

*always disobedient*



*žene u crnom beograd*

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## Who are We?

We are an activist group and a feminist-antimilitarist network made up of women from different generations and different ethnic groups with different social statuses and various levels of education. We have different lifestyles and sexual identities. What we share is a rejection of all forms of war and violent politics, first those of the state and community in which we live and then all others. We share a commitment to women's visible and public resistance to all forms of patriarchy, nationalism, militarism, and fundamentalism. A varying number of people participate in Women in Black's street actions and other activities. Sometimes, there are only a few; sometimes, there are hundreds, depending on the political and social circumstances, the need, and other factors.

### **When did We Begin?**

On October 9, 1991, we began to oppose the war and war politics of the Serbian regime. On this date, we began a nonviolent public protest against war, nationalism, militarism, violence, and all forms of discrimination.

### **What is Our Mission?**

– *We bring visibility to women's nonviolent resistance to war, nationalism, sexism, militarism, ethnic homogenization, fundamentalism, xenophobia, homophobia, and all other forms of discrimination.* First, we target the problems of the state or community in which we live and then all others. We have organized nearly 1,000 street actions, including protests, performances, street theater, campaigns, street marches, and education in the street. Additionally, through our connections to politically engaged artistic groups, we created an aesthetic of nonviolent antiwar resistance.

– *We create space for women's voices and actions* against all forms of patriarchy, war, and violence. We empower women to transform their bitterness and dissatisfaction with the roles patriarchy prescribes for them and its control over women in the private and public spheres into active nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience. We stimulate women's organizing and the expansion of women's autonomy.

– *We build networks of women's solidarity* on the global and regional level across all state, national, ethnic, and all other divisions and barriers.



ŽENE U CRNOM, 1991 →

– *We build peace networks, coalitions, and associations to encourage the active participation of women in peace-building, peace processes, and peace negotiations. We have formed coalitions to demand the punishment of crimes, primarily the crimes committed in our name, but also all others. We also created The Coalition for a Secular State. In brief, we stimulate and create solidarity coalitions to advocate for a just and lasting peace, a strong civil society, the rule of law, and social justice.*

– *We demand confrontation with the past and the application of various models of transitional justice which include all forms of responsibility (individual, collective, moral, and political), the punishment of all war crimes, the extradition of all war criminals to The Hague Tribunal, trials in domestic courts, and the creation of new forms of transitional justice from a feminist standpoint.*

– *We organize peace education in the form of seminars, conferences, trainings, activist gatherings, meetings, discussions, and workshops. We educate women about feminism, pacifism, antimilitarism, nonviolence, women's peace politics, new concepts of security, civil society, women's activism, interethnic and intercultural solidarity, reproductive rights, transitional justice, and fundamentalism.*

– *We create an alternative women's history by writing about women's resistance to war and the history of those who are different, and through our extensive publishing activities. We have produced nearly 60 printed items (books, brochures, monographs, peace agendas, and calendars) as well as a large number of posters, leaflets, and stickers.*

– *We start campaigns and legislative initiatives that sensitize the public to important societal issues. The most notable of these have been the campaigns for demilitarization, implementation of human security from a gender standpoint, the protection of women's human rights, responsibility for war and war crimes in order to create a just peace, and the preservation of a secular state.*



ŽENE U CRNOM – PROTIV RATA



## What are Our Goals?

– *A just and lasting peace* which includes a complete confrontation with the past, the application of all forms of transitional justice and the punishment of criminals, first those who committed their acts in our name and then others.

– *A radical change in the dominant values system* (which is sexist, nationalist, militarist, xenophobic, and homophobic) through radical changes in the educational system at all levels. We pressure institutions to include gender equality, peace, nonviolence, and multiculturalism in compulsory education, which would widen the peace politics of Women in Black on the state and societal level.

– *The foundation and expansion of women's peace networks* throughout Serbia and in the region through women's active participation in peace building, peace processes and peace negotiations, and women's active solidarity and mutual support regardless of citizenship, ethnicity, or religion.

– *A strong civil society*, which will be created by organizing autonomous civil initiatives, increasing civil disobedience and preserving autonomy from the state, every leader, and every party. We will pressure institutions to serve citizens and to expand the values of peace, nonviolence and solidarity.

– *Democracy at all levels*, private and public, which includes a strengthened rule of law, social justice and the repression and punishment of organized crime.

## What Symbols do We Use?

The basic aesthetic of Women in Black is to reverse the traditional, patriarchal, imposed, and often required symbols and forms of the oppressor. The symbols and forms which we choose are anti-patriarchal, alternatives, 'subversive,' and rebellious.

**Black:** In traditional cultures, women wear black because of the death of a close relative. It is a private family symbol. Historically, it has been women's obligation in many cultures throughout the world.





Žene u crnom, 1991 →

For Women in Black, black is a public political color and a choice. We wear black because of the deaths of all victims of war and violence, primarily the victims of crimes committed in our name. During the wars in the former Yugoslavia, our black was a public rebellion against the politics of war, nationalism, and militarism.

After the wars, black is still a rejection of the dominant values system and the culture of death and destruction.

After the wars, our black shows that we are against the denial and forgetting of crimes. Black means remembering the crimes that were committed in our name and demanding responsibility for them. We use black in all of our street actions connected to wars and commemorations of crimes, primarily those committed in our name, but also all others.

**Silence:** In patriarchy, silence is imposed on women. This silence covers up and negates the experience of women. For Women in Black, silence developed in the public space as a way to condemn those who produce war and violence, primarily in the state and community in which we live.

We chose silence because we do not have the words to express the tragedy, suffering and pain produced by war and violence.

We choose silence because we do not have the words to express our bitterness towards the state-organized crimes of the Milošević regime and the fact that the fall of that regime did not stop the institutional denial of the criminal past.

Silence is also a choice that avoids and lessens provocations and attacks from people in our surroundings.

Silence is an invitation to understand and listen to oneself and others because patriarchy (of which war, sexism, nationalism, and militarism are the most visible manifestations) negates and abolishes otherness and difference. This is the opposite of the affirmation and visibility of otherness that we support.





**Body:** Our presence in public places – employing traditional symbols whose meaning is entirely opposite, reversed, changed, and turned upside-down from the traditional – signifies our civil disobedience and anti-patriarchal rebellion.



### **How Often Do We Go into the Street? What Changes are We Introducing?**

Until 1996, we held protests weekly, during which we were always silent and dressed in black. After 1996, we protested with varying frequency, depending on political events, our degree of preparedness, and our ideas for street actions. The 'ritual' of being in the street is important to us, but in this phase, the preparation and planning was also a very important aspect of the 'ritual.'

After 1996, we often organized weekly protests, but sometimes they occurred more than once a week and sometimes only once a month. For example, during the three months of civic protests in the winter of 1996-1997, we organized street actions every day. There are dates which must be marked with street action, such as the anniversary of crimes committed in our name and important dates of the women's and peace movements.

In contrast to the majority of groups in The International Network of Women in Black, which exclusively hold silent vigils dressed in black, we have added some changes to our vigils. Although we have diversified the forms and contents of our protests, we still often stand silently, dressed in black.

To the simple ritual of black and silence, we add many other elements, including bright colors, strong sounds – most often drumming or shouting slogans through a megaphone, and various visual effects with the help of jugglers. These are most often used during peace marches and feminist-antimilitarist performances.

*The peace symbol of Women in Black – Belgrade* was adopted by The International Network of Women in Black as its symbol.

The rainbow flag is a symbol of peace and celebration of diversity. We added it to our street actions in 1995 and now use it frequently.

*Fatima's hand* is a symbol of peace, global women's solidarity, women's perseverance, and intercultural solidarity. It was first used by Women in



Black-Israel. Additionally, we borrow many elements from the international peace movement, incorporating new symbols and rituals depending on the content and context of the action.

Additionally, men also protest with us. They are not with us as some form of protection, but as our allies in the struggle against patriarchy. These are men who refused to go to war, hid themselves from violent mobilization, deserted from the battlefields, or-after the war-spoke out with us for conscientious objection, abolishing the military, and all forms of demilitarization.

### **What Else do We Achieve through Street Actions?**

In addition to bringing visibility to nonviolent resistance, sensitizing the public to these issues and putting pressure on institutions, through these actions we want to:

*Strengthen relationships of solidarity and cooperation within civil society.*

In most of our public activities, activists from like-minded organizations and a large number of private citizens participated with Women in Black activists. Most of these actions were carried out with other alliances, initiatives, and networks. This is very important for strengthening solidarity, mutual support and cooperation within civil society.

*Promote an aesthetic of antiwar resistance* by cooperating with politically engaged artistic groups and theaters. We have frequently collaborated with Skart, Dah Theater, The Center for Cultural Decontamination, and The Institute for Engaged Art.





## Visible Women's Resistance: We are Still in the Streets

Most of our nearly 1,000 street actions were related to the wars and violence in the former Yugoslavia. This passage will describe the chronology and motives of Women in Black's street actions in opposition to the war against the civilian population, crimes committed in our name, repression of political dissidents – and for an end to war and nonviolent conflict resolution.

1991 – 1996:

Every Wednesday, silently and wearing black we protested against

- The war politics of the Serbian regime and its aggression in Croatia-killing people; destroying cities, especially, Vukovar, Dubrovnik, and Zadar; and cutting off roads and contact between people.

- The aggression in Bosnia-Herzegovina– the destruction of Mostar, the siege and destruction of Sarajevo, the creation of concentration camps, the Srebrenica massacre, and countless other atrocities.

- The abduction of Bosniak passengers in Štrpci, Serbia and the oppression of and discrimination against 'the other' (those who are different ethnically, religiously, sexually, culturally, and in any other way).

- The constant violent and illegal mobilization of men for war, taking them off to the battlefield, and the persecution of deserters in Serbia.

- The exodus of the civilian population from the Krajina region of Croatia following the Croatian Army's "Lightning" and "Storm" military campaigns in May and August 1995, respectively.

Winter 1996-1997: Everyday, we actively participated in the massive civic protests in Serbia. We also distributed leaflets about nonviolent methods of resistance.

Autumn 1997: We protested against the war politics of the Serbian regime towards Montenegro and against the repression of the independent media in Serbia at this time.

1997 – 1999: We held protests against the low intensity war and apartheid in Kosovo, actions in solidarity with nonviolent popular women's



and students' movement in Kosovo, and the 'A Pact, Not a War' action, which supported the peace negotiations between the Serb and Albanian factions in Rambouillé.

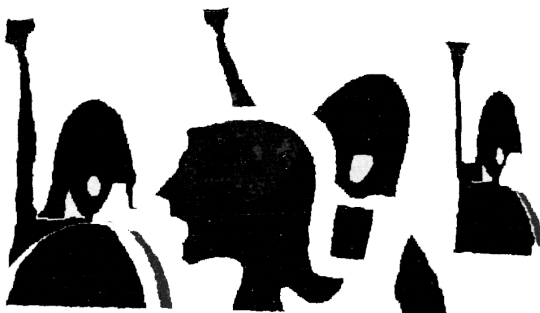
– We also protested against the persecution of the non-Albanian population in Kosovo by the intervening army in the spring of 1999.

1999– 2000: We protested against the Serbian regime's growing political repression of political dissidents in Serbia.

Most of Women in Black's actions connected to the wars in the former Yugoslavia were initiated after the fall of the regime in October 2000. These activities included demands for holding the Serbian regime responsible and against the denial of the criminal past, actions against the escalation of the conflicts in South Serbia and Macedonia (2001), actions against violence in Kosovo and Serbia (March-April 2004), commemorations of the anniversaries of crimes committed in our name, visits to the places where crimes were committed in our name (Vukovar, Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Štrpci, Sjeverin, and Kosovo), and celebrations of the anniversary of the antiwar resistance in Belgrade and throughout Serbia.

#### ***Actions of Global Solidarity against Violence and War***

Since the beginning of our work, as a part of the global antiwar movement, Women in Black has participated in many actions against war and violence. We have also independently initiated such actions. Issues addressed in these actions included the conflicts in the Middle East (Israel/Palestine and Lebanon) the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington DC, and the war and violence in Afghanistan, Iraq, Columbia, and other places. Additionally, we have organized actions in solidarity with peace movements in the aforementioned conflict areas and other areas.





## Performances

Because the topics addressed in each performance overlap, it is very difficult to classify our performances. We have categorized them according to the elements that predominate in each performance. The performances often have a 'traveling' and decentralized character; many events were held outside of Belgrade.

**Antiwar:** Our antiwar performances were primarily against the wars in the former Yugoslavia but also in other places:

– *I Confess* was carried out in cooperation with the Center for Cultural Decontamination of Belgrade. This performance marked the seventh anniversary of Women in Black in Black-Belgrade in 1998. The performance was a 'solemn act,' a confession of our antiwar and 'anti-patriotic' activities during a period of fierce regime repression of the antiwar movement in Serbia. Over 100 people participated in the performance.

– *Imagine, an Homage to John Lennon* was an act in solidarity with the American peace movement and against political censorship after the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington DC on September 11, 2001. The performance was held in Belgrade and Leskovac.

– *Women's Solidarity against Violence and War* occurred in Sarajevo on September 11, 2002. We were joined by The Association of Mothers of the Zepa and Srebrenica Enclaves.

– *Maps of Forbidden Remembrance* was produced in cooperation with the Dah Theater of Belgrade on July 10, 2004 to mark the ninth anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica.

– *To Remember the Genocide in Srebrenica* occurred in Belgrade and Zrenjanin in July 2005 to mark the tenth anniversary of the genocide. A similar performance was also held on July 10, 2006, the eleventh anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica.

– *Never Again – Ten Years since 'The Storm'* occurred on the tenth anniversary of the expulsion of the civilian population from the Krajina region of Croatia (The Storm) in the main square in Novi Sad.

– *Let's Disarm the World – Let's Build Peace* was a performance by International Network of Women in Black activists in front of Camp Derby, the biggest American military base in Italy.



### **Feminism and Antimilitarism**

Performances held during meetings of *The International Network of Women in Black* from 1992 to 2001 included 'Let's Banish Militarism from Our Lives,' 'Women's Solidarity against Violence and War,' and 'Always Disobedient.' These are only some of the performances that we organized in Novi Sad, Subotica, Ulcinj, and Podgorica during the meetings of the International Network. Women from every country of the former Yugoslavia and every continent participated.

– *Cassandra with Us* was a performance held in cooperation with Dah Theater of Belgrade in 1997. The source materials for the performance were the story of Cassandra's resistance to the Trojan War (33 centuries BCE) and 'Cassandra with Us' by the German author Kristy Wolf, a dialog between Cassandra and Women in Black. The performance was an homage to women's resistance to war and militarism in all places and all eras.

