous aspects of the pandemic, as well as other issues.

(You can find the 43-page integrated report on this meeting (in Serbian) on our website)

In this reporting period, we also organized numerous meetings / conversations with activists of the WiB Network regarding the coronavirus pandemic, which will be discussed in more detail in the section 'Solidarity is our strength'.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

– in addition to the aforementioned, were realized within the Network:

Women's Peace Activism, Đulici, Bosnia and Herzegovina

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

In this reporting period, one meeting was organized:

– women from a dozen villages from the area of Zvornik, Tuzla, as well as two WiB activists from Belgrade participated in the sixteenth (16) meeting. At this meeting, we discussed various aspects and consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. Since they live in a rural area, they were dedicated to agricultural work, they could move without any restrictions (*'we worked in the fields, hung out, drank coffee together ...'*). However, they were most affected by the atmosphere of fear and the media use of the pandemic.

To women from the area of Zvornik and Tuzla who suffered the



June 25 – 21

most severe war tragedies, loss of loved ones, expulsions during the nineties, we asked questions about the frequent **comparison of coronavirus and war, the use of war terminology during the pandemic, etc.**



'You can never compare war and corona,' says most women, and they explain the great differences: in the war (1992- 95) their closest ones, primarily male relatives, were killed, expelled, starved, forced into exile, and in relation to this they perceive coronavirus as *'something normal, without fear of scarcity and expulsion'*); however, they feel vulnerable because *'coronavirus is everywhere in the world'*.



Use of the pandemic – psychological war: *'Everything that happened around coronavirus is some kind of war, primarily psychological war; the atmosphere of fear and abuse influenced us to remember the traumas of the war even more ... '*

During this meeting, the women talked about mutual support and solidarity among women witnesses of the Women's Court and the WiB Network by: frequent telephone contacts, communication on social networks, etc.

Humor and laughter against the corona virus – projection of video clips during a pandemic and state of emergency; screening of



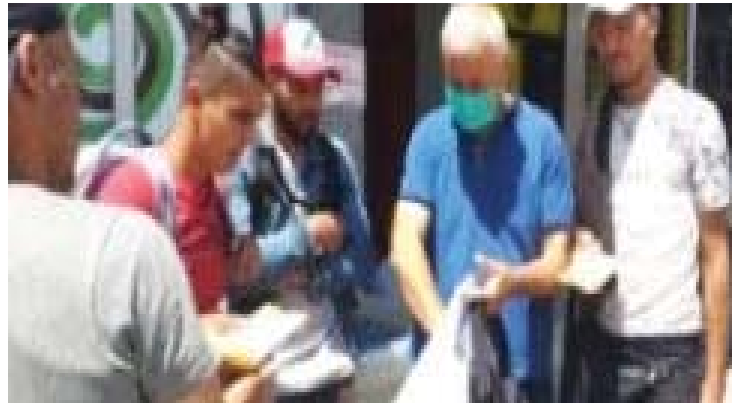
documentary material of the WUC Video Activism Group. During the evaluation, the participants expressed great satisfaction with direct contact, and joint activities in the coming period were agreed.

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, 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, 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 activists: *June 20th and 24th and July 7th and 13th.*



In addition to this, solidarity with war refugees Women in Black is expressed by other activities:

Reports – 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 pandemia.

II Solidarity with Marija Lukic – Trials for sexual harassment in Krusevac

Marija Lukic is a victim of sexual harassment committed by Milutin Jelacic Jutka, the former mayor of Brus. Marija Lukic filed a criminal complaint against him in 2018 because he sent her about 15,000 SMS messages during her two years as his secretary. An indictment was filed against M. Jelacic Jutka on July 20th, 2018 for two criminal offenses: sexual harassment and unlawful sexual acts through abuse of office. The trial began on May 27, 2019 in the Basic Court in Brus, when the defendants' supporters organized verbal and physical assaults on Marija Lukic and us who support her. At the request of M. Lukic and her lawyer, the trial was transferred to the Basic Court in Krusevac. All sessions were attended by WIB activists.

In this reporting period, two hearings were held:

June 10 and 19 – The Basic Court in Krusevac rejected the prosecution's proposal to order custody of the accused Milutin Jelacic Jutka. Custody was requested after neither the accused Jutka nor his legal team appeared at this hearing, although the police tried unsuccessfully on two occasions to detain the accused. On two occasions, on June 10 and 19, without a valid excuse, he failed to appear in court in Krusevac. It should be noted that M.J. Jutka obstructed the trial all the time, putting pressure on the judiciary and the police.

