

**Women in Black activities and important documents
related to the implementation of the Resolution 1325**

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1. Propositions and suggestions for drafting the National Action Plan on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 in Serbia, from the workshop held in the organisation Women in Black in Belgrade.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is one of the most debated resolutions. It deals with women, peace and security. For the first time, those issues are put in a relation of interdependence and in the same order of importance. Decades of activist and theoretical work by women on the questions of peace have led to clarification of the confusion that, from the time of the suffrage movement, has been circulated as a choice between women's rights and questions of war, peace, national, racial and class interest.

Resolution 1325 was passed on the threshold of the new millennium, in years that offered new confusions: security vs. human rights; security vs. human rights, the liberal interpretation of gender, the bureaucracy of gender mainstreaming, the concept of human security limited by strategic development politics, etc.

As critical communication is accelerated, and experience considerable, a lively analysis of the implementation of the Resolution has developed revision of the plans, debate about its potential of international and global interest for reform and emancipation. It is a pleasure to responsibly participate in it.

The importance of taking into consideration the experiences of civil society is emphasised in the debates. Attention has been drawn to the advantage of linking CEDAW to Resolution 1325, because of the preservation of human rights framework and because of the advantage of using an elaborated and credible system of reporting to the Committee. CEDAW is concerned with global security of women so that it is indeed the appropriate place for inputs about the progress of human security (with which women identify as exceptionally important actors and as a group for progress), about the respect of women's human rights and about the treatment of the female defenders of human rights. We will mention as well the Recommendations of civil society on the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Europe (September 2009) which also speaks about the practical preconditions for good implementation: policy 1325 must be highly ranked in relation to other policies, care for and commitment to the drafting of the official public report and responsibility for the implementation, with a transparent budget, a precise follow-up and reports on expenditure.

The key precondition is a clear **localisation (planning from the context)**, through the dynamics of various actors that reflect both experiences and limits.

The only available document for the moment, the Recommendations for drafting the NAP (BFPE, February 2010), does not establish standards for a coherent and inclusive plan, but is carried out through uncritical implementation of the liberal, developmental and militaristic approach of security and gender. Viewed from the political procedural angle, the implementer of the drafting process and the proposer of the draft NAP is in most countries the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while in Serbia the Ministry of Defence has been recommended. International cooperation is not in the focus of the Recommendations, although Resolution 1325 deals with the global question of security and opens questions of human security that are holistic and global.

Political analysis of the text and of the process of drafting the Recommendations

Civil society

In the Recommendations for drafting the NAP, civil society has an unspecified influence. The experience of peace activism is completely excluded and it is set aside in the report of the working group which dealt with the participation of women in conflict resolution, post-conflict situations and peacekeeping operations.

The drafting process of the NAP testifies to the absence of civil society from this process, not acknowledging the long-term efforts, initiatives and dedication of civil society organisations in education, promotion, and lobbying for the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Serbia. (In attachment, we have included a short account of the activities of Women in Black and of related organisations in the field of security and Resolution 1325).

The whole process is developing with the full approval and participation of international organisations, in the first place UNIFEM, which gives to the process all kind of help, and ignores the experiences, knowledge, and commitment of NGOs on Resolution 1325 in the last 6 years, ignoring the contribution of female activists to peace-building in the last 20 years, as well as the security risks of not confronting the criminal past, the condemnation of genocide in Srebrenica, etc.

The experience in other countries of the region (e.x. Bosnia and Herzegovina) shows that the drafting process of the NAP has been ‘public and clear,’ that woman’s organisations working for a long period of time on Resolution 1325 were included from the beginning in this process. The short deadline for submitting comments, suggestions and objections (from the end of February to 15 March 2010) is yet further evidence of the non-transparent and non-participative model in Serbia. (In Bosnia and Herzegovina a working group for drafting the NAP worked for a year and a half, meeting every other month.)

The Ministry of Defence as the recommended implementer

The Ministry of Defence has been appointed as necessary implementer, which symbolically shifts the meaning of Resolution 1325.

The Ministry of Defence as the implementer of the drafting process of the NAP testifies to the militaristic approach to security, an approach that is, among others, characterised by: army and police dimension, militarisation of society – the transmission of military values and organisation to all spheres of life; absence of civil society in the creation of the notion and practice of security, marginalisation and victimisation of women, etc. In short, in this traditional militaristic approach to security, the main subject of security is not the citizens but the state, or more exactly, its political and economic elite. Apart from that, the experience of the wars of the 1990s in ex-Yugoslavia and particularly the role of the Armed Forces of Serbia that have inherited the burden of the Yugoslav People’s Army (of the Military of Yugoslavia, of the Military of Serbia and Montenegro) as one of the main executive organs of the regime of Slobodan Milošević, calls into question the credibility of this

institution as the implementer of the drafting process of the NAP, and this is particularly unacceptable from the feminist pacifist point of view.

Namely, the Ministry of Defence is required, on the basis of article 11 of Resolution 1325 (“Emphasizes the responsibility of all states to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions”) to take a clear and unequivocal stance towards the genocide in Srebrenica, in line with the decision of the International Court of Justice (February 2007), to support, following the Resolution of the European parliament, the proclamation of July 11 as the Day of Remembrance of the Srebrenica genocide. In this case, the Ministry of Defence would obtain a higher degree of confidence on the part of civil society organisations that continuously advocate the punishability of all crimes, first of all those committed in our names, and then of all the other ones.