– *We are Bringing Visibility to the Connection between Military Expenses and Tampons* was a performance against militarization and its damaging effects on women's standard of living, health, and education. The performance was held for the first time in May 1996 in Belgrade.

– *We are Going Slowly to be Sure that We will Arrive Safely* was about the transfer of military expenditures to the civil sector. It used the caterpillar — style baner as a symbol of the persistence, patience, and dedication of peace activists. We received the caterpillar – style bannaer as a gift from Spanish feminist antimilitarist circles and autonomous groups as a symbol of feminist exchange and support. This performance was held for the first time in May 2001. Subsequently, it was performed ten times in different cities in Serbia.

– *Let's Demilitarize Ourselves, Let's Demilitarize our Surroundings* addressed the transfer of military expenditures to the civil sector. We employed a peace parachute that we received as a gift from Spanish feminist antimilitarists as a symbol of international connections and solidarity. This performance was held in many cities in Serbia.

– *These are not Toys* targeted the production and purchasing of war toys for young children. This performance was held for the first time on July 4, 2001 in Belgrade.

– *We are Still Disobedient and We are Still in the Streets* celebrated



women's disobedience to war, nationalism, and militarism. We installed the peace symbols of Women in Black and 'Faces of Peace' in the street. This performance was held many times in 2002, 2003 and 2004.

– *Not One Woman, Not One Man, Not One Dinar for Militarism* was against The Law on Support for The Hague Indictees and Their Families. It premiered on December 10, 2004, International Human Rights Day, in Belgrade.

– *Let's Control Our Bodies, Let's Control our Money* was held in Belgrade on May 28, 2005 to mark the International Day of Women's Action for Peace and Disarmament (May 24th) and the International Day for Reproductive Rights and Women's Health (May 28th). The performance promoted women's autonomy and freedom of choice, especially reproductive rights. We used the feminist slogans 'I give birth if I want, with whom I want, and when I want!' and 'I won't give birth for the state, nation, church, or army!'

– *Women, Peace and Security: Towards a Feminist-Antimilitarist Concept of Security* marked the fifth anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. The performance was held in front of the Serbian Assembly on October 31, 2005. The performance presented the transformation from the role of the victim offers to women as 'security and protection' by the patriarchal militarized state towards a feminist concept of security, which includes respect for women's human rights and mutual support and solidarity among women.

– *In Commemoration of Deserters* was a symbolic monument celebrating the betrayal of deserters and conscientious objectors who refused to go to war or who left the battlefield from 1991 to 1999, for bravely discarding the patriarchal roles of hero and soldier. The monument was erected by activists who supported deserters and conscientious objectors and who consider them their associates in anti-patriarchal nonviolent rebellion. The building of this living monument unfolded as a ritual which included sharing texts of support for deserters and deserters' resistance and honoring de-





serters by waving rainbow peace flags. This performance deconstructed patriarchal militarist symbols and codes. This performance was held for the first time on October 18, 2006 in Belgrade to mark the fifteen anniversary of the nonviolent antiwar resistance in Serbia.

***Against Retrograde Tendencies in Society:*** Fascist, clero-nationalist, and fundamentalist tendencies became more visible after the December 2003 elections. Our actions promote the values of anti-fascism, secularism, human rights, and women's human rights-especially reproductive and sexual rights.

– *Fascist Darkness in the Corner!* occurred in Belgrade on the International Day of Action against Fascism, Racism, and Xenophobia, November 9, 2004. A similar performance entitled 'Let's Stop the Darkness in which We Live' was held in Belgrade on International Human Rights Day, December 10, 2004 and on March 21, 2005 in Belgrade to mark International Day against Racism. On November 9, 2006, with The Queeria Center, we organized the performance 'We're Stopping Fascism – We're Building Solidarity.'

– *I Carry Your Fruit* was held in Belgrade on March 8, 2005. In cooperation with The Institute for Engaged Theater and Art, we staged a performance against the clericalization of society and for the promotion of reproductive rights. The performance was designed to reject the propaganda demanding that women have children for the needs of the state, nation, army, and church.

– *Let's Banish Fascism Together* was a performance in Belgrade on November 9, 2005 to oppose the growing fascist tendencies in Serbia.

– *Stop Fascism!* was a performance in Novi Sad on December 9, 2005.

– *I Learned the Lesson!* was staged on March 8, 2006 against the clericalization of society and the restriction of the identity of women to the roles of mother, reproducer of the nation, and protector of patriarchal morals. It was held in cooperation with the Institute for Engaged Art. This performance was very similar to 'I Carry Your Fruit.'

– *We Want Democracy, Not Theocracy!* was directed against The Law on Churches and Religious Communities and advocated for a secular state, including the complete separation of church and state. The performance was held many times during April and May 2006 in cooperation with The Institute for Engaged Art.



– *Neither Whore nor Saints, but Women* was a performance against The Law on Churches and Religious Communities, the misuse of religion in politics, and the general clericalization of society held on June 21, 2006 in Belgrade in cooperation with Dah Theater.

**Peace Marches:** These events were held to advocate for women's human rights, confrontation with the past, the extradition of all indictees to The Hague Tribunal, and for demilitarization.

– *The Streets are Ours – Women's Solidarity is Our Strength* was a march on International Women's Day, March 8, 2003 in Belgrade, in Leskovac in 2004, and in Belgrade and Novi Pazar in 2005.

– *Let's Demilitarize Ourselves, Let's Demilitarize Our Surroundings!* was held on May 28, 2003 in Niš. It was a march marking The International Day of Women's Action for Peace and Disarmament.

– *Solidarity is Our Strength – Solidarity with Anita* was a women's march in Surdulica on February 3, 2005 against political and sexual violence against women.

– *Stop the Mafia – Stop Organized Crime* occurred in Leskovac on September 23, 2005 as part of the actions of the International Anti-Mafia Caravan.

– *Stop Fascism!* was an antifascist march in Novi Sad on December 10, 2005.

– *We Won't Go Back, We are Defending Our Rights* occurred in Belgrade on March 8, 2006.

– *We Remember!* was a series of peace marches held in conjunction with commemorating the crimes in Štrpci (in Prijepolje on February 27, 2006), Tuzla (on May 25, 2005) and Sjeverin (in Priboj on October 22, 2005).







## Campaigns

During the wars in the former Yugoslavia from 1991 to 1999, all of our campaigns were directed against the wars, the aggressive policies of the Serbian regime, and forced mobilizations. After the fall of the regime in October 2000, the campaigns continued. The following is a list of some of the citizens' initiatives in which Women in Black participated, both as a group and as individuals.

– *Daily antiwar candlelight vigils* were held in front of the Serbian Executive Building for six months (from October 1991 to February 1992) with the slogans 'Solidarity with all Rebels against War,' and 'For Everyone Killed in War.' This action was initiated by a group of citizens.

– *The Referendum against War* was an effort to gather signatures against war and forced mobilization. The Civil Movement conducted this action in the autumn of 1991 and winter of 1992 and collected 55,000 signatures.

– *The Campaign against the Violent Mobilization of Refugees* helped refugees in Serbia (especially in 1994 and 1995) by regularly informing the domestic public, international institutions, peace networks, and human rights organizations about the mobilization of refugees and by organizing protests.

– *Actions for Amnesty* were held to support men who refused to participate in war, abandoned their military obligations, deserted from the battlefield, or left the country and faced various forms of punishment – including jail sentences – because of their actions. This action included regularly informing the domestic and international public and offering legal support, including the assistance of legal experts from aligned organizations, most often The Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (YUCOM). Unfortunately, even after the adoption of The Law on Amnesty in April 2006, men who avoid military service are often arbitrarily punished.

– *The Campaign against the Persecution of Conscientious Objectors* sought to protect those who refused military service. The Law on the Military only allowed for exemptions from military service on religious grounds. (The most well-known conscientious objector case is that of Pavle Božić. There were actions against the jail sentences and other punishments that he received from 1993 to 1998). Conscientious objection was codified in 2003, but conscientious objectors still face discriminatory and unequal



treatment with regards to their military obligations.

– *The Campaign for the Recognition of the Right of Conscientious Objection* began in May 2000. The most active period was December 2000 to May 2001 when The Lawyers Committee for Human Rights and Women in Black started a legislative initiative to collect 30,000 signatures, which were then delivered to The Federal Assembly. This campaign occurred throughout Serbia. In addition to collecting signatures, it developed into a permanent action for demilitarization that included street actions, performances, media appearances, concerts, and panel discussions. This campaign was devoted to the recognition of the right of conscientious objection and emphasized the project 'Who Tells You that You Must? You Decide!,' which was carried out in May 2003 throughout Serbia and included the distribution of leaflets and other informational material.

– *Enough Crime!* was instigated by Women in Black and others after the assassination of Prime Minister Zoran Đinđić. The campaign occurred in March and April 2003. It had three phases, consisting of distributing and affixing stickers with 'Enough Crime,' 'We Demand Responsibility,' and 'Vukovar, Sarajevo, Srebrenica, Kosovo, and 11 Nemanjina Street' (the site of the assassination). The action occurred in approximately 50 cities in Serbia. Nearly 700,000 stickers were either distributed or affixed to something. Nearly 100 nongovernmental organizations participated in this campaign which educated the public about responsibility for war and war crimes.

– *Not in Our Name, Not with Our Money* was a regional women's peace initiative started by Women in Black-Belgrade and autonomous women's groups in Sarajevo and Zagreb. It began on March 8, 2004 with demands that everyone indicted for war crimes by The Hague Tribunal in the former Yugoslavia be unconditionally extradited, no military units be sent to the so-called peace mission in Iraq and regional governments refuse to sign bilateral agreements with the United States exempting American citizens from the International Criminal Court. More than 100 NGOs from the former Yugoslavia joined us in presenting these demands to the authorities in our countries.

– *Not in Our Name!* was a national initiative started by group of citizens against The Law on Financial Support to Hague Indictees and Their Families. In one week in April 2004, nearly 18,000 signatures were collected and delivered to the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. The Women in Black Network collected signatures throughout Serbia. This national initia-



tive has still not been addressed by the Serbian National Assembly. Women in Black has organized protests because of this.

– *Go Out and Outvote* – For a Modern Serbia! was a get-out-the-vote campaign for a round of presidential elections in June 2004. It was also directed against the chauvinist Serbian Radical Party candidate. Voice of Difference and Women in Black organized this action in 40 cities in Serbia.

– *Extradite Them!* was a Women in Black initiative that demanded the Serbian government institutions' complete and unconditional cooperation with The Hague Tribunal, the immediate extradition of everyone indicted for war crimes, the immediate repeal of The Law on Financial Support for Hague Indictees and Their Families and an immediate start to the investigations of mass graves in Serbia. This initiative 'traveled' to ten cities in Serbia from December 2004 to March 2005 and included street actions, media appearances and discussions directed at educating the public about responsibility for war and war crimes committed in our name. This initiative has continued and has been organized several more times.

– *No to the Military!* was a civil disobedience initiative of gathering signatures for a petition to repeal compulsory military service. Women in Black organized this action in Belgrade during March and April 2005.

– *Let's Interrupt the Conspiracy of Silence* was a signature gathering initiative against the growing anti-Semitism in Serbia and for the adoption of an anti-discrimination law. The G8 Coalition initiated this action and carried it out in March and April 2005.

– *The Declaration on Srebrenica* was written by the G8 Coalition in June 2005 to mark the tenth anniversary of the genocide in Srebrenica. The Declaration demanded that the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia undertake all methods to protect the rights of victims of war crimes, especially the victims of the genocide in Srebrenica in July 1995. Even though, the Declaration was addressed by a session of the Assembly, it received enormous public interest and was a very important civil society document against the denial of the criminal past.

– *Women, Peace and Security* was a resolution written by Women in Black about women's participation in peace building processes and peace negotiations and women's security from a feminist antimilitarist standpoint. The Resolution was presented to the National Assembly on October 31,



2005, the fifth anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 'Women, Peace, and Security.'

– *The Declaration on the Equality of Sexual Identities* was written by Women in Black in December 2005 to celebrate 15 years of LGBT activism in Serbia. The declaration was signed by approximately 1000 public figures in Serbia known for their long-standing antiwar and anti-nationalist involvement. The same declaration was signed by dozens of NGOs.

– *Spain Today, Serbia Tomorrow* was a Women in Black campaign for the equality of sexual identities. Approximately ten NGOs from Belgrade and Novi Sad actively participated.

– *Women Say No to War – Stop the War in Iraq!* was part of the international women's actions initiated by American Code Pink activists for the withdrawal of troops from Iraq. The Women in Black Network-Serbia collected signatures which were presented to the US Embassy in Belgrade on March 8, 2006.

– *We Want Democracy, not Theocracy* was a campaign for maintaining the secular character of the state as a basic democratic and constitutional principle and against The Law on Churches and Religious Communities adopted in March 2006. The Coalition for a Secular State prepared amendments to the law with the support of dozens of NGOs throughout Serbia. Women in Black, as one of the founders of the coalition, organized many public discussions, street protests, and performances related to this issue during 2006.

– *Women Ask* was a Women in Black peace initiative that started in October 2006 on the fifteenth anniversary of the group to mark fifteen years of nonviolent antiwar resistance in Serbia. The initiative presented institutions in Serbia with questions and sought facts connected to war and war crimes (such as the numbers of victims of the wars from 1991-1999, the number of men violently mobilized, the number of people injured, and the number of mass graves, as well as facts about the criminal persecution of Serbian men who refused to go to war or deserted from the battlefield).

In this period, Women in Black, together with other organizations, started other initiatives against the fascisization of society, strengthening clero-fascist tendencies, and for the boycott of the discriminatory and undemocratic constitutional referendum in October 2006.



## Women's Peace Networks- Networks of Women's Solidarity

Women in Black-Belgrade is a member of women's peace networks on the global and regional level. The organization has also founded a number of women's solidarity networks. These networks will be described in this section.

*The International Network of Women in Black/The International Network of Women's Solidarity against War*

Women in Black-Israel began to protest against the Israeli occupation of The Palestinian Territories in January 1988. In Italy, The United States, and Germany, groups were formed to support their efforts.

After Women in Black-Belgrade began their protest on October 9, 1991, Women in Black groups were formed in nearly all European countries, the United States, Latin America and Asia, as a sign of support.