July 10 – Former mayor of Brus, Milutin Jelacic Jutka, is sentenced on July 10 by a first-instance verdict to three months of unconditional imprisonment for sexually harassing Marija Lukic.

After several refusals to appear at the trial, M.J. Jutka finally appeared in the Basic Court in Kruševac on July 10 to present his closing arguments, but he did not attend the sentencing. Marija Lukić stated: "I am satisfied because M.J. Jutka is the first politically powerful man to be convicted of his crime. I went through terrible pressures. I was afraid of prolongation, cancellation, obsolescence ... I was afraid of the power and influence of M.J. Jutka. That is why we did not want to insist on the crime of "sexual harassment" because we were aware that further actions and presentation of evidence risk obsolescence. " The Women Against Violence Network also believes that this is a 'historic victory for all women – M. Lukić is the first woman in Serbia to win justice in court against a powerful man'.

Since May 2019, eight **(8)** hearings have been held, with a large number of hearings being postponed. At all hearings, M. Lukić was supported in front of the court in Kruševac by the following organizations: Peščanik, Women in Black, the Let's Not Drown Belgrade Initiative, etc.

III Solidarity with the Milivojevic Family from Lucani – The Ivanjica trials

Criminal proceedings against the Director General of the Milan Blagojevic-Namenska Arms Factory, Lucani – Rados Milovanovic and two executives from the same factory (Vladimir Loncarevic and Toma Stojic). They are charged with 'committing a serious crime against general security' because on July 14th, 2017, workers Milomir Milojevic and Miloško Ignjatovic were killed after a gunpowder explosion.

At the hearing held on **June 11** before the Basic Court in Ivanjica, Tomo Stojić, the head of the Occupational Safety and Health Sector in the mentioned arms industry, was heard. Stojic, like R. Milovanovic and V. Loncarevic previously questioned, pleaded not guilty. At the beginning of the trial,

Dragan Palibrk, R. Milovanović's lawyer suggested that due to the epidemiological situation the hearing of T. Stojić ends. Milovan Milivojevic, the father of the deceased Milomir Milivojevic, opposed this, saying: "Today is the **112th** time for me to come to court because of this and I ask the court not to delay the procedure. I am convinced that the accused want to delay this procedure." Mirjana Milovojević, the sister of the killed worker, testified that Radoš Milovanović, during the break of the trial, cursed her mother in the hall, to which her father Milovan reacted, asking the court to protect his family. The next hearing is scheduled for September 1, 2020.

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

IV Solidarity with activists during pandemia (COVID 19) and state of emergency

Since the pandemic started we established various ways of mutual support and solidarity within WiB Network: daily telephone and social networks contacts with activists in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia; visits and providing food for activists in Belgrade, especially those over 65 who were quarantined; distribution of modest humanitarian aid for the most socially vulnerable activists. Therapists' team of the Women's Court active in the whole region gave psychological support to activists. Also, we were in constant communication with activists of the International Network of Women in Black from Italy, Spain, GB, but also Turkey and Latin America, and friends from the USA etc. This gave us an insight into various dimensions and consequences of pandemia – political, social-class, gender, militarist, etc. We continued this activity after the end of the state of emergency – May 6th 2020.

Visits/gatherings/exchange with activists – collective pondering on the different aspects of the pandemic: we organized 'mini' feminist discussion circles with participation of the core activists of WiB network, and with the activists from the area of Zvornik and Tuzla (Bosnia i Hercegovina) too.

– **Serbia:** in the period u periodu from May 10th to mid-July we visited eleven (11) places: (Novi Sad and Petrovaradin (May 10th); Subotica (May 11th); Leskovac i Vlasotince (May 15th); Kruševac (May 22th); Kikinda (June 2nd); Pančevo (June 5th)); Lučani (Jun 11th and July 14th), Kraljevo (July 14th);

– **Belgrade:** we organized in WiB premises four rounds of discussions (May 13th, 20th, 27th and June 17th).

– **The spectre of Corona is haunting the world':** in the meeting held June 12/14 in Radmilovac near Belgrade **32** persons participated from some ten towns in Serbia, as we already reported in details, but since most of them previously took part in our visits, a special discussion was organized with activists who were not part of feminist discussion circles (Zrenjanin, Zaječar and Priboj on Lim).

