

Women's Court – A Feminist Approach to Justice

Report for July – August – September 2013

This is a short report on Women in Black's activities in the given period pertaining to organizing of Women's Court – A Feminist Approach to Justice. The report mostly focuses on activities implemented in Serbia, as well as activities implemented with partner organizations. Information on activities in other former Yugoslav states are represented inasmuch as Women in Black, as the responsible party for program activities, have been given information from other organizations of the Women's Court Organizational Board.

If you want to find a more detailed account please take a look at our web site www.zeneucrnom.org or www.zenskisud.org or write to us: zeneucrnom@gmail.com

We thank you in advance and with solidarity.

At the end of 2010 the Initiative Board consisted of: Women for Women, Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Center for Women's and Peace Education – Anima, Kotor (Montenegro), Center for Women's Studies and the Center for Women Victims of War, Zagreb (Croatia), Kosovo Women's Network, Women's Network and Women in Black, Belgrade. These organizations initiated the organization of a Women's Court for former Yugoslavia. The IB now consists of 10 organizations from all former Yugoslav states. At a meeting held in February 2013 the Initiative Board became the Women's Court Organizational Board.

Women in Black are responsible for program activities organized for the Women's Court, they discuss and agree on and coordinate all activities with other organizations members of the Organizational Board.

In the period covered by this report the following activities were implemented:

I Public Presentations / PP

Public presentations / PPs of the initiative for organizing the Women's Court are an integral part of the research-activism process of gathering information and suggestions pertaining to the idea and vision of justice and selection of topics of the Women's Court.

July 5th, Novi Becej: this public presentation was attended by 19 women, and was moderated by Ivana Vitas and Marija Perkovic.

July 3rd, Porec: this public presentation was attended by 13 women from the Istra region; it was moderated by activists from Zagreb. The public presentation was organized by the Center for Civil Actions, Porec.

II Work-Consultative Meetings

The Feminist Code on Organizing the Women's Court which obligates us to share knowledge, think everything through together – therefore, these meetings are part of a democratic process. During meetings we analyze results achieved through activities implemented thus far, define future activities for the process of understanding and creating justice from a feminist perspective. In accordance with the Feminist Ethics pertaining to the process of organizing the Women's Court, aside from Work-Consultative Meetings, we opened up numerous other avenues for work in each country: regular operational work meetings, workshops, legal team meetings, discussion focus groups, etc. This report primarily lists activities in Serbia, as well as those which we were informed about by partner organizations from each former Yugoslav state:

1. Joint Work-Consultative Meetings – these meetings were held among partner organizations of the WC's OB, as well as other civil society organizations which take part in the process of organizing the Women's Court:
 - *September 14th, Vranjaska Banja*: a meeting with women from the Women in Black Serbia Network who are involved in organizing Women's Court. 10 women from the following towns participated in the meeting: Belgrade, Kraljevo, Novi Becej, Leskovac, Pirot, Dimitrovgrad, Krusevac, Sombor.
2. Regular Work Meetings: these meetings are held at the WiB offices in Belgrade. In the period covered by this report, during July and September, we held meetings every Thursday. Meetings are attended by members of the WiB Coordination Team, and sometimes joined by members of the Women's Studies in Belgrade. We use the meetings to: exchange information, ideas and dilemmas, analyze results of activities implemented, define and agree on future activities, etc. These meetings are attended by five to 10 members of the Coordination Team.

III Feminist Ethics of Care – Support for Potential Witnesses

We held 5 meetings (3 in Serbia, 2 in Montenegro) for support to women who have testified at feminist discussion circles about military/ethnic/economic/gender violence. 59 people in total participated in the meetings:

- *July 5th, Zrenjanin*: the meeting was attended by 4 people: 2 activists from the "Ravnopravnost" (Equality) and 2 WiB activists from Belgrade.
- *July 27th, Bela Reka*: 9 people took part in this work meeting.
- *September 12th and 13th, Vrnjaska Banja*: a meeting with potential witnesses of the Women's Court. It was attended by 17 women (14 women who volunteered to be potential witnesses during the WC's organizational process, and 3 women WiB activists

in charge of the meeting); the following issues were discussed: feminist ethics of care – support for potential witnesses; solidarity in practice – support for victims of war, military violence during war and after war, work in refugee camps, support for displaced people; women as subjects of justice; and joint agreements about how to prepare potential witnesses from Serbia.