We consider that the Ministry of Defence should work for the rehabilitation of General Vlada Trifunović, the amnesty of all deserters of war in the wars from 1991 to 1999, the investigation of the deaths of soldiers in the military barracks of the Armed Forces of Serbia from 2000 on, the revocation of ranks and decorations from all the officers of the Yugoslav People’s Army and Yugoslav Armed Forces who participated in the wars of 1991-1999 and did not distinguish themselves by opposing war crimes. Inasmuch as these conditions are fulfilled, the Ministry would be able to be one of the implementers of the drafting process of the NAP, but never the main implementer of these activities.

Also, the Ministry should recommend the inclusion of women’s experiences from the wars on the territory of the former Yugoslavia in the curricula of military and police schools, in order to heighten the sense of responsibility and recognition of the civil position. With the exclusion of women’s peace experiences, the regional chances are even more substantially impoverished.

Which concept of security?

The formulation that ‘the working groups recommend the Ministry of Defence as the main implementer of the drafting process and the proposer of the draft National Action Plan for implementation of the UN SC Resolution 1325 in Serbia because the greatest part of activities is related to areas under its jurisdiction’ completely neglects changes in theory and practice of security, achievements in the field of human security such as:

- *The basic subject of security are citizens, not states* – the whole process of drafting the NAP must aim at achieving human security, and this security cannot be achieved without the active and autonomous role of civil society organisations.
- *States are required to ensure the security of their citizens:* in so far as a state orients its security towards people, and not towards repressive institutions (army, police), the assurance that this state will take care of and protect them is higher.

- *Recognition of the importance of civil society, i.e. non-state actors:* civil citizens' organisations request a higher possibility and a higher responsibility in the promotion of human security.
- *Request for the punishment of those who violate human rights and humanitarian laws:* the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal, as well as of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda, represents an important step in the field of human security. Including also the active advocacy for the implementation of the UN Resolution on human rights defenders, which is in the case of Serbia highly disputable since the reports of UN special rapporteurs on the position of human rights defenders in Serbia are unfavourable and since the state has not taken adequate measures for the security of human rights defenders.
- *Human security requires a multidisciplinary approach:* this implies the cooperation and coordination of institutional and extra-institutional activity, as well as citizens.
- *Women are actors of peace and not only victims of war:* the major part of antiwar actions in Serbia since the beginning of the 1990s, and after the war, and the actions for the punishability of war crimes have been initiated by female peace activists and human rights defenders, but they have been the most frequent target of attack both from state and non-state actors. Animosity towards female activists of civil society is still present, especially towards those who request responsibility for the war and for war crimes: demonization by the state apparatus and media and attacks by clerical-fascist and neo-Nazi organisations. In this regard, the role of the implementer of the drafting process of the NAP is enormous – in the sense that it requires the penalisation of all those who jeopardise the security of human rights defenders.

On the basis of all the above-mentioned points, we give comments on the plans of the working groups:

Resolution 1325 is related to the reform of the concept and to the reform of the sector of security with an emphasis on civilians. Analysing the thematic division in working groups for the drafting of the Recommendations, the working groups II and IV worked in the domain of the reform of the sector, the group III on the reform of the concept, while the group I developed one strategy in detail.

Working group I – The role of women in the decision-making process

The slowness and uncertainty of the implementation of the Gender equality act (harmonisation, Act amendments, etc.) must not block or blur (so that it will take the central place, that is the position of condition) the potentials offered by Resolution 1325. Progress in the framework of the strategy of achieving gender equality should be posited as a compatible process with a common aim.

For a quality process, it is necessary to include the experiences of peace groups that have been working on peace-building on the national and regional planes, as well as on confrontation with the past.

Implementers of the drafting process and proposers of the draft NAP 1325 in this domain: all the gender mechanisms and the Parliament of the Republic of Serbia, civil society organisations.

Working group II – Participation of women in conflict resolution, in post-conflict situations and in peacekeeping operations

Assumptions:

- *Normalisation of violence in society – normalisation of violence against women;*
- *Impunity of war crimes – impunity of violence within the family;*
- *Rights and obligations of intervention for violence, both in the family against those committing violence, and in the state against war crimes (Hague court).*

We can sum up those assumptions in the following way: since in Serbia, the principle of impunity in the sphere of family violence is dominant, such a value position is transmitted to all the spheres of society and is reflected in the impunity of perpetrated war crimes.

Propositions from the context of Serbia 2010:

Use of the Army of Serbia and of other defence forces in operations outside the borders of the Republic of Serbia:

To enact an ordinance on the lustration of potential participants from the ranks of the army, police and other defence forces, and of all individuals with whom contracts for employment in peacekeeping missions are concluded.

To provide a single compulsory programme of training in relations towards civilians, in human security, in respect and protection of women's human rights and of their female defenders. To involve peace and educational groups for the work on the curriculum and for participation in the education. (Including the training of the personnel of peacekeeping missions for work with women victims of sexual crimes.)

To promote the participation of women in peacekeeping missions and gender awareness in relations and communication with the local population, acknowledging the specificities of cultural identity and its non-homogeneity.

To produce a precise code of behaviour towards civilians as a part of the contract with the Army, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and other services, with the establishment of effective mechanisms of supervision and punishment.

Civil democratic control of the army, police and other security services, including the secret services and the private security sector:

By a strategy of national security and by a strategy of defence, through precise discussion with civil society actors, including women from peace groups, to define the role of civil society in the domain of defence and security and to create a clear legal basis for effective civil control.

To establish a strict and effective parliamentary budget control of expenditure in the sector of defence and security, and mechanisms of responsibility for the omissions of both reporters and inspectors.