With the support and solidarity of friends from all over the world, especially Women in Black-Italy, we initiated The Network of Women's Solidarity against War, which later became The International Network of Women in Black. Since 1992, we have organized ten meetings of the International Network. They were held in Novi Sad, Totovo Selo, Subotica, and Ulcinj. Approximately 1,780 women activists participated. These women were from the former Yugoslavia, 13 other European countries (Austria, France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Belgium, Great Britain, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Russia and Chechnya), ten African countries, Asia, Latin America, The US, Canada, and Australia. At the meetings, the political character of the network was discussed during workshops, panels, and performances. The most frequently addressed issues were women's resistance to war and war crimes; women's relationships towards gender/nation/army/homeland; citizen's strategies for resistance to all forms of ethnic homogenization and fundamentalism; the connections between local, regional, and global militarization; feminist-antimilitarist ideas, principles, and practices; women's global solidarity; the diversity of sexual orientations and other topics.

After the ten meetings in Serbia and Montenegro, the meetings of the



International Network of Women in Black were held in other places in alternating years. There were meetings in Italy (in 2003) and in Israel (in 2005). The next meeting of the international network will be held in Valencia, Spain in August 2007.

The International Network of Women in Black includes activist groups and individuals from all countries of the former Yugoslavia, other parts of Europe, the United States, Latin America, Africa, Asia and Australia. There are more than 250 Women in Black groups throughout the world.

This activist network is one of the most powerful expressions of women's nonviolent resistance to war and women's alternative politics.

***The Shared Principles of the Network Are:***

- Opposition to all forms of the politics of war and violence, especially those of the state or community in which we live;
- The creation of connections, alliances, and solidarity coalitions with women across all political, ethnic, and all other borders and barriers;
- Global women's peace politics based on the principles of feminism and antimilitarism;
- Women's alternative politics and diplomacy, which includes nurturing dialog among women from conflicting/warring sides and creating space for exchange; joint initiatives and activities (more information on the specific forms of support that are part of international alternative politics can be found in the section on international peace politics); supporting autonomous women's initiatives in crisis areas through organizing visits to 'difficult places' and maintaining constant contact; and extending political, emotional, moral, and financial support to autonomous women's groups' activities and projects in conflict and post-conflict areas;
- Nonviolent resistance to all forms of ethnic homogenization and patriarchal control of women in the name of ethnic unity;
- Support for women's participation in peace negotiations on the local, regional and global level;
- The creation of a just peace through civil disobedience to all forms of militarization, campaigns for demilitarization, campaigns to pressure institutions for the reallocation of military expenditures to the civil sector, global antiwar actions, and actions in solidarity with women from conflict areas.

The International Network of Women in Black exists without official



structures. There is no 'center' or network steering committee. Through international meetings, bilateral meetings between members of 'national' or regional networks, and constant electronic communication, we start effective joint initiatives and actions. The network carries out its activities exclusively on a voluntary basis.

### **The Women in Black Network-Serbia – The Women's Peace Network**

The Women in Black Network-Serbia developed as an activist network in 1997. Women in Black was subject to constant demonization by the regime because of our clear public antiwar activities. The Network developed its work simultaneously in two areas-organized street actions and traveling, decentralized educational activities.

The network was created gradually, not as an 'intrusion from outside' or a 'networking project,' which would have been short-term and without results.

The network operates exclusively from below. Its activities are developed in response to activist's wishes and convictions. They combine theory with practice and activist engagement with theoretical knowledge.

The network is made up of activist groups and individuals from more than 30 cities throughout Serbia. Some groups and individuals have been with the network from its beginning. Others have different rhythms; they participate occasionally in certain activities. Some groups and individuals stop their participation with the network; new groups and individuals join it.

The network is based on the principles of feminism; pacifism and anti-militarism; nonviolence; solidarity; and civil disobedience to nationalism, militarism, ethnic homogenization, fundamentalism, homophobia, and all forms of injustice and discrimination. In addition to these values, the network is connected by personal solidarity, support, friendship, care, loyalty, sisterhood, trust, and mutual education.

Some of our basic mottos are *Not in Our Name and We won't be Fooled by Our Own*, which oppose all wars and war crimes, especially those committed in our name. They express disobedience to all forms of patriarchy and take a critical position towards all governments.

The network is made up of women who will not be passive victims of the nationalist and militarist policies of the Milošević regime or the current



dominant nationalist discourse in Serbia. They demand responsibility for the wars and war crimes of the Serbian regime. They are women who publicly disobey nationalism and militarism, who advocate for a culture of ethnic, cultural, and sexual diversity.

The network is comprised of women who are diverse ethnically, religiously, culturally, sexually, educationally and socially.

Since 2002, the network has held regular meetings. Since 2003, these meetings have occurred three to four times per year, mainly in Belgrade. In these meeting, joint activities are discussed, experiences and information are exchanged, and horizontal connections are made among groups in the network. These connections between cities of the network are a very important aspect of autonomy and solidarity that is still not consistently practiced, mainly because of a lack of financial resources. The network has carried out many joint activities, including seminars, workshops, street actions, and campaigns.

**The Women's Peace Coalition** is comprised of The Kosova Women's Network and The Women in Black Network-Serbia. It is a result of a decade of solidarity, support, and cooperation between activists from autonomous women's groups in Kosovo and Serbia. It was formed in May 2006. The Women's Peace Coalition is a citizens' initiative based on the idea that women's solidarity crosses national, ethnic, and religious borders and boundaries. The coalition advocates for a just and lasting peace; the inclusion of women as equal partners in peace-building processes; the participation of women in peace processes and peace negotiations; the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325; and the improvement of women's political, economic, and societal status. It opposes the





retrograde tendencies and processes in our states that prevent the realization of the goals of Resolution 1325. The Women's Peace Coalition monitors the official negotiations on the status of Kosovo from a gender perspective and demands that the future status take into account the issues of women's human rights and peace and feminist activism. The coalition maintains frequent contact and holds quarterly meetings in which joint activities are discussed.

Thus far, the most important activity of the coalition was a conference entitled 'Women, Peace and Security,' held at the beginning of September 2006 in Struga, Macedonia. Sixty women activists from both countries participated. Activists from the Women's Peace Coalition have also presented their activities abroad, to institutions as well as alternative international forums.

**PEACE**





## Networks, Coalitions and Alliances

In addition to those already mentioned, Women in Black initiated the following regional coalitions and alliances with other networks and non-governmental organizations in 2005 and 2006:

*G8* is a group of eight nongovernmental organizations from Belgrade, Belgrade Circle, The Center for Cultural Decontamination, Civic Initiatives, The Humanitarian Law Center, The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, The Youth Initiative for Human Rights, The Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, and Women in Black. This coalition, which was formed in early 2005, advocates for responsibility for war and war crimes, primarily those of the Serbian regime; for the punishment of all war crimes; against the denial of the criminal past in Serbia; for the application of all forms of transitional justice; and for the establishment of the rule of law and democracy. It pressures institutions through campaigns, public announcements, and demands for the application of criminal and all other forms of responsibility by those in power. *G8* started a number of joint initiatives of which the Declaration on Srebrenica of June 2005 is the most noteworthy.

*The Coalition for a Secular State* was initiated at the beginning of 2006 by four nongovernmental organizations from Belgrade, The Belgrade Center for Human Rights, The Center for Peace and the Development of Democracy, Voice of Difference, and Women in Black, with the support of ten additional NGOs across Serbia. The coalition organized against the Law on Churches and Religious Communities, against the clericalization of the state, and for preserving the secular character of the state, that is, for the complete separation of church and state.

*The Women's Regional Lobby for Peace, Security, and Justice in Southeastern Europe* began in July 2006. It is comprised of women activists from civil society and democratic political parties from the Balkan region (Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Serbia). It advocates for the promotion of peace, security, and stability in Southeastern Europe. To date, the Lobby has repeatedly spoken out in



favor of a just and lasting solution to the Kosovo problem and has held numerous consultative meetings.

*The Feminist Coalition* is comprised of feminist groups from Belgrade-The Autonomous Women's Center, The Center for Women's Studies, The Incest Trauma Center, Voice of Difference, Women's Reconstruction Fund, and Women in Black-who closely cooperate. In monthly meetings, the Coalition agrees on activities, joint work and actions on the international and regional levels and supports one another. Special emphasis is placed on the production of joint documents for CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) Sessions, as well as activities against retrograde tendencies in society (particularly clericalism) that endanger women's human rights.





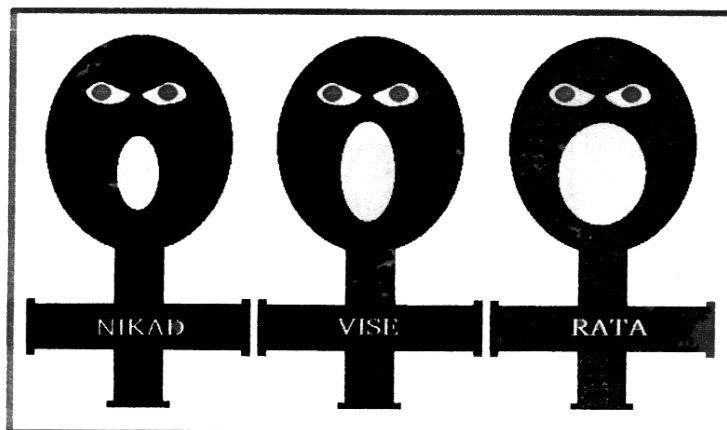
## Confronting the past - transitional justice from a feminist viewpoint

As Women in Black started as a reaction to the warmongering and aggressive politics of the Serbian regime, this is the most important segment of our peace politics. We transform feelings of bitterness, shame, and guilt into acts of nonviolent resistance and civil disobedience. During the war we confronted 'history as it happened' – the criminal politics of the regime. Until October 2000, we protested against state-organized crime. Then, as now, we believe that the Serbian regime and the Serbian armed groups, who committed innumerable crimes, as well as the institutions that supported them, are most responsible for the breakup of Yugoslavia.

After the fall of the Milošević regime, and particularly after the assassination of Prime Minister Đinđić in March 2003, Women in Black and other civil society groups have acted against the institutional denial of the criminal past. (Models of confronting the past and models of transitional justice will be addressed later.) The following is a list of some of these actions.

*Street Actions*, which have already been extensively discussed. We will only summarize them here.

There were protests every Wednesday from October 1991 until the end of 1995. The protests were directed primarily against the wars and war





crimes committed in our name in Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo. There were also protests against violence, repression, and the persecution of minority groups (in terms of ethnicity, religion, and ideology).

*Commemorations/anniversaries of crimes* were organized primarily in Belgrade, but also in other towns around Serbia. These commemorations sensitize the public, demand responsibility for war and war crimes, and, most importantly, respect the victims of crimes and extend empathy to victims' families and communities. Annually, we mark the beginning of aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina (April 6), the kidnapping and murder of Bosniaks in Štrpci (February 27), and the genocide in Srebrenica (July 11). Additionally, we organize actions on the fifth, tenth and fifteenth anniversary of the fall and destruction of Vukovar (November 18); 'The Storm' Offensive - the persecution of civilians in the Krajina, Croatia (August 5), the crime in Sjeverin (October 22) and the crime in Tuzla (May 25).

*Campaigns* are permanent demands for truth about crimes; for the prosecution of all who organized, ordered, and carried out crimes; and against the denial, minimization, and relativization of crimes. We carried out campaigns alone and with other groups, networks, and coalitions. Some of these include 'Not in Our Name, Not with Our Money,' 'Against the Law on Assistance for Hague Indictees and Their Families,' 'The Declaration on Srebrenica,' 'Women, Peace, and Security' and 'Women Ask.'

*Visiting 'difficult' places means* going to areas of war or crisis, taking trips to so-called unfriendly countries or communities during war. This is done primarily because of our policy of solidarity and trust-building, but also to break from the national consensus and resist all forms of ethnic homogenization. These trips included going to various parts of Croatia from 1991 to 1995, visiting Sarajevo during the siege (1994-1995), a peace caravan to Tuzla, and regular trips to Kosovo during the Serbian regime's institutional apartheid and low-intensity war against Kosovar Albanians from 1995 to 1999.

*Visiting the places where crimes were committed in our name* is something we have done frequently, particularly after the wars. This illustrates our policies of respecting the dignity of victims and showing solidarity with them as well as recognizing crimes committed in our name and asking forgiveness for them. This is an aspect of building a just peace and promoting truth and friendship. Since 2002, approximately fifty Women in Black Network activists from various towns in Serbia have gone to the annual



commemoration of the genocide in Srebrenica at the invitation of The Mothers of Srebrenica Association and The Women of Srebrenica Citizen's Association. We were present at the burials of identified persons at the Memorial Center in Potočarie.

We also went with other groups to commemorate crimes in Štrpci (Prijepolje 2005 and 2006) and in Sjeverin (which was held in Priboj). With other groups, we attended the commemorative gathering on the tenth anniversary of the massacre in Tuzla (May 25, 2005). More than fifty Women in Black Network activists attended the commemoration in Vukovar of the fifteenth anniversary of the destruction and fall of that city on November 18, 2006.

*Remembering and marking important acts and dates in the history of the antiwar resistance in Serbia* is something that we do because the majority of Serbians, particularly young people, are victims of the systematic silencing and falsification of the recent past. Not only are the facts about crimes silenced; the resistance to war, crimes and nationalism from 1991 to 1999 is also silenced. These acts remember a number of civil antiwar actions, including women's antiwar initiatives and the rebellion of reservists, deserters, and their parents. Initiatives to rename streets and public places are part of this sphere of action. Instead of the dominant nationalist/militarist names, we worked and continue to work for places to be named for pacifist and feminist activists. Remembrance as a civic responsibility also includes the commemoration of antiwar activists.

*Actions against the increasing fascism of society* confront the policy of excluding those who are different, which is a consequence of non-confrontation with the criminal past. In keeping with the anti-fascist politics of Women in Black, we have organized, alone or with other groups, numerous street actions, public panel discussions and conferences.

Publicly bearing witness to crimes, the hardship and suffering of victims and their surviving relatives, and victim's involvement in building a just peace is another important aspect of our work. Publicly bearing witness can lead to uncovering the facts about war crimes and to catharsis





and healing. Women in Black organized the first such event in Serbia on April 6, 2002, to mark the tenth anniversary of the aggression against Bosnia-Herzegovina with members of The Mothers of Srebrenica and epa Association, relatives of those killed in the Srebrenica genocide. Women in Black Network activists from many towns across Serbia participated in this action as well as in numerous others organized in Belgrade by the Humanitarian Law Center in 2005 and 2006.

*Following trials* is another integral part of our activities. We can divide this activity into the periods before and after the fall of the regime. After the armed NATO intervention in 1999 and in 2000, we followed the trials of victims of the regime's political repression, ethnic hatred and discrimination.