Montenegro

- *July 12th, Kotor*: a meeting with witnesses was held in the House of Free Thought; 12 women attended.
- *September 26th to the 29th, Tivat, Montenegro*: In Tivat (Montenegro) a meeting/workshop was held from September 26th to the 29th. Also, a work meeting was held with members of the Regional Organizational Board of the Women's Court – A Feminist Perspective of Justice.

The workshop was attended by potential witnesses: Mirjana Ucakar and Dragojla Popovic from Slovenia, Ljubica Andjelkovic, Jovanka Carevic and Danica Radosevic from Croatia, Sabra Kolenovic, Kadefa Rizvanovic, Suhra Sinanovic and Munevera Avdic from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Anka Vukicevic, Maja Jovovic and Sabina Talovic from Montenegro, Jasminka Bogdanovski, Selvije Selmani and Sanja Canevska from Macedonia, and Binasa Dzigal, Danica Pupovac, Marija Kovacev, Borka Vasic and Nadezda Kostic from Serbia. Members of the WC's Organizational Board took part in the workshop. In all there were 29 women.

Marijana Senjak (Zagreb), a psychotherapist with years of experience with work on PTSP in B&H and Croatia, and Ljupka Kovacevic (Kotor), a psychologist also equally experienced in this field in Montenegro, conducted the workshop.

IV Screenings of Documentary and Regular Movies

This educational program consists of several segments: documentary movies about experiences from other Women's Courts and international tribunals; documentary and regular movies on the subject of women's experience, women's groups and networks, violence against women, women's struggle for peace and justice, feminist approach to justice; documentaries produced by Women in Black's Video Activism Group deal with the feminist approach to justice, peace and security. After all movie screenings we open up discussions about the movies but also about our initiative for organizing the Women's Court – A Feminist Approach to Justice.

During the period covered by this report the following activities were implemented:

“Where Do We Go Now?” – a French movie by Lebanese director Nadin Labaki. The movie portrays the relationship between Muslim and Christian women in a Lebanese village. The main focus of the movie is on brave and determined women from the village who support each other, cooperate, stand in solidarity with each other despite the fact that their men are in conflict. The film is 110 minutes long.

- *August 31st, Nis*: the movie was screened at the offices of the Women's Space organization; 13 women attended.

“Calling Out the Ghosts”: the movie is 63 minutes long and follows the lives of two women (Nusreta Sivac and Jadranka Cigelj), who survived sexual violence at the Omarska concentration camp during the Serbian aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

During the period covered by this report one movie screening was held:

- *September 9th, Nis*: the movie was screened at the offices of the Women’s Space organization; 6 people attended.

V Artistic Activist Engagement – Street Actions

These activities serve to strengthen feminist ethics of care, as well as non-violent resistance to all forms of discrimination and exploitation. We will list the street actions conducted in relation to issues relevant to Women’s Court for the period covered by this report:

July 8 – 11: We Will Never Forget the Srebrenica Genocide – As part of the commemoration of 18 years since the Srebrenica genocide the following actions were undertaken:

July 8 – 11: Srebrenica – Peace Activism, Activist Bicycling – The Peace March from Belgrade to Srebrenica. This action was organized by a group of activists (Eva Dinic, Vladimir Jevtic, Nina Djurdjevic Filipovic), in cooperation with SOS Vlasotince and the Women in Black Network in Serbia, with financial support from the Women’s Reconstruction Fund. During the action they handed out fliers with information about the Srebrenica genocide. Cyclists went from Belgrade to Srebrenica by bicycle and on July 11th they took part in the 18th commemoration of the Srebrenica genocide. The “Belgrade – Srebrenica by Bicycle 2013” action was implemented as a bike tour, and was done for the first time this year. Nine cyclists took part, and the tour lasted three days, passing about 220 kilometers. Cyclists wanted to remind the populace in Western Serbia and Podrinje of the role Serbia played in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina – during the Bosnian war these regions were frequently used for logistics support and as a destination of various military and paramilitary formations coming back from the front lines.