–**Đulići, Bosnia and Herzegovina:** within educational program 'Women's Peace Activism' (June 25th and 26th) in Đulici we discussed consequences of the pandemic with participation of **21** women from some ten places in the area of Tuzla and Zvornik in BiH.

In 'mini' feminist discussion circles sixty female and five male activists participated, total of 65 and 32 participants in Radmilovac to be added. So, around hundred (**100**) persons were involved in discussions on pandemic and its consequences. Although it is a limited number, we think that the positions of the persons with whom we held the discussions reflect perceptions, thinking and feelings of a far wider circle of people. Namely, because of health/epidemiology reasons we did not invite larger circles but decided to invite the core of WiB Network only.

Challenges of activism in the Corona times – during these encounters and discussions we got precious experiences and findings. We are listing the following:

About activism and its challenges:

– *Activism is a direct communication, a space for direct collective pondering and this can't and must not be replaced by alienated digital communication – turnout was bigger than expected;*

– *Solidarity among activists of WiB Network was alive on local, regional and global levels; mutual support and exchange*

strengthened both relations of trust and friendship as well as political, feminist-antimilitarist, principles;

– *Critical questioning of activist, especially feminist engagement, because of the danger of depolitization of feminism and ,NGO jobs’;*

– *Rebellion is a right, and the crisis and shakes even strengthen activist, duty’ to react, and breaking rules and repressive measures are acts of legitimate, justified and just resistance. Etc.*

On consequences of pandemic on economic-social level:

– *State of shock provoked by drastic repressive measures and regime propaganda marginalized the economic aspect – contrary to expectations, the discussion was less focused on these questions, probably because in the first months of pandemic some reserves existed, and dramatic consequences will be seen in next period;*

– *Women are the most struck by pandemic – women are the most employed in the caring professions, services, production and education, where they are exposed to exploitation and humiliation; a large number of women in precarious work, gray economy, lost their jobs, and those who did not, were exposed to the risk of loosing it; factory workers in south Serbia are in the worst situation (Jura etc.) they don’t have protection means, suffer blackmail, dismissal, reprisal and humiliation daily; activists with steady jobs, because of salary reduction merely survive; many activists, freelance journalists, artists, workers... lost their regular income; because of taking care of elderly in the family many activists could not fulfill their duties at work, etc.*

Ethics of care – taking care of others on personal, family level:

– *Traditional gender role of taking care of others: mostly women were occupied with taking care of members of their families, physical assistance, emotional work, material aid... thus keeping relative emotional balance of the family; drastic measure of prohibition of movement for those over 65 was enormous physical and emotional burden; next to invisible, unpaid, unrecognized physical and emotional work in the household, women were obliged to do pedagogical work, also invisible and unrecognized and unpaid, due to online schooling; social/gender imposed sacrifice has been accompanied by serious health consequences;*

– *Not all the activists were in the same situation – part of them, mostly those who live alone, did not have to take care of others as fulfilling a family duty; caring for others as an ethical and political choice was far easier to activists;*

– *Pandemic of violence against women during the state of emergency – women reported various forms of psychological and economic violence, and during the state of emergency they were imprisoned with violent partners/family members and were scared to report violence during curfew;*

– *Retraditionalization* – *women back to homes* – ,During pandemic women were entitled for absolute responsibility for home and family, enormous burden of duties was put on them and they had to carry it, without choice' (Snežana O.).

Alternatives – strategies of resistance on personal level; feminist ethics of care = balance of taking care of others and of oneself: women developed various practices of taking care of themselves, building their spiritual, emotional and intellectual resorts; for some women ,quarantine' was higher level of time and space control; some activists imagined their utopian projects in ecofeminist key – closeness with and within nature. Instead of anthropocentric dominant positions that ,men is a measure of all things' they discovered beauty of rhythms of nature instead of merciless destruction of natural resources which is one of the causes of the pandemic. Activists practiced concept of feminist ethics of care – ethics principle of solidarity in care and global vulnerability; feminist ethics of care and responsibility appeared also in keeping relations within international women's peace community.

During collective pondering on various aspects of pandemic activists also warned about extremely devastating consequences of repressive measures of the regime:

Social distance – mechanism of social distance had dramatic mental, health, moral and political consequences; social control on the level of state and society was accompanied with mutual blaming, suspicion, denunciation, perverting isolated victims as perpetrators. Justification mostly was not health/epidemic, but turned into a form of ,disciplining' citizens, and provoked emotional, psychological, ethical, political problems.