We followed the rigged trials of ethnic Albanians from Kosovo and Serbia in many Serbian towns (primarily Niš and Belgrade), including the trials of prominent leaders of Kosovar Albanians, 143 members of a student group, and five Albanian students at the University of Belgrade.

We also followed the rigged trials of Serb political dissidents, including the criminal trials of leaders of civil society. These trials were held in 1999 and 2000 in Leskovac and Valjevo.

In addition to attending these trials, we informed the domestic and international public about them and organized solidarity campaigns and concrete forms of assistance for victims of the regime's terror and their families.

*The Punishment of Crimes – The Way to a Just Peace* project included following the trials conducted after the fall of the regime for the crimes in Sjeverin and Štrpci, the murder of the Bitici brothers, and the assassination of Prime Minister Đinđić.

*Following trials in the Special Court* has meant attending the trials in the Chamber for War Crimes in Belgrade. The Special Court was founded in





2003 and is the only institution in the country where a competent court and prosecutor's office try those who have committed war crimes, including crimes committed by the Serbian side.

*The Trial of the 'Scorpions'* has been followed in an organized and systematic fashion by Women in Black Network-Serbia activists since December 2005. This trial, which is in session for one or two weeks per month, tries members of the 'Scorpions' unit who were arrested for the murder of Bosniak civilians in July 1995 as part of the genocide in Srebrenica. Thus far, almost 100 activists from the Women in Black Network have followed the trial. These activists are from Belgrade, Niš, Pirot, Zaječar, Dimitrovgrad, Leskovac, Babuš nica, Vlasotince, Kruš evac, Vrbas, Novi Sad, and Zrenjanin. In total, we have spent 36 days at the trial.

*The Trial for the Crime in Suva Reka* is seeking the truth about the incident on March 26, 1999, when members of the Serbian Interior Ministry murdered 48 Albanian civilians in Suva Reka, Kosovo. The trial began in October 2006. Thus far, we have attended more than 30 days of the trial in the Special Court. Attendees include 20 activists from 10 towns across Serbia.

Following these trials is important for a number of reasons. It is a way to learn about the institutional justice model of transitional justice and models of transitional justice that strengthen civil society's responsibility to confront the past. It also sensitizes the public to crimes committed in our name. Most importantly, following these trials is an expression of our solidarity with victims. At the trials, we keep in contact with the relatives of those who were murdered, who also follow the trials. This is of tremendous moral, emotional, and political significance. As part of these activities, we organize visits with the relatives of victims of crimes and with members of organizations from Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo who also follow the trials. We write daily dispatches from the trials, organize internal and public discussions, and analyze the trials.

#### *Confronting the Past - Educational Activities*

Although the activities discussed above are of an educational-activist character, in this section we will list seminars, panel discussions, lectures and trainings on this topic.



Žene u crnom, 1991 →

### *Bridges of Peace and Democracy*

From 1998 to 2000, we organized a series of over 30 panel discussions throughout Serbia about the Hague Tribunal ('The Hague – For and Against'), state responsibility, and the roles of civil society in confronting the past. Journalists, professors, and activists from Serbia and Croatia participated in these discussions.

This activity occurred in towns where we had not organized events previously. In cooperation with nongovernmental organizations and democratic municipal governments, we held the panel discussions local institutions spaces, such as libraries, cultural centers, and town halls.

In addition to emphasizing the importance of criminal trials for the decriminalization of the region and the emancipation of the common people from their position as the hostages of their criminals countrymen, the panel discussions showed how the arguments of Serb and Croat nationalists against The Hague Tribunal are identical; 'only members of "our" nation are prosecuted in The Hague,' both groups say. These attitudes demonstrated the necessity of civil society's increased efforts to change the value system and apply pressure on institutions to accept transitional justice. To this end, Women in Black activists have participated in a large number of seminars and panel discussions as lecturers and coordinators. At the same time, we have organized trainings in order to encourage as many network activists as possible to gain and share knowledge about transitional justice. During 2005 and 2006, we focused on the gender dimension of confronting the past. Although the aforementioned activities did have a gender dimension, during this time we particularly focused on acquainting ourselves with the experiences of the international women's movement and discovering new models of transitional justice.

### *Confronting the Past: A Feminist Approach*

Transitional justice is a collection of institutions, political and social processes, measures, and decisions related to the process of democratic transition, the transition from a criminal/dictatorial regime to democracy. Transitional justice consists of criminal and non-criminal sanctions spanning all forms of responsibility – individual, collective, moral, political and includes reparation and rehabilitation mechanisms for victims of crimes. The most well-known criminal sanctions strategy of transitional justice is



war crimes trials. Of the non-criminal, the most well-known models are truth and reconciliation commissions, lustration, the opening of secret dossiers, compensation or reparations for victims of crimes, and reconciliation.

To date, models of transitional justice have not taken a gender dimension into account. The autonomous women's movement has taken on this responsibility.

A feminist approach to confronting the past does not mean the negation or reevaluation of the existing models of transitional justice. We believe these models are extremely important. Rather, this approach incorporates a gender dimension into the theory and practice of confronting the past, in the process of transitional justice. This entails valuing women's non-violent resistance to patriarchy, war, sexism, nationalism, and militarism; transforming feelings of bitterness, powerlessness, and guilt because of the Serbian regime's wars waged in our name into actions of civic responsibility; strengthening women's autonomy through their active involvement in peace-building; promoting women's visibility as active participants in peace, not only as victims of war and violence; constructing an ethic of care that includes the public participation of women in preventing war and building peace; building coalitions of women's solidarity as an active peace policy; and creating new models of transitional justice which draw on international experience, but are adapted to the specific circumstances of this region.

There are two phases of Women in Black's educational activities related to a feminist approach to confronting the past. The first phase lasted from March to October 2005 and included training programs and seminars. Two





training seminars were held in Belgrade (on March 25-27, 2005 and April 15-17, 2005). The themes addressed included theories of responsibility; feminist praxis and the theory of responsibility; from the ethic of care to an ethic of civic responsibility; women's international tribunals for war crimes; the ethical principles of Women in Black; models of transitional justice; the consequences of denial of the criminal past for the legal system, the values system, and the future; mechanisms for escaping responsibility – opposition to The Hague Tribunal; civil society's responsibility for transitional justice; and a feminist approach to confronting the past. The interactive lectures were led by well-known Serbian women activists and academics, women who began many antiwar initiatives. By profession, they are philosophers, historians, and lawyers. Lectures were also given by the younger generation of activists and feminist theorists, as well as activists from The Women in Black Network-Italy. Following this phase of training, newly-acquired knowledge was applied in the field.

Regional seminars were organized in Sijarinska Banja in south Serbia (May 13-15, 2005), on Lake Palić in Vojvodina (June 24-26, 2005), on Zlatar Mountain in the Sandžak region (September 1-4, 2005), and in Kragujevac in central Serbia (November 25-27, 2005). The themes addressed were the concept of confronting the past, from the role of victim to the role of responsible citizen, responsibility and me, models of transitional justice, confronting the past through women's solidarity and resistance to fascism, and continuing women's nonviolent resistance. Over 200 women from 30 towns in Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo participated in these seminars.





The second phase of work on this theme, which began in March 2006 and continues to this day includes the following activities.

*Transitional Justice from a Feminist Viewpoint* is a project that deepens and elaborates on the aforementioned themes through workshops and lectures. This is a response to the wishes of participants in the regional seminars to learn more about these important and interesting issues. To date, day-long seminars have been held on the themes of 'The Responsibility of Civil Society to Confront the Past and a Feminist Approach to Transitional Justice' (Belgrade, May 10), 'Women's Solidarity in Confronting the Past' (May 20 in Leskovac and May 30 in Zaječar) and 'Responsibility and Me' (July 7 in Velika Plana and December 12 in Vlasotince). These workshops were attended by 90 activists. There is great interest in organizing more of these workshops.

*Knowledge as Civic Responsibility for Peace – Little Libraries of Transitional Justice* involves forming libraries about transitional justice which include works by domestic authors' and translated texts. To date, libraries have been formed in eight towns in Serbia in order to deepen knowledge and organize discussions on these themes. It is anticipated that in the next phase, brochures will be created about transitional justice from a feminist viewpoint on the topics of theories of responsibility, models of transitional justice, women's tribunals, women's solidarity, and Confronting the Past: The Principles of the Peace Politics of Women in Black.

*To See, To Know, To Change* involves showing recorded testimonies, documentaries and fiction films about suffering in war and nonviolent resistance to war, particularly about the women's peace movement in the former Yugoslavia and in other parts of the world (including the Middle East, Africa and Latin America). Thus far, film screenings have been organized in every region of Serbia, eight towns total, with 143 women participants- not only Women in Black activists, but also women with much less familiarity with the issues of confronting the past and transitional justice. Following the screenings, workshops and roundtable discussions are held to talk about the themes of the films. The majority of participants have commented that these screenings prompt women to become more involved in confronting the past and in peace activism, and that it is indispensable that the films are seen by a wider circle of people in Serbia.

*In Remembrance of Women's Resistance – Memory as Responsibility* is one



of our new activities. It developed a form of confronting the 'positive' past, remembering 15 years of antiwar resistance and 15 years of Women in Black's work. It occurred from October to the end of December, 2006 and consisted of screening the film *Uvek Neposlusne* (Always Disobedient), an audio-visual installation by the Skart artist group, and conversations about antiwar resistance, women's activism and confronting the past in ten towns (Kikinda, Zrenjanin, Zaječar, Leskovac, Bečej, Novi Sad, Kraljevo, Tutin, and Kruševac). As part of this project, concerts by the antiwar punk group Hoću-Neću (I will – I won't) were organized as well as an exhibition of the photography of Women in Black. This activity will continue in 2007.

Other activities in connection with confronting the past include:

- making and maintaining contact with the families of victims of crimes committed in our name;
- lobbying, alone and with other organizations, for the implementation of transitional justice in Serbia;
- collecting and printing the testimonies of persons affected by war;
- writing, printing, and distributing brochures about transitional justice, remembrance of crime, and similar themes;
- publicly speaking out on issues related to confronting the past;



## Traveling Women's Peace Workshops

This educational program lasted from February 1998 until October 2002. It later developed into a variety of educational projects called 'The Women's Peace Network: Growing and Strengthening.'

These workshops stimulated the creation of The Women in Black Network-Serbia.

These workshops were held in four regions of Serbia, in Kragujevac (for central, south, and east Serbia), in Kraljevo (for west and central Serbia), in Novi Pazar (for the Sandžak region), in Novi Sad (for Vojvodina) and one site in Montenegro (Nikšić).

Altogether, there were six cycles of workshops. After each cycle, an evaluation meeting was organized with at least five participants from each region. This enabled interpersonal and interregional connections and the formation of joint initiatives.

Activists from civil society, democratic political parties, unions, and Serbia's biggest educational workers' professional organization participated in the workshops, which applied pedagogical methods and the ideas of Women in Black in educational settings.

These workshops had an enormous value during the time of war and the dictatorial regime. They broke media blockades; created connections between democratic oriented women; and helped to dismantle the patriarchal mentality, prejudices, and stereotypes. The workshops created a women's peace network which developed into The Women in Black Network-Serbia. This educational project helped to deconstruct the demonization of Women in Black in the regime's media. Even during the first educational cycle, in addition to workshops for women, there were other activities organized in the cities where the workshops were held. The public participated in these panel discussions, meetings, and street actions. Every workshop session lasted three days. The same workshops were held in every region.

An extensive collection of literature was used to prepare for each educational cycle. Essays and other texts on the cycles' themes were distributed to workshop participants. During the fourth workshop cycle, we also began to print booklets from 50 to 99 pages in length. Additionally, interactive



Žene u pokretu, 1991 →

methods and strategies from many countries (especially Spain and the US) were combined and used, but they were always adapted to the workshop participants and modified to fit the needs of the participants and other circumstances.

The first cycle of the Women's Traveling Peace Workshops, *Women Changing Women*, consisted of workshops on civil society, recognizing women's needs, and friendship among women. Including the evaluation meeting, 132 women participated in this cycle.

The second cycle, *Women's Rights are Human Rights*, also included three workshops (on the history, concept, and contents of women's human rights; reproductive rights; and the mother-daughter relationship). This cycle had 119 participants.

The third cycle, *Interethnic and Intercultural Solidarity*, consisted of workshops on equal and different, stereotypes and prejudices, identities, life in diversity, and (dis)loyalty to 'them' or oneself. There were 197 women who participated in these workshops.

The fourth cycle, *Women and Power*, included workshops on 'from invisible power to sharing power;' changing the idea, contents, and structure of power; and power within women's groups. One hundred eighty-four women participated.

The fifth cycle, *Women and Antimilitarism*, included workshops on militarist values in everyday life, how militarization hurts women, and the history and experiences of feminist-antimilitarist political engagement. Altogether, 214 women participated in this cycle.

The sixth cycle, *Women's Peace Politics*, consisted of workshops on 'by stopping patriarchy, we create peace;' the natural (un)peacefulness of women; women's peace coalitions; and relationships among women as peace policy. There were 214 women participants.

As part of this project, 207 workshops were held. Altogether, 1,248 women from 52 cities in Serbia and Montenegro directly participated in this project.

The Traveling Women's Peace Workshops consisted of other activities as well, including numerous peace meetings with women from the former Yugoslavia, especially at moments of heightened tension when there was a greater need for the direct engagement of peace activists. One of the most important of these meetings was held in Bujanovac, south Serbia on July 14, 2001 at the height of the crisis in Macedonia. Fifty women activists from Macedonia and Serbia participated in the meeting. Street actions for peace were also organized.



## The Women's Peace Network Widening and Strengthening

A two-year long project of educational activities began in July 2002. The segments, like of the Traveling Women's Peace Workshops, had a decentralized character and were held on a rotating basis. However, new aspects were introduced. A list of these follows.

- Project activities were determined based on the needs of the activists, problems within the surrounding society, and in accordance with the cultural-political atmosphere and situation;

- Issues and topics about which there was a very low level of information and knowledge were addressed;

- Workshops were held in cities which did not host activities during the 'traveling workshops.' This strengthened the advocacy network and encouraged the horizontal integration of activists;

- There were diverse forms of activities. Activities included workshops, lectures, panel discussions, roundtable discussions, and international and regional conferences;

- The content was also very diverse and depended not only on the needs of the participants but also the principles of traveling workshops, the research that the workshop coordinators came across through their work, the interdependency of activities on the global level (i.e. militarization and globalization) and, most importantly, the repercussions of global developments on civil society and the status of women;

- Activist engagement and academic knowledge were connected and theory and practice were blended. This created an informal coalition of experts and activists, enhancing the processes of interpersonal 'studies' and mutual assistance;

- Feminism and antimilitarism were more strongly integrated.