July 8th, Sabac and July 9th, Loznica (Western Serbia): we held protests, dressed in black and silent – “We Will Never Forget the Srebrenica Genocide”. Around ten Women in Black Network in Serbia participated alongside the aforementioned cyclists.

July 10th, Belgrade – “Remembrance and Accountability”, exhibit: Organized in the House of Human Rights in Belgrade, by Women in Black, Center for Cultural Decontamination, Lawyer’s Committee for Human Rights, Humanitarian Law Fund and the Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia. Photographs were exhibited as part of the “July 11th – Day of Remembrance of the Srebrenica Genocide – Declare it!” campaign, which was organized by the aforementioned NGOs from February 2009 to July 2010, and this year repeated the said demand. In front of the entrance to the exhibit, Women in Black activists handed out fliers containing statements of Bosnian women who survived the war and genocide tragedies.

July 10th, Belgrade - “July 11th – Day of Remembrance of the Srebrenica Genocide – Declare it!”: a protest in front of the Serbian Presidency, as part of the campaign bearing the same name; organized by the aforementioned NGOs, with support from over 30 Serbian NGOs. On this again

we requested that the President, Tomislav Nikolic, the Government and the Parliament, declare in Serbia July 11th the Day of Remembrance of the Srebrenica Genocide.

July 10th, Belgrade – “They Have Left a Trace on us”: a theatrical action, where WiB Network members stood in silence and dressed in black, to commemorate 18 years since the genocide. For this action WiB cooperated with artists collective Dah Theater, Skart and Art Klinika. By means of this theatrical action performed on the Republic Square, where we used objects from everyday life of everyday people (sheets, pans, water...), we expressed remorse – first and foremost, for the people murdered, but also for the murder of life itself, symbolically. This action again is a statement that those who were murdered during the Srebrenica genocide left an ineradicable trace on our lives and that we will keep their memory alive. This action, attended by approximately 200 activists from Serbia, represents a continuation of construction of the living monument for the genocide victims. By “moving” Srebrenica onto the Republic Square in Belgrade, with the names of the 8 372 genocide victims written out, we used this opportunity to warn that no one may close their eyes before the reality of the genocide that’s been committed and that only confrontation with what was done can advance the establishment of a political culture where crime is punishable.

July 11th, Potocari/Srebrenica – “Remembrance and Accountability”, solidarity with victims of a crime committed in our name: approximately 60 activists of the Women in Black Network and similar organizations, as well as activists from Canada, Italy and Great Britain took part in the commemoration / dženaza and burial of 409 genocide victims.

July 18th, Belgrade – Commemorating 15 years of the crime committed against civilians of Serbian nationality in Kosovo: In the Opatovac and Retimlje villages, Orahovac municipality, 25 civilians of Serbian nationality were murdered in July 1998. At the commemoration, held at Orahovac cemetery and organized by the Association of Families of those Kidnapped or Murdered in Kosovo and Metohija, Women in Black activists from Belgrade laid down a reef and expressed condolences and solidarity with the families of victims of this crime.

July 24th, Sljivovica/West Serbia: Representatives of those who were interned in concentration camps in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Women in Black, Humanitarian Law Fund and Youth Initiative for Human Rights, visited the municipality of Cajetina (Serbia), concentration camp Sljivovica for Bosniaks from Zepa. Namely, from August 1995 till April 1996 in the concentration camp Sljivovica, members of the Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs held captive several hundred Bosniaks from Zepa and the vicinity – who sought refuge in Serbia after the fall of Zepa. Dozens of cases of torture and inhumane treatment were noted in Sljivovica. They were committed by police officers against Bosniak men. Five men succumbed to injuries. Women in Black, the Humanitarian Law Fund and Youth Initiative for Human Rights called on Serbian institutions to mark these two concentration camps and acknowledge the injustice committed against the victims.