It is indispensable to regulate by law the private security sector and private security agencies in Serbia, since they are the source of structural insecurity and jeopardise the state of rights and the rule of law.

To carry out a wide debate about civil responsible economy and economic orientation of the state in connection to the dependence on the income from military industry on the one hand and about the military expenditure on the other.

We suggest starting again some of the initiatives in the promotion of human security, the culture of punishability of crimes, the rule of law, among which we point out:

Not in our name: national initiative started by a group of female citizens against the Law on financial aid to the Hague defendants and their families; in one week time in April 2004, more than 18,000 signatures (the number of signatures required by law) were gathered and handed over to the National Parliament of the Republic of Serbia; the network Women in black organised the gathering of signatures throughout Serbia; the national initiative has not been included in the agenda of parliamentary session – for this reason, Women in black have organised a number of protest actions.

Recommended campaigns and decisions:

To ratify the Landmine Ban Convention; to open the possibility of conscientious objection whose cost would be paid by the army; to secure work and security conditions of women employed in the military industry; to establish strict control and measures for the reduction of the number of firearms among people with a risk of violent behaviour.

The conversion of military industry into a civil one – in the spirit of the “dividends of peace”: redirecting the military budget in the benefit of peace; introducing peace and non-violence education in schools; monitoring of the Law on the confiscation of property acquired through organised crime and war crimes – a part of the means can be directed at peace and non-violence education.

To have at least 50% of women in truth and reconciliation commissions; to penalise rape as a crime of genocide in Criminal law; to create an ad-hoc parliamentary group of MPs in the Parliament, to be imperatively consulted when the subject under discussion is a problematic from Resolution 1325; to put the Serbian Delegation in the Parliament of the Council of Europe under the obligation to request the establishment of the function of reporter of the Council of Europe for Women, peace and security; the establishment of the same function on regional level.

Implementers of the drafting process and proposers of the draft NAP 1325 in this domain: the Commissioner for information of public importance and personal data protection, civil society, especially female activists and experts of the peace movement, of peace education, of security and civil control of the army, the

parliamentarian Committee for security, the representatives of the Army of Serbia, of the Ministry of Education, of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and of other forces responsible for the enforcement of the Law on the use of the Army of Serbia and other defence forces in multinational operations outside the borders of the Republic of Serbia.

Working group III – Instruments of legal protection of women

The concept of human security is a key part of Resolution 1325. In view of the complexity of the process and of the time framework of the NAP (2010-2015), it is necessary to harmonise values, to define the priorities and actors/division of obligations, and to synchronise the activities for the given period.

Implementers of the drafting process and proposers of the draft NAP 1325 in this domain: on the basis of wide consultations of the civil society and of the state, to define implementer for the given period on the basis of the agreed-upon priorities.

Working group IV – Awareness campaign of female and male personnel of the security sector about gender questions

The suggested analysis is by an analyst. In order to advance the position of women and to protect their interest in the security and defence services, it is necessary to form consultative groups (women with experience in the services of the army, police, customs and others, of different generations, including retired women inspectors).

For the purpose of achieving a multi-sector, multidisciplinary and participative approach in the drafting of the NAP, and first of all for the purpose of acknowledging the exceptionally important contribution of the women's peace movement in the demilitarisation of consciousness and in the institutional demilitarisation, it is essential to include in the curriculum of the training the *Awareness raising of female and male personnel of the security sector on gender questions, education on the following themes:*

Gender character of armies and wars – inclusion of women in armed forces

Modern warfare and the inclusion of women in the army: reasons for the inclusion of women in the army;

Women's units in the police: importance and advantage for the population, especially for women;

Inclusion of a higher number of women: positive contribution to the functioning of peacekeeping operations by way of increasing the number of women in the peacekeeping missions with the purpose of furthering dialogue with the civil population.

Feminists and the inclusion of women in the army

Women and armed forces: emancipation or militarisation?

Stances and reactions in relation to the participation of women in armed forces;

Feminist dilemmas connected to the participation of women in the army – strengthening or weakening of militarism?;

Feminist-antimilitarist criticism of the inclusion of women in armed forces;

Feminist-antimilitarist alternative: demilitarisation of the concept of security and defence, demilitarisation of patriotism, demilitarisation of the educative system, conscientious objection whose cost would be paid by the army, conversion of military industry into a civil one, re-examination of the notion of masculinity, (nationalism, militarism, sexism, racism, homophobia, xenophobia), education for peace and non-violence, change of the value system, etc.

Implementers of the drafting process and proposers of the draft NAP 1325 in this domain: female practitioners, activists of the peace movement, ombudsmen, representatives of the Army, of the relevant ministries and services.

Technical analysis of the Recommendation

The chapter Structure of the drafting process and content of the NAP, part 3 (Possible bodies, indicators and surveillance mechanisms) and part 4 (Operative steps) abound with omissions and imprecise points of a legal-technical nature. There are too many indicators (at times mixed up with activities), often incoherent, with unclear effects. The different competences are not clear, from the fact that it is not known to whom complaints should be addressed to the fact that the supervisory body has no right of interference. Monitoring, reporting and statistics are not integrated as mechanisms but would fall into the order of project tasks. Promotional activities and campaigns are without a focus and include enormous resources.

Conclusion: role of the international peace movement

The women's peace movement through international cooperation exchanges reports and develops civil indicators of the global implementation of the resolution Women, peace, and security.