The educational activities within this project can be classified in the following ways.





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International and regional conferences and seminars:

– *Civil Society – Women's Activism – Creating Peace* was held in October 2002 in Belgrade with 57 participating activists from 17 cities in Serbia and Montenegro. Lecturers included leading feminist theorists from the former Yugoslavia who were also feminist and peace activists. Panel discussions were held about autonomous women's initiatives in the former Yugoslavia, women in dissident movements, women's politics in former communist countries, borders of feminist compromises, civic responsibility and feminists, and civil society after September 11th.

– *Civil Society and Women's Activism* was a regional two-day seminar in the form of lectures and workshops held August 2003. Thirty-three activists from six from southern Serbian cities participated.

A series of seminars on this same theme were held in:

– Borsko Lake, in August 2004, in which 29 activists from seven cities in eastern Serbia participating;

– Negotin in eastern Serbia at the end of October 2004, in which 18 activists from four places in the region participated.

– Valjevo in central Serbia in December 2004, in which 12 women participated.

– Kraljevo in central Serbia in January 2006, in which 21 activists participated.

Altogether, 170 women participated in these seminars.

'*Everything for Peace, Health, and Knowledge – Nothing for Armament*' is an event that has occurred annually since May 2002. Women in Black has organized feminist-antimilitarist activities on two important dates for global autonomous women's movements-May 24th, The International Day for Women's Action for Peace and Disarmament, and May 28th, The International Day of Action for Women's Health and Reproductive Rights. Thus far, three conferences were held (two in Belgrade and one in Niš), which included workshops and panel discussions about militarization, the poverty of women, military expenses, disarmament, a feminist approach to health, reproductive and sexual rights, demographic politics, and security.

At these conferences, the lecturers were distinguished experts and activists from the former Yugoslavia, the United States, The Netherlands, Belgium, Argentina, Algeria, and Great Britain. Altogether, 280 women from



all parts of Serbia participated. Another conference on a similar topic will be discussed in another segment of this book.

### Women's Peace Politics

A series of seminars about the principles of women's peace politics, women's peace coalitions, and women's resistance were held in Belgrade in 2004 and 2006, Negotin in 2004, and Kruševac in 2006. In total, 173 women participated. There was also a series of conversations and workshops held in 2004 entitled 'Women's Peace Bridges' in Pljevlja, Montenegro, and Dimitrovgrad, Bor, Požarevac, and Trstenik, Serbia. Approximately 100 women participated.

*Neda Božinović: Continuing the Struggle for Peace and Women's Human Rights* was a one-day conference about the activism and theoretical engagement of Neda Božinović (1917-2001), one of the founders of Women in Black. It was held in cooperation with the Neda peace group, in Zaječar on April 1, 2006. During this conference, the life of Neda Božinović was illustrated by her anti-fascist engagement, enlightening research, and feminist and peace activism. In conjunction with the conference, there was a photography exhibition and a street action for peace. Over 40 activists from Zaječar, Belgrade, Negotin, Majdanpek, Boljevac, and Bor participated.

*Our 15 Years – 1991-2006* was a peace meeting held on October 7th and 8th, 2006 in Belgrade to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the work of Women in Black. There was a panel discussion, workshops, the premiere of the film 'Always Disobedient' about the work of Women in Black, and a photography exhibition. Approximately 250 people from all parts of Serbia participated in these events.





## Women and Power

*Another Power is Possible* was an international conference, held in March 2004 in Leskovac. This conference consisted of three panel discussions and six workshops about women and power, different ways of addressing power, and building new forms of power. Along with 135 women from Serbia, International Network of Women in Black activists from Italy, Spain, Columbia, and the United States participated.

One-day and/or two-day seminars about the relationships between women and power, types of power, exchanging ideas, and the meaning and structures of power were held in the spring of 2004 in Zajecar, Dimitrovgrad, and Pirot; seventy-two women participated in these events.

## Globalization and Alterglobalization

More international conferences were held:

*The Globalization of Solidarity and Social Rights – 'We are Creating Peace by Offering Alternatives'* was held in March 2003 in Belgrade. This was the first conference on globalization in Serbia which connected the academic and alternative level, theorists and activists. At this conference panel discussions were held about the cultural, political, social, and economic dimensions of globalization, including responses to the injustices of neo-liberal globalization (the alterglobalization movement). There were participants and lecturers from Croatia, Italy, and Germany and 100 activists from 30 Serbian cities and five Montenegrin cities at the conference.

*Let's Globalize Feminism and Antimilitarism* was an international conference organized in Belgrade on March 29-31, 2002. There were approximately fifty activists from Serbia and a group of five activists from the Italian network of Women in Black in attendance.

*Let's Globalize Feminism and Antimilitarism* was a conference held in the end of December 2003 in Belgrade. Activists from Bosnia – Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Slovenia, The United States, and Germany participated as well as 60 activists from 16 Serbia cities.

*Panel Discussions, Lectures, and Roundtable Discussions* were held on topics including feminist approaches to health; women's health and policies; reproductive and sexual rights and the privatization of health services; the globalization of conservatism and its alternatives; religious fundamen-



talism, conservatism, and retrograde tendencies in the former Yugoslavia; religious fundamentalism in periods of transition; clerical-nationalist and fascist tendencies in Serbia; feminism as utopia and reality; men and feminism; feminist antimilitarism; the spread of feminist theories and activism; women's human rights, and the politics of international support.

Panel discussions and lectures were held in Belgrade, Bela Crkva, Leskovac, Novi Sad, Niš, Novi Pazar, Pančevo, Kragujevac, Vlasotince, Dimitrovgrad, Tutin, and Zrenjanin. These panel discussions were held frequently in the period from 2003 to 2006.

There were over 1,000 participants in this segment of the project, according to the number of persons who registered. The actual number was likely larger because it is difficult to determine the exact number of attendees at this type of activity.

*Patriarchy and Feminist Alternatives*, a series of workshops about the relationship between gender and violence and women's solidarity, was held in the fall of 2004 in Pirot and Leskovac. There were 63 women participants. A similar series of workshops were held in the fall of 2005 in Pljevlja, Montenegro.

*Equal, but Different* was the title of daylong workshops held in Zaječar, Bela Crkva, and Prijepolje in which a total of fifty women participated.





*Reproductive Rights are Human Rights* was a daylong workshops in Tutin in which 20 women participated.

Within the framework of these activities, there were also seminars about strengthening the capacity of The Women in Black Network in January 2002. We also organized seminars about our representation in media in February and May 2003 in which 83 activists participated.

This period of diverse educational activities created a need for a better understanding of specific themes and pressing societal issues which especially affect women. These include the aforementioned activities relating to confronting the past. Activities related to the issue of security from a gender standpoint, as well as feminist responses to the clericalization of society, will be elaborated on in the following segments.





## Women, Peace, and Security - a Feminist-Antimilitarist Approach

Since the beginning of Women in Black's work, we have supported demilitarization on the institutional, cultural, and spiritual level through street actions, educational activities (conferences, seminars, and workshops), legislative initiatives, and our publishing activities. Within the alternative history we have documented, there is a multitude of written documents about this. Although only in recent years has the issue of security received our special attention, our feminist-antimilitarist actions have always challenged the traditional militarized understanding of security. Through our antiwar actions, demands for responsibility for war and war crimes, campaigns for conscientious objection to military service and military expenses, and legislative initiatives, we have built an alternative concept and practice of security.

### Campaigns

***Women, Peace, and Security*** was a Women in Black resolution submitted to the Serbian National Assembly on October 31, 2005, the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the same-named UN Security Council Resolution. We presented our resolution to a group of women National Assembly members with a civic orientation. Our resolution contains the basic demands from Resolution 1325 (the participation of women in peace processes and decision-making about peace, the inclusion of a gender perspective in peace processes, training on the gender perspective in peace missions, the protection of women in armed conflicts and post-war periods, and the introduction of a gender dimension and gender perspective in UN reports and the mechanisms for implementing peace agreements). In our resolution, we added demands specific to the political circumstances in which we live, including nonviolent conflict resolution; the inclusion of civil society and peace activists in nonviolent conflict resolution processes; respect for and protection of women's human rights and all citizens' security, especially the security of human rights defenders; the preservation of the secular character of the state; the application of The Law on Family which punishes violence against women; the repeal of The Law on Support to Hague Indictees and Their Families and the redirection of those funds to peace and



nonviolence education projects; discontinuity with criminal politics; the extradition of everyone accused of war crimes; the criminalization of denial of the Srebrenica Genocide; democratic and civil control over the armed forces; the prevention of the privatization of armed forces; and respect for the rights of human rights defenders. Unfortunately, despite our constant demands, which were formally presented again on October 31, 2006, the Assembly of Serbia has not taken the 'Women, Peace, and Democracy' Resolution under consideration, illustrating the undemocratic character of the current Serbian government.

**We won't Go Back – We are Defending Our Rights:** was a campaign that occurred on March 8, 2005 and 2006 against the clericalization of society and growing fundamentalist tendencies, the endangerment of reproductions rights, and the growth of military and police expenditures at the expense of women's human rights. The campaign included street actions, the distribution of leaflets throughout Serbia, media appearances, and public debates.

**Reproductive Rights and Security** was a research survey about reproductive rights in general and abortion specifically. It has been conducted every May since 2002 in approximately 20 cities in Serbia. It charts the effect of the propaganda of nationalist demographers, clero-fascist media, and clero-nationalist institutions that targets the emotional, spiritual, and political integrity of women and reduces women to their reproductive function in the interest of the state, ethnic group, and church. The campaign is directed not only against the aforementioned tendencies, but most importantly, to defend reproductive rights.





## Educational Activities

***It is possible to divide the conferences, seminars, and workshops in the following way.***

*'Everything for Peace, Health, and Knowledge – Nothing for Armament'* are conferences which have been held since 2002 (except for 2005, which will be discussed later), uniting two important days-May 24, The International Day of Women's Action for Peace and Disarmament, and May 28, The International Day of Action for Women's Health and Reproductive Rights. We were the first group and network in the world to connect these two days and annually organize feminist-antimilitarist activities to mark them. These international conferences critically reconsider the traditional concept of security that serves war, militarism, and nationalism; promote human security devoted to human needs and investment in peace, development, health, education, and women's human rights. These conferences have been held in Belgrade and Nis. Thus far, 280 women activists have participated.

*'Women, Peace, and Democracy'* was a project implement throughout 2005. It consisted of two basic parts, regional training seminars and international training conferences, as well as an array of other related activities.

### ***Regional Training Seminars***

The seminar 'The Role of Women's Activism in Building Civil Society and Peace' was held on Zlatar Mountain, in the Sandzak region, February 18-20, 2005. The topics addressed in the interactive workshops and lectures were civil society; civil society and women's activism; peace, security, and demilitarization from women's perspectives; joint lobbying for the adoption of Resolution 1325; and feminism.





Žene u ratu, 1991 →

Seminars entitled 'Women, Peace, and Security' were held at Borsko Lake July 1-3 2005, in Predanje south Serbia September 25-26, 2005, and in Belgrade on October 31, 2005. The topics addressed in these seminars included identity politics, UN Security Council Resolution 1325, the significance of its adoption, and women's peace politics.

Later, the training seminar 'Security and Confronting the Past' was held in Kragujevac on November 25-27, 2005. Fifty-five women from 16 cities in Serbia and Kosovo participated. The topics included confronting the past, security, 'Identity: Chosen or Imposed?,' personal responsibility, women's solidarity, women's activism, and Resolution 1325.

*We also held two international training programs.*

'Peace, Women's Human Rights, and Solidarity' was held in Novi Pazar in the Sandzak region March 4-6, 2005. 'Everything for Peace, Health, and Knowledge – Nothing for Armament' was held in Belgrade May 27-29, 2005.

During the training program in Novi Pazar, which marked March 8, International Women's Day, panel discussions were held on peace and security, women's solidarity against conservative tendencies, and joint activities for the implementation of Resolution 1325.

The training in Belgrade was held May 27-29, 2005 and addressed women's solidarity against conservative tendencies, the differences between the concepts of state security and human security, human security, Resolution 1325, political demography and gender politics, and demographic politics and national security.

Other activities that were part of the Women, Peace, and Security project included workshops and lectures about civil society and women's human rights in Vlasotince, south Serbia, and Dimitrovgrad, east Serbia. In Tutin in the Sandzak region, a series of workshops called 'Reproductive Rights are Women's Human Rights' was held. Women in Black participated in The International Anti-Mafia Caravan (which passed through Leskovac at the end of September 2005) in order to raise consciousness about the connections that exist between the war mafia and the political elite. Activities were also organized to mark the fifth anniversary of the adoption of Resolution 1325.

The result of activities connected to the gender dimension of security and creating human and feminist-antimilitarist concepts of security include



deepening and widening knowledge about the concept, meaning, and significance of security; expanding knowledge about importance of security for women's everyday lives and women's peace activism; expressing women's interest in creating security as a function of women's human rights, not national security; expanding theoretical knowledge and activist experience on gender issues, peace, and security; strengthening cooperation between activist and academic experts in this field; raising the consciousness of civil society and the general public about the importance of Resolution 1325; lobbying a group of women members of the Serbian National Assembly; constantly demanding that the Republic of Serbia implement Resolution 1325; increasing the media's awareness of the issue of gender and security; and forming regional and global networks whose work related to issues of gender, peace, and security.

Altogether, 325 women participated in this project.

Additionally, we organized a few other activities, which will now be described.

'*Women, Peace, and Security*' was a conference held in Belgrade on October 31, 2005, the fifth anniversary of the adoption of Resolution 1325. As part of this conference, a panel discussion was held on 'Security is the Absence of Fear, Violence, and Poverty...From the Traditional Concept of Security to Human Security' with the participation of famous experts on security and politicians with a civic orientation. The panel discussion 'Attacks on Human Rights Defenders and Peace Activists' in which the most famous activists from Serbia and Montenegro participated, exposed the media's demonization of women activists for their persistent efforts for a break from the criminal past and application of transitional justice. There were 79 women activists from 22 cities in Serbia and Montenegro who participated in this conference.

*Security and Women's Activism* promoted the publication of a Serbian language edition of *Rising up in Response* through a series of workshops and discussions about women's activism and the challenges and obstacles that women civil society activists face in Serbia. The workshops and book promotions were held in September, October, and November 2005 in six cities in Serbia (Leskovac, Zrenjanin, Belgrade, Pirot, Novi Sad, and Kikinda). Altogether, 140 women participated in these activities.