August 5th and 6th, Trnopolje and Omarska, Bosnia and Herzegovina: Five Women in Black activists went on the invitation of the Association of Concentration Camp Survivors of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Association of Concentration Camp Survivors from Prijedor to visit former concentration camps of Trnopolje and Omarska (located at the site of a mine bearing the same

name). Serbian armies and police held captive around 6 000 Bosnian and Croatian nationals in said camps, while 700 – 900 people were murdered at those same camps. On August 6th there was a commemoration of the date when the camp was closed. Our visit was intended to pay our respects to the victims, show solidarity with the survivors, but also give support for the initiative of building a Memorial Center on the location of the Former Concentration Camp Omarska.

V Video Activism

Video activism entails activities on making video materials related to the feminist approach to justice; also, translations and subtitling of the documentary movies which portray experiences of non-violent movements against criminal impunity, neoliberal economic globalization, etc. The Women in Black's video activism group is coordinated by Marija Vidic and Goran Lazin, in cooperation with Marija Arandjelovic and Zinaida Marjanovic.

During the period covered by this report the following video materials were produced:

May 31st – International Day of White Armbands – Prijedor (2.56 minutes). The movie shows a street action organized by the “Because It Concerns Me” initiative from Prijedor for the international Day of White Armbands on May 31st. This was the first ever public manifestation commemorating non-Serb victims that was not banned by Republika Srpska authorities.

Women in Black Remember Children Victims of War in Bosnia and Herzegovina (5.33 minutes). This movie was made for the International White Armband Day, May 31st, and shows activists making statements commemorating children victims of war in B&H.

They Have Left a Trace on us – We Will Never Forget the Srebrenica Genocide (11.11 minutes). The movie shows the theater action in Belgrade on July 10th 2013 which was organized by Women in Black, in cooperation with Dah Theater, Art Klinika and Skart.

We Remember – Crimes against Women in the Bosnia and Herzegovina War (2.11 minutes). The movie shows the protest on May 24th 2013, held at the Republic Square in Belgrade, for women victims of the B&H war.

Commemoration of 21 Years from the Closing of Omarska Concentration Camp (5.44 minutes). The movie shows conversations held on August 5th at the place where the former concentration camp Trnopolje used to be. The movie also shows that the Women in Black won this year's international Award against Genocide Denial.

Food, Not Guns (1.34 minutes): street action organized on June 12th by Women in Black on the Republic Square, as part of the Global Action against Militarization which is organized by the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA).

Women in Black and Refugees (4.49 minutes): the movie shows the work WiB did in refugee camps during the 90s, as well as the work done against forced recruitment of refugees. The movie was made with material of TV Arte's movie Women in Black.

VI Publishing

The goal of this activity is to broaden the knowledge needed for the organizational process of the Women's Court – A Feminist Approach to Justice. It consists of leaflets, readers, etc.

During the period covered by this report the following was published:

- Leaflets on the process of organizing the Women's Court in Serbia, from February to September 2013;
- Leaflet "Legal Regulation of Crimes of Rape in War"
- Leaflet "Support for Victims of War – Support for Refugees and The Displaced" (Women in Black and solidarity actions with victims in Serbia)
- Booklet "Support for Victims of War – Support for Refugees and The Displaced" (Women in Black and solidarity actions with victims in Serbia). The booklet contains five chapters: Work in Refugee Camps in Serbia, Krajina, Kosovo; Military Violence in War and After War (RTS and Topcider); and Rigged Political Trials – Victims of Slobodan Milosevic's Regime in Serbia. The booklet numbers 43 pages.

(The report was written by Milos Urosevic and Stasa Zajovic, in cooperation with Ljupka Kovacevic, Marija Perkovic, Zorica Trifunovic).

Belgrade
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