It is essential that the experience of peace activists in Serbia has an influence on the process of drafting the NAP, on the quality of its implementation and on its improvement in order to achieve the aims of the Resolution: reforms of both the concept and sector of security, as a single civil resolution.

13.03.2010, Belgrade

Women in black in cooperation with:

Centre for peace and democracy development, Group MOST, Women for peace Leskovac, Voice of difference, Lawyers' committee for human rights, Helsinki committee for human rights in Serbia, Expert in the sphere of security from the Faculty of Security Studies Dragana Dulić.

2. **Women in Black - brief description of our activities related to security and Resolution 1325**

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.

A) Research activities:

- **Research “Reproductive rights and security”** – the research through questionnaires related to reproductive rights, specifically abortion. It was carried out since May 2002. till May 2007, in more than twenty towns in Serbia.
- **Research “Women, peace, security”** - analysis of the field experience, which was carried out within security educational activities in 2005.
- **Research “Women, security, reproductive rights and transitional justice”** - the research was carried out in 2007, on a targeted sample on 894 women from all over Serbia; all of them were politically active women, democratic parties' activists and civil society activists.

Findings and the results of these two researches were published in a book: **“From traditional to feminist security concept – Resolution 1325”**, published in Serbian in October 2007.

- **Reproductive rights and Re-traditionalisation** – a research-activist project that was carried out between March 8 and May 20th 2008, on a sample of 987 respondents, from 55 cities and populated areas. The research involved women of different generations, ethnicity and levels of education in accordance with the average rates for Serbia.

B) Educational activities:

International and regional conferences, seminars, workshops and lectures.

- **“Everything for Peace, Health and Knowledge – Nothing for Armament”** International conference organised by Women in Black in 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2008, 2009 and 2010 in Belgrade and in 2003. and 2007 in Nis, each May, celebrating May 24th, International Day of Women's Action for Peace and Disarmament and May 28th International Day of Action for Women's Health and Reproductive Rights.
- **“Women, Peace, Security”**- Four regional seminars organized during 2005. in Sandzak, east, south and central Serbia.

- **“Women, Peace, Security”**- Regional conference organized in Belgrade on October 31st, 2005, to celebrate fifth anniversary of the adoption of Resolution 1325.
- **“Women, Security and Activism – Repression against human right defenders”** - regional conference held in Totovo selo, Vojvodina, in May 2007.
- **“Women, Peace, Security”- Resolution 1325”** - Conference held in Belgrade on October 31st 2008.
- **“Human right defenders”**- Conference held in Belgrade on March 8th 2009.
- **“Women, Peace, Security”- Resolution 1325”** - Conference held in Belgrade on October 31st 2009.
- **“From traditional to feminist concept of security - Women, Peace, and Security”** – project that has been going on from October 2009 till April 2011 includes educational activities, lobbying, research, publishing activities, street actions etc.

Also, Women in Black have held more than ten workshops in different parts of Serbia related to security, reproductive rights, transitional justice etc...

C) Publications:

Books related to the issues of gender aspect of security.

- **“Women, Peace, Security”**, collection of articles published by Women in Black. The book is published in 2008. and has 185 pages, with the articles written by the most prominent authors and experts in this subject. It deals with two topics: 1. from the criticism of the traditional security concept to the human security concept; 2. feministic – antimilitaristic security concept.
- **Empowered through rebellion:** The translation of the book *Rising up in Response*, written by Jane Barry (Urgent Action Fund), published in July 2005. The book is about fighting for woman's rights in conflict areas. It has seven chapters and 176 pages.
- **“From traditional to feminist concept of security - Resolution 1325”** published in 2007. Also, Women in Black have published a lot of leaflets related to this topic”
- **“Security of human right defenders – protection of human right defenders in international and domestic documents“** published by Women in Black, Lawyers' committee for Human Rights and Anti trafficking Center from Belgrade in 2009.
- **“Reader– From traditional to feminist security concept”** –the reader has 130 pages and is published in 2010.
- **„Women for peace”** is a book -collection of articles published by Women in Black since 1993, published in 2007, 2008 and 2009. One chapter (53 pages)

named “Women, peace, security” is related to this topic. Collection is published in Serbian and English language.

D) Lobbying and Advocacy campaigns – Resolution 1325

Women, Peace, Security: Women in Black Resolution is adopted in October 31st, 2005, in order to celebrate fifth anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. A group of women MP's, members of democratic parties, has submitted our resolution to the Parliament of Serbia, along with the request for the implementation of this Resolution. WiB Resolution comprises of all the most important requests from R1325, but also particular requests related to the community we live in. Integral text of the **Resolution 1325** has been resubmitted to the Parliament of Serbia on October 31st 2006, October 31st, 2007 and October 31st 2008. Unfortunately, so far, our recommendations have not been included in the Parliament agenda, which shows insufficient democratic capacity and the lack of political will of government officials in Serbia to include autonomous civil society initiatives and validate their efforts.

Platform for protection of women human right defenders in Serbia, initiated in June 2007, on the seventh anniversary of the ratification of Resolution 1325, by YUCOM (Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights), Anti trafficking Center and Women in Black. The platform, as well as a petition to adopt a UN Declaration on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, was submitted to the Parliament of Republic of Serbia, but was never included in the Parliament agenda.

In **October 2007** we have ***renewed our demand from 2006 to the Serbian Parliament***, through with the assistance of MP's from the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), as well as a petition to adopt a UN Declaration on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders. A meeting was organized on the same day, between Vesna Pešić, Nataša Mičić and activists of the Women in Black Network, where joint activities that will lead to achieving legitimate demands of the Women in Black, were agreed upon.