*Women, Peace, and Security* is an anthology of essays published by Women in Black. In the anthology's 185 pages, the work of well known activists and experts on this topic is represented. It is divided into two parts 'From Criticism of the Traditional Understanding of Security to the Concept of Human Security' and 'The Feminist-Antimilitarist Concept of Security.'

*Rising Up in Response*, a book by Jane Barry and published by the Urgent Action Fund was translated into Serbian and published by Women in Black. It is about the struggles of women's human rights defenders in conflict areas. The book was printed in July 2005 and has seven chapters and 176 pages.

Additionally, Women in Black has printed a large number of leaflets on this topic.





## Warning Signs of Fundamentalism and Feminist Responses

Women in Black works for a secular state and the total separation of church and state, opposing the misuse of religion, ethnicity, cultural heritage, and tradition for political ends, especially the repression of women's reproductive and sexual rights. Supplementing the activities related to this issue already mentioned in this publication, in this section we will describe activities in 2005 and 2006. During the 1990s, religious institutions, primarily the Serbian Orthodox Church, played an important role in the production of warmongering politics and the clericalization of society, which most jeopardizes women. Women in Black has reacted to all of these phenomena; many segments of this publication have already addressed that. Even after the fall of the Milošević regime, clero-nationalist, clero-fascist, and fundamentalist tendencies continue to attack democracy, civil society, and, especially, women's human rights. Women in Black has organized an array of activities to oppose these dangerous tendencies. This project is one of them.

### Educational Activities

During 2005, a series of workshops about the impact of fundamentalist tendencies on reproductive and sexual rights and women's solidarity against conservative and fundamentalist tendencies was held in Belgrade, Novi Pazar, Tutin, and Leskovac.

Also, three international roundtable discussions were organized

*Warning Signs of Religious Fundamentalism, Conservatism, and Retrograde Tendencies in the Former Yugoslavia* was held in Novi Sad on April 23, 2004 with the participation of activists and experts from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia. Approximately 60 people attended this discussion.

*The Globalization of Conservatism and Fundamentalism and Alternatives* was held in Belgrade on May 28, 2004. The panelists were from Great Britain, the US, Croatia, and Serbia. Sixty women attended.

*Conservative Tendencies and Alternatives* was held in Novi Pazar on June 1, 2004. The panelists were from Algeria, Argentina, Croatia, and Serbia. Eighty people attended.



A series of lectures about the growth of fundamentalist tendencies was also organized. However, the growth of retrograde tendencies on the local, regional, and global levels, and their extremely negative effects, created a need for still more training on recognizing retrograde tendencies for Women in Black Network activists. The increase in fundamentalism also prompted the necessity of starting joint campaigns and legislative initiatives against the growing clericalization of society in Serbia and to develop feminist solidarity in action against all fundamentalism across state, ethnic, and religious barriers; extend support to victims of fundamentalist violence and repression against women; and strengthen feminist solidarity coalitions and support on the local, regional, and global level. Because of this, we organized a series of trainings.

### **Trainings**

– April 7-9, 2006, the first 'Warning Signs of Fundamentalism and Feminist Responses' training was held in Belgrade. It was the first training on this topic for Women in Black Network activists. It was comprised of ten interactive lectures on important issues connected to fundamentalism, including fundamentalism's goals and methods and responses to fundamentalist threats, tendencies, and movements. The lecturers were history, philosophy, and sociology experts from Serbia, Algeria/France, and Croatia. The seminar was attended by 57 Women in Black network activists from Montenegro, Kosovo, and 20 cities in Serbia.

– April 28-30, 2006, the second training on this topic was held, also in Belgrade. The topics addressed in this training included fundamentalism—the abolition of the secular state and secular society; the fundamentalism of the Serbian Orthodox Church and feminist alternatives; the misuse of religion in the political sphere; patriarchy, fundamentalism, and war in Italy; the religious left; and women and fundamentalism. The workshop leaders and lecturers were experts and activists from the Women in Black network from Serbia, Italy, the US, and Croatia. The participants totaled 57 women, from Montenegro, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Italy, and 14 cities in Serbia. After the training, participants applied their newly acquired knowledge and experience in the field.

### **Seminars**

On June 2-4, 2006 in Sijarinska Banja, south Serbia, the first regional seminar on Warning Signs of Fundamentalism and Feminist Responses was



held. Lectures and workshops addressed fundamentalism and the abolition of the secular state and society, the role of the Serbian Orthodox Church in the breakup of the former Yugoslavia (which included a screening of a film by The Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia on this topic), 'Identity: Assigned or Chosen?', fundamentalist attacks on women's human rights and the repression of reproductive and sexual rights, and feminist alternatives to fundamentalism. The seminar was attended by 34 women from 8 cities. It is planned that at least five similar regional seminars will be held throughout Serbia in 2007.

#### **Lectures, Panel Discussions, and Debates**

– March 8, 2006, 'Women's Solidarity against Growing Fundamentalism and the Repression of Reproductive and Sexual rights,' a panel discussion held in Belgrade in which 48 activists participated.

– April 6, 2006, 'Fundamentalism's New Strategies in Europe and North America: The Attack on Democracy, Basic Human Rights, and Women's Human Rights and Feminist Strategies against Fundamentalism,' a lecture in Belgrade by the founder of Women Living Under Muslim Laws. Thirty activists attended the lecture.

– April 12, 2006, with the participation of experts, activists, and representatives of the media, a public discussion about The Law on Churches and Religious Communities was held in Belgrade.

In this segment of activities, over 450 people participated, most of whom were women.

#### **Lobbying Activities**

##### *The Coalition for a Secular State*

Women in Black responded to the proposed Law on Churches and Religious Communities, by organizing activities to sensitize the public and forming a solidarity coalition for the protection of the secular state. The Coalition held five public meetings in which the possibilities for joint activities were discussed. The result of this work was the formulation of proposed amendments to the law. We lobbied a group of National Assembly members to propose these amendments in the Assembly. After the passage of the law, the coalition hired a lawyer who is currently researching the possibility of bringing a case before the Supreme Court in order to overturn the law as unconstitutional.



*Žene u crnom, 1991 →*

## Street Actions

March 8, 2006, a women's peace performance entitled 'I Learned the Lesson;' occurred in Republic Square in Belgrade. It was led by the Institute for Engaged Art and was directed against the clericalization of society and the proposed Law on Churches and Religious Communities. Women in Black Network activists from 20 cities in Serbia and autonomous women group activists from Belgrade participated in this action.

– March 8, 'We won't Go Back-We are Protecting our Rights' - a women's peace march in the main streets of Belgrade.

– April 29, 'We Want Democracy - not Theocracy,' a protest and performance in Republic Square in Belgrade against the adoption of the Law on Churches and Religious Communities. Women in Black activists from throughout of Serbia participated in this action.

May 27, 'We Will Give Birth if We Want, When We Want, and with Whom We Want,' the distribution of leaflets that included facts about childbearing gathered by Women in Black activists in 20 cities in Serbia. This action was directed against the clericalization of the state and the propaganda of clero-nationalist institutions and clero-fascist forces, which demands the prohibition of abortion and the implementation of policies to increase natality in Serbia.

– June 21, 'Neither Whores, nor Saints, but Women,' a women's performance by Dah Theater and Women in Black against the Law on Churches and Religious Communities, against the misuse of religion for political purposes, and for a secular state and women's human rights.

## Publishing

– Warning Signs of Fundamentalism and Feminist Responses is a 244 page anthology which contains sections entitled 'Fundamentalism: the Concept and Its Characteristics, Ways, and Fields of Work,' 'Fundamentalism: The Attack on Democracy, Basic Human Rights, and Reproductive and Sexual Rights,' and 'Fundamentalism and Feminist Responses.' We also published a smaller notebook with the same name and numerous leaflets and brochures, which were distributed during street actions.

In 2007, it is planned for the program to be widened to Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, in cooperation with aligned organizations.



## Power and Otherness

This project occurred from March until October 2001 in three regions in Serbia (Sandzak, south Serbia, and the Banat). Since the population in these regions is very heterogeneous - ethnically, religiously, linguistically, and culturally – the workshops focused on recognizing these differences as a base for creative dialog and cohabitation.

This project was carried out in three phases. The first consisted of workshops with the same content (stereotypes and prejudices and living in diversity) in all three regions. The second phase featured more varied content, adapted to regional needs, including gender and nation, we and 'the other,' and breaking away from patriarchy. In the third phase, there were workshops and discussions in which women from all three regions participated. The themes addressed were identities, confronting the past, models of transitional justice/ways of serving justice, and the political and cultural consequences of September 11th.

Altogether, 21 workshops were held as part of this project and 223 women from 37 towns in the aforementioned border regions participated.

### ***Education for Democracy – Law in our Everyday Lives (Street Law)***

This educational program for teachers was carried out from October 2002 until June 2003 in cooperation with The Forum for Free Education of Zagreb. The Ministry of Education and Sport of The Republic of Serbia classified this program as professional training for educators which would enable them to apply interactive and participatory methods in democracy and human rights education.

Two cycles of workshops were held, in November and December 2002, as part of this educational project. The practical application of the acquired skills and knowledge in primary and secondary schools in approximately thirty cities in Serbia followed. Of the 61 participants, predominantly secondary and upper primary school teachers but also a few university students studying humanities and education, 58 completed the training successfully and obtained a certificate. During the implementation period of the project, the participants held a total of 325 workshops in 31 cities. They were awarded certificates in May 2003 in Belgrade.



The next phase of the project began in February 2004. It prepared an educational program for education workers (a training for trainers) to qualify them for teaching work, primarily in local communities. In this phase of the project, educators from The Forum for Free Education frequently consulted with participants.

In the second half of April 2004, a seminar was organized in Belgrade. After successfully passing the exam, the 26 successful participants in the program (most of whom were teachers from throughout Serbia) were qualified to use participatory and interactive methods in formal and informal education. At the end of April, they received the title of 'Trainer for the Street Law Program.' This allowed them to independently teach new program participants. The qualification program was carried out in cooperation with The Forum for Free Education of Zagreb. From October to the end of December 2004, the qualified trainers carried out 27 workshops with the Roma population in Belgrade, Kragujevac, and Niš.

Unfortunately, after the Koštunica government came to power in January 2004, our program—as well as many similar civil society educational programs—was expunged from the Ministry of Education and Sport's catalog. This exemplifies the retrograde processes which seriously threaten the educational system and illustrates the continuity with the politics of war, nationalism, xenophobia, clericalism, and militarism in Serbia.





## Mutual Support – Women's Solidarity at Work

Since its beginning in early 2001, this educational activity has empowered women, encouraged their autonomy, broadened the public space for women, and promoted peace policy in everyday life. In particular, it encourages the creation of autonomous women's groups and supports them in their initial stages. It also strengthens civil society and the coalitions of solidarity within it. Thus far, nearly 50 workshops and lectures have been held in Futog, Novi Sad, Gospodinci, Zaječar, Lebane, Leskovac, Vlasotince, Vladičan Han, Bojnik, Zrenjanin, Bela Crkva, Prijepolje, Vranje, Tutin, Belgrade, Uice, and Kikinda in Serbia, as well as in Pljevlja, Nikšić, Cetinje, and Kotor in Montenegro. Workshops and lectures were held multiple times in many of these places.

The contents of the workshops are determined by consulting with women (and men) from the local community. The main purpose of the workshops is to tackle topics that effect the women's autonomous movement and civil society in general. Primarily, they are about the focus of Women in Black's work:

- Women's Peace Politics
- Confronting the Past
- Feminism and Globalization
- Militarism and its Alternatives
- The Alterglobalist Movement
- Antifascism and Solidarity
- Globalization and Women's Human Rights
- Globalization and Reproductive Rights
- Globalization and Women's Health
- The Equality of Sexual Orientations (LGBT Rights)
- Reproductive Rights / The Church / Clerical Nationalism– Women's Feminist Responses
- Women's Activism before the War, during the War and in the Post-War Period
- Patriarchy and Feminist Alternatives



- Mother – Daughter Relationships
- Stereotypes, Prejudices, and Multiculturalism

In contrast to other educational projects, Women in Black organized these workshops mainly at the invitation of local groups. Thus far, we have held approximately 50 workshops in which nearly 1,000 women participated. It is important to note that some activists participated in educational activities that were organized far from their place of residence. Because of the importance of the themes, they later organized similar lectures and workshops where they live and work.

The remaining activities in the realm of mutual support (such as campaigns, legislative initiatives and petitions) are classified within other segments of Women in Black's work. This section exclusively mentions educational activities.

### ***Internal Workshops***

In addition to our regular meetings, we very often hold lectures, workshops, and discussion on political relations and a wide spectrum of other issues for our group. The lecturers and workshops coordinators are part of Women in Black or aligned groups in Belgrade or our friends from abroad.

The issues which we address in these workshops and lectures are numerous. We won't list them here. We hope that this publication offers a good representation of the activities, statements, and values of Women in Black.





## Conscientious Objection and Antimilitarism

### *From 1991 to 1996*

Since October 1991 we have publicly expressed solidarity with war dissenters and all men who refuse to go to the battlefield, demanding amnesty for deserters and working to stop the mobilization for war.

Since late 1991, Women in Black worked with a men's support group to organize the following forms of action and support:

- Moral, emotional, and political assistance and support to deserters and conscientious objectors;
- Counter-information and alternative information, including written reports about deserters and conscientious objectors' human rights, the mobilization of refugees, international antimilitarist networks and networks for human rights, and relevant international institutions (such as The European Bureau for Conscientious Objection of The Council of Europe and Amnesty International);
- Contact with those at risk and their representatives (including asylum seekers, deserters, returnees, lawyers' offices, and human rights bureaus);
- Cooperation with other groups domestically and throughout the former Yugoslavia that are involved with related issues;
- Antimilitarist education.

### *From 1996 to 1999*

Since 1996, we have published a journal on antimilitarism and conscientious objection called *PRIGOVOR* (Objection). To date, nine issues have been published.

Observation of May 15, International Conscientious Objectors' Day, also began in 1996. On this day and others, we promote the concept of conscientious objection in public spaces through concerts and at music festivals.

Activists participated in seminars on conscientious objection in European and non-European countries, making lasting and strong connections of mutual support and cooperation with antimilitarist networks all over Europe, especially in Germany and Spain.



In order to further improve the informal network, three meetings were held, the last at the end of 1996. About thirty young activists from ten cities in Serbia attended each meeting.