Militarization of consciousness – in wider surrounding, town, the whole country... there was a drastic increase in climate of aggressiveness and animosity, reclusiveness, suspecting others as possible source of infection etc. Militarization was also expressed as blind acceptance of imposed measures, fear from reprisal for 'disobedience'. But, many women expressed disobedience to social distance, although it was easier for women who lived in houses with yards, especially in rural areas.

Corona and war – women from the area of Zvornik and Tuzla who survived the hardest war sufferings, loss of the closest people, deportations in nineties, are of the opinion that ,the war and Corona are never to be compared' because in the war (1992-95) those closest to them, primarily male relatives were killed, they were deported, starved, forced as refugees and, considering that, they see Corona as ,something natural', but feel vulnerable since ,Corona is in the whole world'. Part of the women think that ,everything what has been happening around Corona virus was a form of war, especially psychological war; atmosphere of fear and abuse provoked even more our memories of war trauma' etc.

Responsibility of the state, misuse of pandemic and state of emergency on the political level – described are the most drastic phenomena:

– *Senicide – house arrest* – for people over 65 for 42 days; drastically endangering their health; stigmatization and sanctioning of elderly;

– *Colapse of health system* – fear of health workers of corona, mostly due to inadequate protection, led to loosely and inhuman behavior of health workers; many improvised Covid-19 hospitals, open during state of emergency, provoked panic fear, and due to lack of basic hygienic working conditions, were perceived as concentration camps;

– *Misuse of religion and religious holidays* by Serbian Orthodox Church and the state – health danger and political danger in a form of strengthening clericalization;

– *Criminalization and punishment of diobedient, rebelous citizens – sadistic behaviour of the regime etc.*

Organized social resistance – in anti-regime actions ('Noise against dictatorship') – most of the activists participated in the action because it represented not only release from fear but a visible collective resistance, disturbance of the regime; the actions were more massive in cities, buildings, but the activists made 'noise' in smaller places also, encouraging the others; in action 'noise' women were more numerous and bolder; potential of such actions is insignificant, they could not generate collective resistance to the regime – that is the opinion of part of the activists; part of the activists expressed mistrust and suspicion in the action, considering it a manipulation and cheap politics.

(The report was presented in the meeting of Women in Black Network, September 2020, and the full report of Staša Zajović in Serbian and English is available on 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 **(9)** lectures, debates, book presentations, film screenings, with the participation of more than **120** persons.

The following events took place in this reporting period:

Joint reflection on various aspects of the pandemic: gender / socio-economic / political / militaristic ... This cycle of conversations was held at the WiB premises four times **(4)**:

- **May 13** – 12 persons;
- **May 20** – 7 persons;
- **May 27** – 8 persons;
- **June 17** – 12 persons

Due to epidemiological reasons, the number of participants was limited, and a summary of these interviews was presented in the previous sections of this report.

In addition to this cycle of talks, the following meetings were organized:



June 3

- **Elections or boycott - that is the question?** – on the forthcoming parliamentary and local elections (June 21, 2020); keynote speakers were: *Rade Veljanovski*, Civic Democratic Forum, *Aris Movsesian*, New Party; *Srbijanka Turajlić*, Political Council of the Free Citizens' Movement; *Biljana Djordjevic*, Let's not drown Belgrade; *Biljana Stojković*, Civic Resistance, *Vesna Pešić*, sociologist and debate moderated by *Tamara Spaić*, journalist and activist of the WiB; this event was attended by **35** people.

June 10

- **Six (6) women activists attended the discussion on the current situation**

June 24

- **Fifty years since the first Pride Parade: what has changed?**

The participants in the conversation believe that the Pride Parade in Serbia is 'the result of the conformism of the organizers - entertainment and political promotion' and that is why they do not see the interest of the society in Serbia, nor their activist interest in organizing the Pride Parade. During the conversation, they were most interested in the issues of the class aspect of gay law and equality before the law, and they also discussed gender roles, the dominant sexualization of gay relationships and the inferior position of lesbians in domestic and international gay organizations. The conversation was attended by **15** people and moderated by Marko Tasić.