October 31st –Media Center - Press conference – Maja Pešić, Nevena Kostić i Marina Nikolić, coordinators of the research project, presented Women in Black activities concerning the feminist approach to security, results of the research project “Women, Security, Reproductive Rights, Transitional Justice.” Biljana Kovačević Vučo presented the demands from the Platform on human rights defenders, which was a joint effort of the Women in Black, Yucom and the Anti-trafficking Center (ATC), supported by the Women in Black Network from Serbia, as well as dozens of NGO's from all over Serbia. Staša Zajović promoted the Women in Black publication *From the Traditional to the Feminist Concept of Security – Resolution 1325*.

Meeting with the deputies to the Assembly of Serbia, submitting a demand to the Serbian Parliament (31. October 2008.) - On the occasion of the eighth anniversary of the adoption of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, deputies Snežana Stojanović-Plavšić, Elvira Kovač and Nikola Novaković (deputy president of NS) received the representatives of the NGO-s Women in Black and the Lawyers' committee for Human Rights - YUCOM in the National Assembly building. The following documents were submitted to the representatives of the Assembly of Serbia: UN SC Resolution 1325, Women in Black Resolution 'Women, Peace, Security' and UN Declaration on the rights of human rights defenders. At the same time, the MPs

were informed about the obligations deriving from the UN Declaration on Human Rights of the human rights defenders and they were called upon to act in accordance with it and protect the defenders of human rights by adopting the declaration and other relevant international documents concerning human security and the security of human rights defenders.

2. Women, Peace, Security – Resolution 1325 and the UN Declaration on Human Right Defenders, the conference

The conference was dedicated to the safety of defenders of human rights, women's human rights, activists for peace, engaged artists and journalists. It was motivated by the 10th anniversary of the UN Declaration on human rights defenders (*Declaration on rights and responsibilities of persons, groups and society institutions in advancing and protection of universally confirmed human rights and elementary freedoms*, passed by the UN General Assembly, in March 1999). The following people spoke: Nada Dabić of NGO Esperanca from Novi Sad, Jovanka Brkić of Women's Deed from Velika Plana, Katarina Jozić from the Committee of lawyers on human rights YUCOM, Staša Zajović from Women in Black, Maja Savić from Labris, Aida Ćorović from Urban – In of Novi Pazar, Svetlana Lukić from Peščanik/B92, Dijana Milošević from Dah Theater, Marko Karadžić, state secretary for human and minority rights of the Republic of Serbia, Nadežda Gaće of Serbian journalists independent association. The session moderator was Jelka Jovanović, agency Beta journalist. The conference was attended by 85 activists from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

3. Secularism

We believe that organised religion, religious communities and the growing clericalisation of Serbian society are some of the most important generators of the insecurity of women, especially of human right defenders and LGBT activists, in Serbia. Hence, Women in Black have been involved, along with other related organisations, in the following initiatives:

Stop clericalisation is a campaign begun in October 2007, aimed preventing the growing clericalisation of Serbian society that endangers not only the democratic nature of society but also the security of women. The campaign included numerous public debates, law initiatives, street actions, educational activities, etc.

The result of this campaign was the founding of *The Coalition for a Secular State*, initiated by Women in Black and supported by numerous NGO's, formed to work against the clericalisation of Serbian society. The Coalition demanded the evaluation of the constitutionality of the *Law on Churches and Religious Communities* (April 2006), that goes against the constitutional principle that protects the secular character of the state, its separation and independence from the church. *Request to the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Serbia* was handed out on April 24th 2008, on the anniversary of the adoption of the law in question. The request was followed by a street performance "We don't want to go back" in front of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Serbia. [The same demand was sent and the same street action was performed, at the same place, the following year, on April 24th, 2009.

The initiatives of Women in Black and related organisations, connected to gender and security issues, have contributed to:

- Becoming familiar with and expanding knowledge about the concept, content and meaning of security – for the first time in Serbia this kind of educational activity regarding gender, peace and security issues was held. Also, for the first time since 2005 – not just in Serbia, but in the region – interactive workshops and lectures were held. All previous activities regarding these topics were conducted in the form of consultative or expert teams meetings, without connections to grassroots activists.
- Expanding the knowledge of security and its importance for women's everyday lives and women's peace activism. Beginning with the criticism of traditional, militarized concept of security, knowledge of human security was deepened, security from a feminist and anti-militarist standpoint was promoted and knowledge about it was deepened. Intertwined theoretical knowledge and activist experience of gender, peace and security issues was achieved. Participants in this educational project have shown tremendous interest in this topic by continuing and improving the usual Women in Black method, which is connecting so-called abstract topics of high/masculine politics (such as militarism, military expenditures, disarmament, and security) with women's everyday lives, women's everyday experiences in the economic, social, and cultural spheres. Women in Black's experience have been confirmed – that all issues are “women's issues,” that there is no women's issues “ghetto,” that women are able to cope with all issues and topics if we manage to put them in a context of women's everyday experiences. It also confirms that the traditional, militarized concept of security is clearly in opposition to women's wishes and needs. Because of this, women, and especially Women in Black Network activists, are interested in developing a completely different concept of security, primarily from a feminist and anti-militarist standpoint. This project is complementary to many other educational and other activities that we conducted simultaneously, primarily ‘Confrontation with the Past – a Feminist Approach,’ as well as activities against clericalization and the militarization of society.
- During educational activities, participants formulated new demands relating to security issues, understandable in a country in which there is a connection between organized crime and the political elite, where the state is burdened with the criminal war past. The state did not employ a model of transitional justice, such as lustration, disclosure of secret police files, war reparation, etc. To meet the demands of activists and participants in this project, as well as to deepen and expand the knowledge of gender, peace and security issues, we contacted other funders, since both the demands of participants and our demands as workshop coordinators, go beyond the framework and possibilities of the ‘Women, Peace, and Democracy’ project, that has resulted in a publication (the reader *Women, Peace, Security* which is 185 pages long, and is the only collection of essays on this topic in the whole region). It is worth mentioning that *Women, Peace, Security* contains two essays that were presented during our ‘Women, Peace, and Democracy’ project activities. The translation of ‘Rising up in Response’ published by Women in Black, with support of the Urgent Action Fund, contributed to a better understanding of topics unwrapped with this project.