During the NATO interventions, we established a network of solidarity, support, and concrete assistance for young people who refused to be mobilized. As part of this initiative, some of our activists founded The Safe House in Budapest.

#### *1999 – Present*

At the end of 1999, we began the formal work of the Network for Conscientious Objection. As part of this initiative, we organized several meetings, in May 2000 in Studenica, near Kraljevo, in August 2000 in Vu?je, Montenegro, and May 2001 at Srebreno Lake, in eastern Serbia. Additionally, the Network initiated campaigns to legally recognize the right to conscientious objection in May 2000 in more than twenty cities in Serbia and Montenegro. Similar activities occurred in December 2000 and January 2001 in thirty towns in Serbia.

From December 2000 to May 2001, we gathered signatures to shorten the period of military service and to codify the right of conscientious objection. This campaign was carried with other groups in approximately ten towns in Serbia and had a very significant impact on public consciousness towards demilitarization and confronting the past, but most importantly on public sentiment regarding conscientious objection.

Educational work on the demilitarization of the mind and the deconstruction of patriarchy continued in 2003 with a series of workshops in various parts of Serbia, primarily intended for young people. Cooperation with organizations who deal with these questions on a legislative level also continued.

In this period, the two previously discussed feminist antimilitarist gatherings were also held.

A civilian service option for the military service obligation was legally recognized in September 2003. In this period, most of activities consisted of helping to write requests for civil service and spreading information through lectures and panel discussion, the media, and the network. Thanks to the pressure applied by civil society, the majority of Serbian young men (over 60%) now opt for civilian service. Because of the discriminatory regulations for conscientious objectors (as clearly illustrated by the length of



service – the term of military service is 6 months while the length of civilian service is 9 months), the campaign for equalizing of the lengths of military and civilian service continues.

We continued to advocate for military reform, civil and democratic control of the armed forces, decreasing military expenditures and transferring these funds to the civil sector, and, most importantly, for total conscientious objection. The antimilitarist initiative 'No to the Army!' was held in March and April 2005 to collect signatures for eliminating compulsory military service (total conscientious objection).

Within the framework of international antimilitarist solidarity with conscientious objectors everywhere, at the invitation of WRI (War Resisters' International), Women in Black has organized international antimilitarist solidarity actions for objectors in Israel, Chile, Colombia, and Turkey, as well as on every May 15th – International Conscientious Objectors' Day.

**Educational Activities** became Women in Black's focus after the codification of the right to conscientious objection. These include the following items, which have been described in greater detail elsewhere.

*Everything for Peace, Health and Knowledge – Nothing for Armament!* – are a series of International conferences organized every May since 2002. (There have been 5 conferences to date).

*Let's Globalize Feminism and Antimilitarism* occurred March 29 -31, 2002 in Belgrade, with the participation of International Network of Women in Black activists from Italy as well as activists from Serbia and Montenegro.

*Let's Globalize Feminism and Antimilitarism* was an international meeting held in Belgrade December 26 - January 3, 2004, in which Women in Black activists from Italy, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Slovenia, the USA, Croatia, Germany, Serbia, and Montenegro participated.

Both of the aforementioned conferences addressed global feminist-antimilitarist solidarity, global and regional militarism, the alterglobalist movement, and the work of the feminist network.

*A Society without Soldiers: Militarism and Alternatives* was a conference held in Belgrade on February 14 -15, 2004 on conscientious objection, soldiers and discrimination, demilitarization on every level, and other topics.

We also held many seminars and workshops about conscientious objection, militarization and alternatives. The following is only a partial list.



*Militarism and Alternatives* were day-long seminars held in many towns (Leskovac, Tutin, Novi Sad, and Novi Pazar) during 2004, 2005, and 2006;

*The Mother-Son Relationship: Reconsidering Patriarchal Values* is a workshop about the reproduction of patriarchal paradigms in children's upbringing – especially that of male children, models of masculinity, and the changes in women's relationship to soldiers after the experience of the wars in the former Yugoslavia. These day-long workshops were held during November 2004 in four Serbian towns (Leskovac, Zaječar, Negotin and Vlasotince);

*Others: From a Patriarchal Construction to Alternative Politics* was a seminar from April 14 -18, 2006 in Banja Vrujci about the connection between male gender roles and militarization, the consequences of militarization for gender roles, homophobia in militarized societies, and alternatives to militarism and militarization.

*Youth Peace Camp – Militarism and Alternatives*, which included workshops and lectures, was held from July 14 -19, 2006 in Divčibare.

We held a number of other antimilitarist activities, including panel discussions, lectures, street actions, publications and exhibitions, many of which are discussed in other chapters.





## Supporting the Victims of War

### Supporting Refugees and Displaced People

From 1993 to 1997, we constantly organized help and support for refugees in refugee camps in Serbia. The following is a list of some of those actions:

– *We distributed humanitarian aid* to refugees and displaced persons with the support of international peace and women's networks.

– *Let's Be Creative Together* was a help and self-help project for women refugees. Women refugees produced artisan handcrafts of women's peace symbols which we sold through our international contacts and networks.

– *I Remember...* is an anthology of women's memoirs. Refugees drew and wrote about what they did not want to forget from the time before the war.

– *A Window to the World* involved the distribution of eyeglasses to 300 people in three refugee camps and supplying daily and weekly newspapers and magazines to help refugees stay informed.

– *We Are* were theater performances by children from the refugee camps. This project was carried out with the support of Swiss directors and activists from our network.

– *We Adopt Peace – Family despite the Distance* was a project through which Italian and Swiss families helped dozens of refugee families.

– *Lone Wolf* was a photography workshop in a refugee camp in which children were trained in photography, in preparation for careers as photographers.

In this period help for injured people, civilian victims of the wars – especially those from Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Krajina in the Rudo Hospital in Belgrade-was also organized.

Since 1997, we have offered modest temporary support and help to refugees and displaced persons from the Krajina and Kosovo.

During 2001, we offered help and support to displaced people from Kosovo. Our small help and self-help project included people living in the Pinki Sports Center in Zemun and was carried out in cooperation with The Association for Self-Supporting Mothers from Zemun.





## Publishing Activities

Alternative History: We have published 60 items (anthologies, magazines, monographs and translations).

Since the beginning *Women in Black*, we have supported the plurality of history by recording the history of 'the other' and those who are different.

The *Women for Peace* anthologies present women's witness to war and women's resistance to war, primarily in the former Yugoslavia, but also throughout the world. Thus far, we have published ten anthologies:

- *Women for Peace*, 1993, 120 pages, in Serbian, English, and Italian
- *Women for Peace*, 1994, 292 pages, in Serbian, English, and Spanish
- *Women for Peace*, 1995, 296 pages, in Serbian, English, and Spanish
- *Women for Peace*, 1996, 296 pages in Serbian, English, and Spanish
- *Women for Peace*, 1997, 309 pages, in Serbian, English, Italian, and Spanish
- *Women for Peace*, 1998, 310 pages, in Serbian and English
- *Women for Peace*, 1999, 352 pages, in Serbian and English
- *Women for Peace*, 2001, 440 pages, in Serbian and English
- *Women for Peace*, 2002, 368 pages, in Serbian and English
- *Women for Peace*, 2004, 310 pages, in Serbian and English
- *I Remember...*, short memoirs by women refugees, 1995 with a reprint in 1996, 148 pages, in Serbian, English, Italian, and Spanish
- *War Deserters in the Former Yugoslavia*, an anthology, 1995, 50 pages, in Serbian, English, Italian, and Spanish

### *Women against War Magazines*

- Issue 1, 1994, 102 pages, in Serbian, English, Italian, and Spanish.
- Issue 2, 1994, 102 pages, in Serbian, English, Italian, and Spanish.
- Issue 3-4, 1995, 104 pages, in Serbian, English, Italian, and Spanish

### *Monographs*

Neda Božinović *Women's Issue in Serbia in the 19th and 20th Centuries*, 1996 with a reprint in 2003), 276 pages (published in cooperation with Feminist '94), in Serbian



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*Women in Black, A photo-monograph*, 2002, 89 pages  
Neda Božinović, *The Continuity of the Struggle for Peace and Women's Rights* 2006, 52 pages  
*Women in Black and Women's Groups from Kosovo*, 2006, 190 pages  
*Translated Literary Works (Published with Feminist '94)*  
Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas*, 2001.  
Audre Lourde, *Sister/Outsider*, 2002  
Jane Berry, *Rising up in Response*, 2005, 178 pages.  
*Educational Material*

These are anthologies containing texts by important authors on the issues which we addressed in our educational activities. They are important sources of information and knowledge. They have an international character since they include authors from all continents. Each of these published items a small of reference book on the topic they address.

- *Nothing is the Same as Before September 11th*, anthology, 2001, 60 pages;
- *We Wish to Dance, We Wish to Play*, translation of a Spanish manual for non-sexist peace education, 2002, 98 pages;
- *Women's Peace Policy*, anthology, 2002, 90 pages;
- *By Strengthening Civil Society, We Create Peace*, anthology, 2002, 106 pages;
- *Globalization: Problems, Dilemmas, and Answers*, anthology, 2003, 180 pages;
- *Women, Health and Disarmament*, anthology, 2003, 162 pages;
- *Another Power is Possible*, anthology, 2004, 78 pages;
- *Women, Peace, and Security*, anthology, 2005, 186 pages;
- *Confronting the Past-A Feminist Approach*, anthology, 2005, 232 pages;
- *Gender, Nation, Identity*, an anthology in English, 2005, 222 pages;
- *The Other: From a Patriarchal Construction to Alternative Politics*, anthology, 2006, 208 pages;
- *Warning Signs of Fundamentalism and Feminist Responses*, anthology, 2006, 244 pages.



### *Women's Peace Agendas and Calendars*

These publications are not only useful material for notes; they express a peace aesthetic and are very important educational materials that promote a culture of peace, nonviolence and feminism.

Altogether, eight Women's Peace Calendars have been published (in 1994, 1995, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007).

The calendars average ten pages in length and always contain Women in Black's principles of peace politics and note significant international dates for peace and women's autonomous movements.

Ten Women's Peace Agendas have been published (in 1993, 1994, 1995, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006 and 2007.)

The agendas have between 145 and 184 pages and note dates that are important for peace, feminist, alterglobalist and ecological movements. Since formal history excludes writing on war and violence and conceals the nonviolent resistance, these agendas include the history of 'the other.' To this end, the agendas are thematically defined. Thus far, they have addressed women's resistance to war; the nonviolent antiwar resistance in Serbia (marking the 10th and 15th anniversaries of that resistance in 2001 and 2007); the invisibility and visibility of women's peace engagement - women winners of the Nobel Peace Prize and alternative women's networks; globalization and alter-globalization - networks that work for just globalization; and politically engaged art against war, violence, militarism, and homophobia.

The Women's Peace Agendas are printed in Serbian; four times, they were also printed in English. The agendas are distributed through networks and groups throughout the former Yugoslavia. The contents and format of the agendas are unique in the region.

### *Educational Notebooks*

These small manuals which include a description of the specific educational programs (context, explanation, goals, schedule, and other details) are important educational resources and are useful as notebooks. Each has between 10 and 30 pages of text; the remainder is blank paper for note-taking.

- *Women, Peace and Democracy*
- *Confronting the Past-A Feminist Approach*
- *Peace, Women's Human Rights, and Solidarity*



- *Women's Peace Politics*
- *Warning Signs of Fundamentalism*
- *The Women's Peace Coalition*

Objection: This is a magazine of antimilitarism and conscientious objection. There were nine issues published which were approximately 30 pages long. The magazine was published from 1996 to 2002.

In addition to this, in this period we formed the aesthetic of the antiwar movement in Serbia. We published posters, postcards, stickers, leaflets, and other items. The exact number of printed items is difficult to state, but it is certainly an enormous number.





## International Politics and International Relations

During our 15 years of existence, we have participated in international meetings, both alternative and official. We have precise information about our participation in official and alternative international conferences since 2001. We have participated in more than 100 international meetings, conferences, and seminars. The majority were in Europe, but we also attended events in North America, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

### **1. Official International Meetings**

With the goal of influencing politically powerful institutions and changing and leading politics, we attended official international meetings. We list only some of these meetings here:

- Vienna, 1993, UN Conference on Human Rights;
- Cairo, 1994, UN Conference on Population and Development;
- Beijing, 1995, UN Conference on Women;
- The Council of Europe-The European Bureau for Conscientious Objection, 1996, 1998, 2001, and 2003, sessions and seminars on conscientious objection;
- Geneva, New York, and Grenada, during 2000 and 2003, UN Session on Refugees and Women's Human Rights;
- Brussels – European Parliament, 2000 'Women's Contribution to Stability in Eastern and Southeastern Europe;'
- New York, Helsinki, 2002, Sessions of the advisory body of UNIFEM about women, peace, and security;
- The Hague- The Tribunal for War Crimes in the Former Yugoslavia, 2003 'Not in Our Name,' a lecture by Women in Black activists;
- Barcelona, Spain, The Government Institute for Women, Catalonia, 2005, 'Women's Mediation of Women and the Practice of Peace;'
- San Sebastian, Spain, The Government Institute for Women, 2006, 'SARE – Women Create Peace;'



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## **2. Alternative International Meetings**

- WRI (War Resisters International) Conferences in Thailand (1992), Brazil (1994), and India (2002);
- Feminist Network Conference in Spain, 1993;
- Meetings of the Movement for Conscientious Objection antimilitarist network (MOC and OF) in Spain;
- 'Women and Health' Conferences organized by the Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights in Brazil (1997), Toronto (2002), and Amsterdam (2003);
- Summer School for Democracy in Croatia in 1996, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2005;
- The Fourth Assembly of the Helsinki Parliament, in Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1995;
- The Permanent National Tribunal, Barcelona, 1995;
- The European Peace Congress, Oldenburg, 1996;
- Peace conferences and debates that were part of the annual peace march from Perugia to Assisi, Italy;
- Alterglobalist Assemblies - Social Forums, Florence (2002), Barcelona (2003), Riva del Garda (2003), and Paris (2003);
- The World Court of Women, South Africa, 2001
- The International Deserters Network, an antimilitarist assembly in Frankfurt in 2003;
- International Peace Forum, Istanbul, 2003;
- 'Women Who are Changing the World,' Amnesty International, Madrid, 2004;
- Forum against War, Florence, 2005
- Nonviolent Peace Force meetings in Great Britain (2003) and Cluj, Romania (2005);
- 'The Women's Movement and Donor Policies,' Amsterdam, 2004;
- 'Beijing Plus Ten,' a Forum of Nongovernmental Organizations, Geneva (2004) and New York (2005);
- Women's Human Rights Defenders, Sri Lanka, 2005
- Zagreb Pride, annual participation on June 28, International LGBT Pride Day;
- and numerous other conferences and seminars in the former Yugoslavia, primarily Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia.