July 1

– Talks marking the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide; in the second part of the meeting, professor of the Faculty of Philosophy in Zagreb, **Lino Veljak**, analyzed the current situation in the Republic of Croatia, before the parliamentary elections to be held on July 5, 2020. The possibility that the left enters the Croatian Parliament / Parliament for the first time through the coalition “We can”, which includes the Workers’ Front, New Left, Green Party and Zagreb is Ours, which won 7 seats in this election, aroused the most interest. Fifteen (**15**) people participated in this conversation.



July 22

“What to do? – on current political problems in the country
– the conversation began with an assessment of the process of holding parliamentary elections in Serbia on June 21, with special reference to personal experiences, feelings and analysis: activists boycotted the elections because there were no basic democratic or epidemiological conditions; in these elections, the ruling (SNS) party won an absolute victory, and after such results, Serbia is the only country in Europe that does not have opposition. The second part discussed the protests that began on July 7, after the announcement of the President of Serbia, *Aleksandar Vučić*, that he would demand the reintroduction of curfew due to the increase in the number of patients with *Covid-19*. Most of the talk was about the regime’s terror, which immediately included members of police, parapolice, hooligan, battalion groups and police formations among the peaceful protesters, who attacked the police on behalf of the regime in order to justify violence against the protesters. **13** people took part in this conversation.

(Extensive reports 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; responsibility for war crimes, violence against women, against repression of political opponents; over refugees.

Victory Over Fascism Day! – on the occasion of May 9 – Victory Over Fascism Day, the statement of WiB states that the regime, using the state of emergency, continued to carry out political repression against all dissidents. We demand competent institutions to: stop intimidation and violence against dissidents, the use of parapolice and paramilitary formations that serve as cover for criminals who have usurped all institutions in the country; President A. Vučić to stop using the pandemic to collect cheap political points, in order to win a political majority in the upcoming elections that would enable him to continue with dictatorial rule and further fascization of our society, etc.

Stop terror against migrants and refugees in Serbia! – Women in Black, A 11 – The Initiative for Economic and Social Affairs and the Info Park strongly condemned the engagement of the Serbian Army in the refugee centers in Šid, Principovci and Adaševci. “We believe that there are no reasons for such a thing and that sending members of the Ministry of Defense further militarizes the refugee tragedy in Serbia.” Bringing the Serbian Army to refugee centers in western Serbia encourages a climate of racism and fascist attacks that were frequent even before the state of emergency, which culminated in the recent attack in Obrenovac during this period. “With the introduction of the state of emergency on March 15, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in reception centers and asylum centers were deprived of basic human rights, all in the name of alleged protection from the Covid-19 epidemic,” says in the statement from May 19, 2020.

Solidarity with ANTIFA protests in the USA – Justice for George Floyd! - on the occasion of the murder (May 25, 2020) of an African-American man George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Women in Black, Belgrade and Civic Action, Pancevo in a statement on June 5, 2020 supported the demands of the demonstrators: all other racially motivated murders to be tried and adequately punished; that the police stop using force in their actions; to stop criminalizing ANTIFA demonstrations and those who participate in them; that further militarization does not prevent justified protests“, etc.

“Justice for Marija Lukić” – on the occasion of the hearing on June 10, the WiB, Belgrade together with the women’s association “Peščanik” from Kruševac call on the Basic Court in Kruševac to judge independently and impartially, and to avoid and ignore all kinds of political and interest pressures of the ruling regime. We invite citizens to express solidarity and support to Marija Lukić and all other women victims of sexual harassment on June 10. On this occasion, we express our deep respect for the brave Marija Lukić, who decided to speak, not only on her own behalf, but also on behalf of all women who are exposed to sexual violence - both in the public and private spheres“, says in the statement.

Solidarity with the Milivojevic family from Lucani – on the occasion of the trial in Ivanjica on June 11, 2020. Before the Basic Court in Ivanjica, criminal proceedings are being conducted against the general director of the factory “Milan Blagojevic-Namenska” from Lucani - Rados Milovanovic and two managers from the same factory (Vladimir Loncarevic and Toma Stojić). They are accused of ‘committing a serious crime against public safety’ because on July 14, 2017, workers Milomir Milojević and Milojko Ignjatović were killed after a gunpowder explosion.