- We expanded others' knowledge about UN SC Resolution 1325, not just among Women in Black Network activists and participants in our educational project activities, but among broader public, primarily within the civil society in Serbia, among women politicians of democratic orientation, and in democratic media.
- We manage to lobby a group of MPs in the Serbian Parliament, women politicians of democratic orientation, such as Gordana Comic, Lejla Ruzdic-Trifunovic (President of the Council for Gender Equality), Natasa Micic, Gordana Stojicevic, etc. These MPs not only took part in some of our project activities, but succeeded in organizing a reception for Women in Black activists in the Serbian Parliament on October 31st 2005, and on which occasion our draft resolution 'Women, Peace, Security' was delivered.
- Additionally, we constantly demanded that the authorities of the Republic of Serbia adopt Resolution 1325, which they have not yet done). We formulated our draft resolution 'Women, peace, security,' using Resolution 1325 as a model. The additions to Resolution 1325 are linked to local and regional problems of our specific post-conflict situation. Our draft resolution was supported by dozens of non-governmental organizations throughout Serbia. When we delivered our Resolution, both MPs of democratic orientations were present, as well as activists from 22 towns in Serbia. On this occasion, Women in Black's proposal was accepted. The documents were submitted into parliamentary procedure on November 9, the International Day of Action against Fascism. Importantly, the Council for Sex Equality of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina recommended that the Executive Council of Vojvodina (the regional government) adopt our draft Resolution without any changes to the text. We consider this a great success, especially in light of the fact that Women in Black have been, because of our activities regarding the confrontation with the past, responsibility for the war and war crimes, subject during 2005 to very severe pressures and repression, about which we informed both the national and international public many times.
- The practice of active solidarity and cooperation with experts was continued, on this occasion on gender, peace and security issues. We collaborated with some of the most famous experts in this field: Dragana Dulic, professor at the Faculty of Civil Security in Belgrade, Vesna Rakic-Vodinelic, professor at the Faculty of Comparative Law in Belgrade and Marijana Pajvancic, professor at the Law Faculty in Novi Sad.
- We had enviable success in making media more sensitive to gender and security issues and Resolution 1325. It is obvious that thanks to our efforts, media of democratic orientation talked and wrote about Resolution 1325 and our draft resolution 'Women, peace, security' for the first time. For example, on October 31 stories about our activities, accompanied with photos from our performance in the front of the Serbian Parliament, were published on the front pages of newspapers.
- Public opinion was also impacted by the fact that Stasa Zajovic, the coordinator of this project was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005, in

the context of the initiative ‘1000 Women for Peace.’ She was also mentioned as very a important individual in 2005. Namely, Zorana Sijacki, director of Council for Sex Equality of Vojvodina stated in her explanation for person of the year “Stasa Zajovic, a coordinator of non-governmental organization, with its long-lasting pleading for peace, social justice and women’s human rights, launched and organized one of the most important initiatives in Serbia today – the initiative for implementation of Resolution 1325, initiative for solidarity with gay and lesbian human rights, and for respect of reproductive rights. With her original feminist activism, Stasa Zajovic is an example for all women in Serbia.” We consider these to be very important encouragements.

- Women in Black have initiated regional and global networking of the organisations that are dealing with gender, peace and security issues:
 - Women in Black, Serbia and Kosovo Women’s Network started the initiative for the founding of **Women’s Peace Coalition** in March 2006; The Coalition is founded in May 2006. To today, we have organised numerous activities together.
 - Women in Black have participated in many international conferences whose topic is the gender dimension of security.
 - The activists of the International Women in Black network show great interest in R1325 and we work together on numerous issues.

Draft Resolution, an Initiative prepared by Women in Black, Belgrade

The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia

- Starting from the expressed wish of Serbian citizens to live in a prosperous and democratic state in which the security of every human being is guaranteed on the basis of the full equality of citizens;
- Keeping in mind that on October 31, 2000 the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1325 which insists on the importance of women’s participation and the inclusion of a gender perspective in peace processes, protection of women in crisis areas and war zones from violence, particularly sexual violence, and the inclusion of a gender perspective in peace treaty application mechanisms;
- Taking into consideration United Nations General Assembly Resolution 53/144, and the European Parliament Resolution ‘The Holocaust, Anti-Semitism, and Racism;’
- Believing that the interest of all Serbian citizens in peace and security are the highest state and national interests;
- Knowing that without affirmation of women’s interests in active and effective participation in establishing lasting and stable peace and security for all members of the community, there is no possibility for insuring the protection of peace and security;
- Taking into consideration the tragic experiences from the period of war in which our country participated;
- Taking into particular account our own responsibility for the future of the Republic of Serbia and its citizens, and the interests of peace, stability, and security in the country, region, Europe, and the world.