### **3. Membership in International Alternative Networks:**

- The International Network of Women's Solidarity against War/The International Network of Women in Black
- War Resisters International (WRI)
- The Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR)
- International Fellowship of Reconciliation/Peace Bureau International (IFOR/PBI)
- Women against Fundamentalism/Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUML)
- Nonviolent Peace Force (NP)

### **4. Activist Peace Tours - International Solidarity**

Since the beginning of our work, we have paid very much attention to this form of mutual support, solidarity, and cooperation. These tours are reciprocal. We go to Western Europe, mostly Italy, Spain, and Germany, but also the US. International peace, feminist, alterglobalist, and other network activists come to Serbia.

Visits and tours are a form of support and a chance to educate each other about regional and global political trends and to plan joint activities. Usually, they are group visits, but individuals sometimes come alone. Activists have stayed for a few days or a few months. During these 'bilateral' visits, activist tours are usually organized to different parts of Serbia, cities in which Women in Black Network-Serbia members work. This exchange and cooperation is a huge support to Women in Black and civil society in Serbia in general, especially in periods of tension, repression by the regime, and international sanctions. During these visits, meetings, lectures, and workshops are held. They most often address women's peace politics; strengthening networks; and women's resistance to all forms of nationalism, fundamentalism, and militarism.

Most often, visiting activists have been from:

- The Women in Black Network, from Italy (many times every year), Spain, Great Britain, Israel, The US, Belgium, Denmark, and Columbia;
- Women Living Under Muslim Laws, from Algeria, France, and Great Britain;
- Antimilitarist networks: conscientious objection and war tax resistance networks from Spain; War Resisters International members from Great



Britain, Germany, Norway, and The US; and the International Deserters Network in Germany;

- International networks for human rights: most often Amnesty International activists;
- Alterglobalist networks: activists from Italy, Germany, and the US;
- The Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights: activists from The Netherlands and Argentina;

Additionally, international peace caravans strongly support Women in Black and Serbian civil society. Among them, we single out the peace caravans of Italian pacifists in 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1999; the 'Peace Now' peace caravan/convoy organized by German pacifist during the bombing in 1999; and The Caravan to Palestine - The Caravan for Human Rights in 2005.

#### **Prizes/Awards**

Since the beginning of our work in 1991, Women in Black has had very significant support from antiwar and feminist movements from Europe and the US. Together, we have built networks against war and all forms of nationalism, fundamentalism, and militarism. We have done the same on the local and regional level. Since the beginning, we have built networks of mutual support, solidarity, and friendship. On the international level, we have received awards from individual institutions. However, in Serbia, besides our role in the fall of the dictatorial regime, we have not received any institutional recognition. On the contrary, the current government's institutions continue a campaign against nongovernmental organizations who resolutely insist on the Serbian regime's responsibility for war and war crimes. The following is only a partial list of the numerous prizes and awards we have received.

- *Honorary Presidency* for 1993 of the Gandhi/M. L. King/B. Khan Association of Brescia, Italy. Women in Black-Belgrade was awarded the honorary presidency for 1993 because of our antiwar resistance.

- *Peace Prize* for 1994. In December 1994, Women in Black-Israel awarded Women in Black-Belgrade their peace prize for our 'persistent opposition to the militarist Serbian regime and active solidarity with women from the former Yugoslavia.'

- *Nomination for the Alternative Nobel Prize*, 1994. The same year, we were nominated for the Alternative Nobel Peace Prize by War Resisters International.



– *Millenium Peace Prize*. This prize was awarded for the first time by UNIFEM, the UN special agency for women in 2001. In the name of the International Network of Women in Black, the inaugural award was accepted by Women in Black-Belgrade at the UN Building in New York. The prize was awarded for 'antiwar resistance, building a network of women's solidarity against war across all state, ethnic, and religious divisions, barriers, borders, and memberships, nonviolent politics, constant effort to create peace, and the creation of women's peace associations and coalitions.'

– *Nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize, 2001*. In May 2001, members of the Norwegian, Finnish, and Danish parliaments nominated Women in Black-Israel and Women in Black-Belgrade for this prize, recognizing our 'nonviolent resistance to war and women's solidarity across all divisions and barriers.' We were also nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2003 as a part of a group of alternative networks and organizations;

– *Honorary Citizenship of Tutin, 2004*. The city government of Tutin (in the Sandžak region) awarded Staša Zajović the coordinator of Women in black with an honorary citizenship for 'opposing war, expanding the spirit of tolerance, and helping the victims of war.'

– *Honorary Citizenship of Grenada, 2004*. The City Assembly of Grenada, Spain awarded this honorary title to M., Zajović as recognition for 'ethical values and ceaseless effort to create space for peaceful exchange between citizens of all ethnicities to resolve conflict.'

– *Nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize-1,000 Women for Peace, 2005*. Staša Zajović was one of the women nominated as part of this campaign.

*The Konstantin Obradović Prize for 2005*. This prize was awarded by The Belgrade Center for Human Rights to Women in Black for advancing human rights and the culture of peace.

*Nomination for the Saharov Prize, 2006*. A member of the European Parliament nominated Women in Black for advancing peace and human rights.

### **Exhibitions**

As part of antiwar resistance, visible feminist-antimilitarist action, and solidarity, Women in Black presented photography exhibitions about our work in Spain, the US, Croatia, Germany and at the World EXPO exhibit 2000 in Hanover.



*Žene u crnom, 1991 →*

### ***Financial Support to Women in Black***

Without the emotional, moral, and political support of our friends from Europe, the US, the former Yugoslavia, and Serbia, we would not have been able to overcome the very large difficulties and challenges which we faced in the last 15 years. We thank all of you.

Without the solidarity and support of feminist-pacifist, antimilitarist, ecological, and alterglobalist groups, networks, and individuals from Europe and the US, we would not have been able to realize many of the projects mentioned in this publication. Together, we have built a global peace movement. Together we transformed anger at violence and war into nonviolent action. Together, we believed and continue to believe that another world is possible!

Without the financial support of institutions, we would not have been able to conduct many of our proposals, programs, projects, and actions. We work hard to not consent to political ransom or conditionality, but to build partnerships, contribute to the democratization of donor support, and relate as equals with institutions.

The groups that have helped us include:

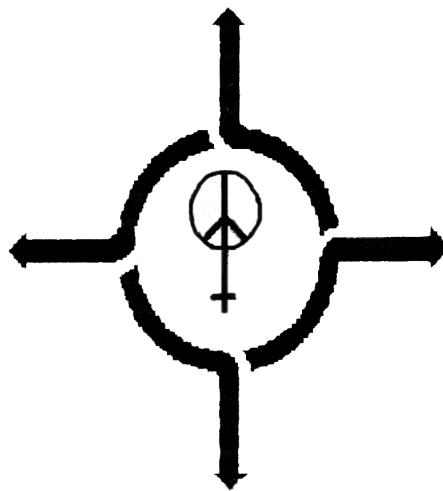
- The Women in Black Network-Italy, groups from Verona, Milan, Turin, Naples, Venice, Scio, Rome, and Udine;
- The Women in Black Network-Spain, groups from Madrid, Santander, Zaragoza, Seville, and Valencia;
- The Women in Black Network-USA, groups from New York, San Francisco, Portland, and Seattle;
- Women in Black-Geneva
- Women in Black-Leuven, Belgium
- The Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights, USA
- The Heart and Hands Foundation, San Francisco, USA
- Women Living under Muslim Laws (WLUML), France and Great Britain
- UNIFEM
- Quaker Peace Service, London
- Mujeres para la salud, Valencia
- Associazione per la pace, Italy
- The European Commission



- Friend of Women in Black friends in Göttingen, Germany
- Friend of Women in Black friends in Oldenburg, Germany
- Kvinna till Kvinna, Sweden
- Casa per la pace, Trento, Italy
- The Danish Peace Foundation, Denmark
- The M. K. Gandhi - M. L. King - B. Khan Association, Brescia, Italy
- The National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council, USA
- Quaker Peace & Social Witness, Great Britain
- Le radici e le ali, Udine, Italy
- ARCI, Udine, Udine, Italy
- Donne per la pace, Trento, Italy
- The Open Society Fund, Serbia
- Filia - Frauenstiftung, Germany
- Mama Cash, The Netherlands
- Towae Stiftung, Heidelberg, Germany
- Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women, Switzerland
- Sollinger Initiative für die Opfer des Krieges auf dem Balkan, Germany
- Frauen Netzwerk, Wendland, The Netherlands
- Comuna di Lavis, Italy
- OSI Budapest, Center for Publishing Development
- MADRE, USA
- Plataforma de solidaridad con los pueblos de la Antigua Jugoslavia, Extremadura, Spain
- Rainbow, Norway
- Frauenrat für Aussenpolitik, Basel, Switzerland
- Campaña para la Objecion fiscal del Estado español, Spain
- MOC (Movimiento de objecion de conciencia), Madrid
- Io, donna contro la guerra, Turin
- Heinrich Boell Stiftung, Germany
- Frauen für den Frieden, Basel, Switzerland
- CFD, Bern, Switzerland



- WATFY (Women's Aid to Former Yugoslavia), London
  - The Book & Journal Project of East-West Women, New York
  - Unesco-Etzea, Alava, Spain
  - Mutter für Frieden, Dusseldorf, Germany
  - Connection. e.V (International Deserter's Network), Germany
  - Casa per la pace di Modena, Italy
  - Università popolare di Valcamonica, Italy
  - COC, The Netherlands
- And many friends from all over the world





## The Principles of Women's Peace Politics

*(In Addition to Those Already Mentioned)*

I am not responsible only for what I do, but also for what is done in my name!... No army protects peace!... We are building a society without soldiers!... Let's banish war from history and our lives!... Every war is a crime; there is no such thing as just and unjust wars!... First, condemn the crimes that were committed in our name, then all other crimes!... Always disobedient to all warriors, heroes, militarists, and nationalists!... Women's solidarity across all borders and barriers!... There is no democracy without truth about all war crimes committed in our name!... I am not responsible only for what I do, but also for what is done in my name!... No army protects peace!... We are building a society without soldiers!... Let's banish war from history and our lives!... Every war is a crime; there is no such thing as just and unjust wars!... First, condemn the crimes that were committed in our name, then all other crimes!... Always disobedient to all warriors, heroes, militarists, and nationalists!... Women's solidarity across all borders and barriers!... There is no democracy without truth about all war crimes committed in our name!... I am not responsible only for what I do, but also for what is done in my name!... No army protects peace!... We are building a society without soldiers!... Let's banish war from history and our lives!... Every war is a crime; there is no such thing as just and unjust wars!... First, condemn the crimes that were committed in our name, then all otherc crimes!



## The Feminism of Women in Black

All of the actions of Women in Black are permeated by feminist theory and feminist activism. Women in Black was initiated in 1991 by a group of feminist activists who, even before war broke out in the former Yugoslavia, were working against the growing nationalism and militarism. Immediately, we were joined by citizens who participated in acts against war and provided concrete forms of support to men who refused violent mobilization to the battlefield. Even at the beginning of our work, Women in Black was joined by pacifist men. Briefly, the feminist engagement of Women in Black is:

**RADICALLY ANTIPATRIARCHAL** because patriarchy is not only a system of domination (one gender over another, one class/race/ethnicity over another); patriarchy is the main cause of war. Therefore, feminist engagement is necessarily antiwar.

**ANTINATIONALIST** because nationalism is one of the most visible and most devastating manifestations of patriarchy. By reducing women to the role of mothers, wives, and machines for reproduction, nationalism takes away women's right to choice and self-determination, jeopardizing a basic value of feminist thinking and practice.

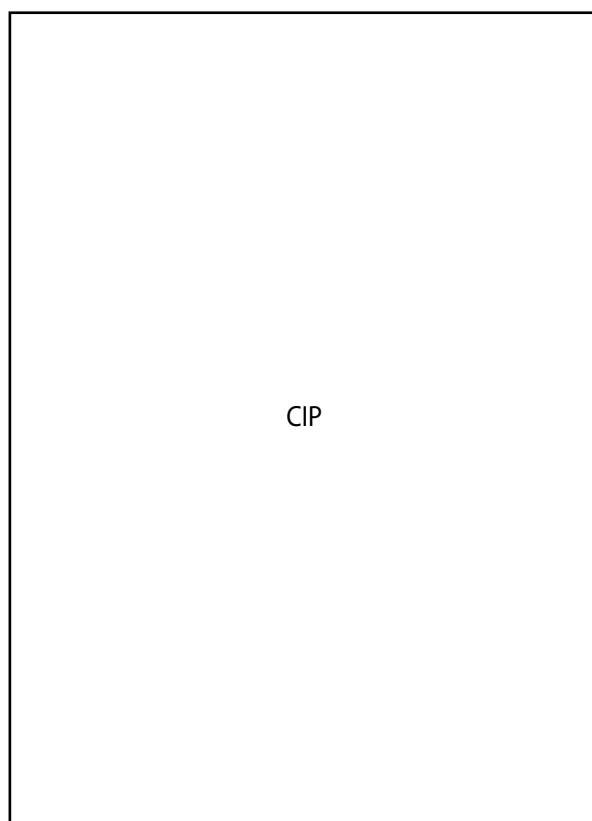
**ANTIMILITARIST** because militarism is armed patriarchy. Expenditures for war, the army, and armaments hurt women most. Militarism depends on force and violence to resolve all problems and conflicts, while feminist antimilitarism is non-violent women's resistance to all militaries, armed forces, and violence. For Women in Black, the patriarchal triad of sexism, nationalism, and militarism cannot be deconstructed without feminist analysis and practice.

**INTERNATIONALIST**, which means solidarity and connection among women across all racial, ethnic, religious, state, and sexual divisions. Internationalism is also expressed through the celebration of women's shared history (which includes marking March 8th and other dates).

**ANTICLERICALIST/ANTIFUNDAMENTALIST**, that is, for the strict separation of church and state. We oppose the attempts of the church to impose on society policies which radically restrict democracy and human rights, especially women's human rights.

**ALTERGLOBALIST**. Instead of the injustice of neo-liberal globalization, Women in Black works for the globalization of peace, justice, nonviolence, and the punishment of war crimes.

**ANTIOMOPHOBIC**. We work for the equality of sexual minorities and the protection of sexual identity as a basic human right.



CIP