A statement on the occasion of the upcoming parliamentary and local elections in Serbia (June 21, 2020) – Women’s Association ‘Peščanik’ from Kruševac and WiB, Belgrade call on citizens to, regardless of their attitude towards the upcoming elections, stop trusting politicians who, instead of us, would decide whether, when and how many times we will give birth, who attack migrants, who are against any diversity, who abuse public resources, whether in order to buy or trade weapons, who say they will defend Kosovo at all costs and provoke conflicts with neighbors, who are not willing to condemn war criminals in their own nation and show no empathy for the suffering of those who lost their families in a senseless war in the Balkans, etc.

“We remember women raped in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina!” – a statement on June 19 International Day for the Fight against Sexual Violence in War, Women in Black reminded that “ about twenty thousand women were raped in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The most numerous victims were Bosnian Muslim women, while among the perpetrators were the most Bosnian Serbs, during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1996), Foca was the site of probably the largest systematic sexual violence and rape in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. “Hague tribunal in the sentence of Foča war criminals (Kunarac, Kovač, Vuković), 2001, first time in the history of international humanitarian law, defined sexual slavery in war as crime against humanity“. Women in Black expressed „solidarity and empathy with women victims and survivors of sexual violence, cultivating the policy of remembering as responsibility for crimes committed in our names during war in B&H“, WiB stressed in the statement of June 19th.

“We will never forget the genocide in Srebrenica!” – A statement (July 10) marking the 25th anniversary of the Srebrenica genocide, the biggest war crime in Europe since World War II, said that “the Milosevic regime is complicit in the genocide by providing enormous political, military and logistical-financial assistance to the Republika Srpska Army.” . The WiB reiterated demands to the state of Serbia “to recognize the genocide in Srebrenica, primarily as respect for the dignity of the victims, and not just as one of the preconditions on Serbia’s path to accession to the European Union; to declare July 11 the Day of Remembrance of the Srebrenica Genocide, to qualify

the denial of genocide as a criminal offense; that the state of Serbia respects the decisions of international courts and court-established facts; that the President of the Republic of Serbia A. Vučić and all other representatives of the state stop denying genocide and all other war crimes in BiH and beyond; to stop glorifying and rehabilitating convicted war criminals.”

“Stop police terror!” – a group of civil society organizations condemned the police terror against the citizens of Belgrade and Novi Sad during the July demonstrations, pointing out that there are countless pieces of evidence that show that violent protesters were instructed by Vučić’s repressive apparatus. “The goal of specially trained police officers and regime thugs, who infiltrated the citizens, was to show the domestic and world public that the protests are violent and that ultra-right organizations are behind them.” Neither is true - the vast majority of citizens who spontaneously gathered on the streets of cities to protest are neither violent nor ultra-right-wing, “reads a July 10 statement signed by: Vojvodina Cultural Club ‘Vasa Stajic’, Alliance of Antifascists Vojvodina, Women in Black, Center for Intercultural Communication, Green Network of Vojvodina, Vojvodina Civic Center and Civic Action Pancevo.

“Stop the hate speech of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the unrestricted spending of the money of all citizens of Serbia!” - The Serbian Orthodox Church / SOC recently received one billion dinars (8.5 million euros) from the budget reserve of the Republic of Serbia for the continuation of construction works of the Church of St. Sava in Belgrade. In a statement (July 14) written by WiB, we expressed our protest against that kind of assistance in a situation “when the health, lives and economic existence of the citizens of Serbia are endangered.” WiB also protested against a vocabulary full of hate speech used in a statement by the Serbian Orthodox Church (July 7th) by which the SOC disqualifies anyone who justifiably criticizes the above mentioned allocation of funds.

“Stop persecuting doctors and journalists who demand the truth!” – “We are asking the regime in Serbia to stop persecuting, intimidating and humiliating the doctors who signed the United Against Covid request, and to give journalists who follow the daily conferences of the Crisis Staff clear answers to their questions concerning the lives and health of all citizens of Serbia. We express our support and solidarity with conscientious and responsible doctors, as well as journalists who professionally monitor the work of the Crisis Staff,” reads the July 24 statement.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

July 2, Sarajevo / BiH – in this reporting period, Women in Black received the following recognition: FRIEND OF BOSNIA Charter for 2020. “As a sign of gratitude for the friendship and exceptional

contribution to the preservation and affirmation of a multicultural, democratic, sovereign Bosnia and Herzegovina, Women in Black, Belgrade, were awarded with this Charter," reads the explanation of the association Bosphorus from Sarajevo. The awards ceremony in Sarajevo was attended on July 2 by Violeta Đikanović and Stasa Zajović on behalf of WIB.

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