The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia is passing

THE WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY RESOLUTION

The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia expresses and confirms resoluteness to accept recommendations for its legislative activities from the same-named United Nations Security Council Resolution, in particular:

1. To secure through legal solutions the adequate participation of women on all levels of decision-making in national, regional, and international institutions and mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution,
2. To support and prompt the resolution of conflicts on the national, regional and international levels without the use of force and violence,
3. To acknowledge the importance of peace initiatives begun by civil society,
4. To begin taking measures to secure the protection and respect of women's human rights and the highest standards of security for all citizens, particularly citizens engaged in defending human rights and promoting the democratic and civic values of the contemporary world.

The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia expresses its conviction that the conditions for establishing a lasting peace and full security for Serbian citizens will be created only by full and consistent protection of human rights, particularly women's human rights, with respect for the rule of law and with economic prosperity and special attention to social justice and the protection of victims of the previous period marked by war and war profiteers. It is therefore showing decisiveness that it is doing all in its power for these conditions to be realized as soon as possible.

The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia declares that the following is necessary to attain security for all citizens:

1. Consistently enforcing the constitutionally established principle of separation of church and state. Religious communities should not make decisions about the educational system, the healthcare system, or women's human rights, particularly reproductive and sexual rights. Traditional common law, which most endangers women's human rights, must not be rehabilitated in the name of preserving identities or culture, independent of whether majority or minority religious communities are in question.
2. Effectively applying The Family Law, condemning violence against women, and uprooting the culture of war which legitimizes violence against women and other less socially and economically powerful people.
3. Revoking The Law on Assistance to The Hague Indictees and Their Families and redirecting those funds to humanitarian usage, most importantly to families of the victims of war and educational projects for peace, nonviolence, and interethnic and intercultural solidarity.
4. Making restitution and providing compensation to families of victims of war using property confiscated from people convicted for war crimes and high-ranking individuals in the regime that ruled Serbia until October 5, 2000 who participated in the unlawful appropriation of property and other forms of plundering the national wealth.
5. The denial of war crimes in the wars from 1991 to 1999, including the genocide in Srebrenica, patterned on the criminalization of Holocaust denial

- on the basis of recommendations from the European Parliament Resolution ‘The Holocaust, Anti-Semitism and Racism.’ (P6_TA-Prov 2005/0018).
6. Strictly applying constitutional and legal regulations which prohibit and condemn all discrimination on religious, ethnic, or any other basis.
 7. Establishing democratic civilian control over the armed forces (the army, security agencies, and police). Only the National Assembly establishes the national interests of the country and only it—not the army or police—makes decisions about the security situation in the country.
 8. Taking more control of security agencies and consistently applying The Law on Lustration and opening secret dossiers, keeping in mind that these agencies do not infrequently endanger the security of a large number of citizens, particularly human rights defenders.
 9. Stopping the trend towards the privatization of armed forces and security agencies that is shown in the unregulated flourishing of private security agencies and their effort to revoke the state monopoly on the legal use of force.
 10. Respecting the rights of human rights defenders in accordance with the UN General Assembly Resolution of March 8, 1999 (53/144, annex) and taking legal measures to secure the rights of individuals, groups, and associations that advance respect for human rights and spread knowledge about human rights nationally and internationally.

**Seminar “Women Human Rights Defenders”, final report
(Belgrade, 31.10.2005.)**

Male and female activists from throughout Serbia participated in the Women in Black “Women, Peace, and Activism’ seminar held May 18-20, 2007 in Totovo Selo in Vojvodina. Activists involved with women’s and peace movements, nonviolence, and respect and advancement of human rights addressed the issues of the increasing danger to the security and safety of fighters for human rights.

The goal of the ‘Women, Security, and Activism’ seminar was to analyze the condition of women’s human rights defenders in Serbia, identify the dangers and threats that these defenders face, and seek ways and to minimize these dangers.

At the seminar, a subset of women’s human rights defenders who are especially at risk was identified. According to participants’ analysis, this most threatened group is women activists who confront the past, lesbian activists who work for the rights of sexual and gender minorities, women activists who are sexual minorities and activists who fight against patriarchy.

It was stated at the seminar that human rights defenders are marginalized in society and within civil society and their families. They have a high profile in their surroundings. They are exposed to systematic media campaigns against them and attack from government representatives and non-state actors.

Participants in the discussion took care to emphasize that they are struck by the insufficient organization and coordination, conceptual disagreement, squandering of energy, and distrust and rivalry within the nongovernmental sector. This happens especially when approaching donors, who are still practically the only source of financing for NGOs. This has serious consequences for NGOs’ positions and subjects them to disfavour in their surroundings. It also affects the amount and quality of their activism.

Showing readiness to strengthen activity through the elimination of their own lack of resourcefulness and mistakes, activists noted that to improve the performance of NGOs, it is necessary to:

- Fight to express our own identities as champions of resistance to the criminalization of society;
- Work to change the media image of NGOs;
- Increase the size of NGOs' actions and influence the media to react to them;
- Energetically work to build and strengthen solidarity as a very important value within civil society;
- With more dedication, expertise, and openness; educate others within civil society. Civil society frequently becomes careless about educating others.
- Respond to pressure and perfidious forms of mistreatment in politics and public life more generally through consistent actions, not only sporadically;
- In communication with institutions and organizations in this country and abroad—including donors—illustrate the phenomenon of the transformation of the civil sector into a prolonged arm of the state.

Seminar participants emphasized that it is important to increase pressure on the government and other state institutions to adopt, apply, and respect the numerous international documents signed by the state of Serbia. Additionally, NGOs will continue to urge that human rights defenders be respected and accepted as a legitimate type of civilian involvement in a democratic society. They should not be described as traitors or enemies deserving of marginalization and demonization.

Activists in the seminar offered ways to improve their security:

- Campaigns are necessary to change the image of marginalized and despised groups in Serbian society.
- More interpersonal solidarity among all nongovernmental organizations is necessary.
- Trainings should be organized to promote a culture of security for women activists.
- The Serbian Parliament should adopt a declaration which protects the rights of women human rights defenders in keeping with UN Security Council Resolution 1325 'Women, Peace, and Security' and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders.

7. DRAFT PLATFORM ON THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS IN SERBIA

Noting that violence and a lack of tolerance and respect for others – especially ethnic, religious, and sexual minorities – has become dominant in behavior and communication in all segments of modern Serbian society, seminar participants emphasized that the media and state institutions, especially The Prosecutors' Office and the Ministry of Justice act with impermissible benevolence and approval towards this social climate. They even build relationships with political parties. In this way, these institutions express and confirm their lack of readiness to confront the causes and consequences of the wars and war crimes committed in our name in the former Yugoslavia.

Women activists with nongovernmental organizations that work for discontinuity with the criminal past and for the respect, protection, and the advancement of human rights as an essential part of safeguarding the dignity and integrity of individuals, groups, organizations, and society as a whole are especially exposed to prosecution, public stigmatization, belittlement, and even physical attacks.

Women who every day work and fight for their rights, the rights of other women, human rights, and the rights of everyone who is subject to discrimination marginalization, injustice, and violence—women who oppose the prevailing norms—are subject to risks. Patriarchal structures isolate and silence human rights defenders. The women in this group are exposed to an additional risk of violence and injustice. Crimes committed against women defenders go unpunished, which makes it possible to exclude these women from communities and society as a whole.

The acceptance of these risks for women human rights defenders becomes disregard for their engagement in defending human rights. Traditionally, the media considers asking most human rights organizations and networks, unions, and political parties specific questions about women's rights as unnecessary and a disregard for "more universal and more important" issues. This tendency isolates women's human rights as well as their defenders.

The best protection for human rights defenders is the fulfilment of all human rights, without hierarchy. Human rights defenders are endangered by an atmosphere of growing political repression, authoritarianism, and militarization of the state.

The government, NGOs, and other actors in civil society should protect human rights defenders in keeping with The UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders and other international instruments and mechanisms. Protection mechanisms should confirm the principles of equality and non-discrimination. They should forbid culture or religion to be used to justify inequality for women. Activists should be protected in all fields of their work, in the public and private sphere. All state and non-state actors should be involved with this.

Because of this, we demand that the Government and Serbian Assembly:

- Annul all laws and decisions which violate women's and human rights and threaten human rights defenders and actively apply the principles of The UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, and make it possible for women to have equal rights to fight for human rights and all other rights.
- Effectively punish state and non-state actors who misuse criminal laws or use the media or other groups to hurt human rights defenders or prevent them from defending human rights and freedoms.
- Secure means for the protection and promotion of human rights defenders and their rights.

We Call on the UN and International Human Rights Groups to:

1. Create new mechanisms of citizens' responsibility for violence against women and women human rights defenders.
2. Support of the mandate of the Special Representative of the General-Secretary on The Situation of Human Rights Defenders and assurance that women human rights defenders are a focus of their work.
3. We call on the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to perform monitoring.

4. We call on state institutions, including national commissions for human rights, the consistent application of UN recommendations about human rights defenders and human rights, especially women human rights defenders.

We Call on Human Rights Organizations, Civil Society Movements and NGOs to:

1. Protect everyone who is under pressure because they defend human rights, especially those who confront the past, work for the rights of sexual and gender minorities, are members of an ethnic minority, or work in rural areas without public protection.
2. Formulate programs and direct funds to the protection of human rights defenders and respond to violence against women human rights defenders motivated by gender.
3. Allow women human rights defenders their freedom of choice and consult both women and men human rights defenders about issues of their security.

We Call on the Media to:

1. Respect the integrity of human rights defenders.
2. Not tolerate, but react to every violation of the human rights of human rights defenders, in accordance with the journalistic code of practice and professional ethics.
3. Show special sensitivity to women human rights defenders and those whose rights they support.

Belgrade
June 14, 2007

Women in Black—Belgrade
Yukom, The Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights, Belgrade
The Anti-Trafficking Center (ATC), Belgrade

Joined by:

The Women in Black Network—Serbia from Bor, Vranje, Vrbas, Vlasotince, Velika Plana, Dimitrovgrad, Zaječar, Kikinda, Kraljevo, Kruševac, Leskovac, Novi Sad, Novi Pazar, Novi Bečej, Niš, Pančevo, and Tutin.

Hera Women's Club, Bačka Topola; The Youth Initiative for Human Rights, Belgrade; The Incest Trauma Center (ITC), Belgrade; The Autonomous Women's Center (AŽC), Belgrade; Voice of Difference, Belgrade; The Reconstruction Women's Fund, Belgrade; Feminist '94, Belgrade; The Queeria Center, Belgrade; The Roma Women's Network, Belgrade; Hora—A Group for the Emancipation of Women, Valjevo; The Belgrade Center for Human Rights; Urban In, Novi Pazar; and Zorana Šijački.