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Kosovar

# Women's Voice

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## announcements

Arts and Crafts Festival at Prishtina Center for Youth and Sport.....  
.....September 15-20

KWN Bimonthly Meeting.....  
...HCIC, 11:00, November 6

Know Your Rights Concert in Prishtina.....November 25



www.womensnetwork.org

## KWN Requests Minister's Support for Legislation that Addresses Gender Based Violence

On July 15th, KWN members met with the Minister of Labor and Social Services, Minister Selmanaj to bring his attention to the absence of appropriate legislation addressing gender-based violence. Since the war in Kosova, institutions have yet to regulate gender-based violence.

KWN members have witnessed the resulting problems firsthand in their work at safe houses throughout Kosova. Currently, these houses are the only door open to people suffering from gender-based violence. Kosovar shelters have many problems, but most are due to the lack of institutional support.

At the meeting, KWN mem-

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**"We are willing to support women who are victims of gender violence."  
- Minister Selmanaj**

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*KWN members meet with Minister Selmanaj to discuss governmental support for safe houses and steps to address gender based violence.*

bers presented this problem to Minister Selmanaj. The KWN delegation included Sevdije Ahmeti from the Center for Protection of Women and Chil-

dren in Prishtina, Sakibe Doli-Dobruna from the Safe House in Gjakova, Lumnije Deçani from the Women's Wellness Center in Peja, Elita Reshtani from the Center for Women and Children in Prizren, Nazife

## KWN Meets with UN SRSG about Resolution 1325

KWN and Zene Zenama (Women to Women) Sarajevo, with support from UNIFEM are writing a report on the degree to which United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security has been implemented in Kosova and Bosnia.

Following an earlier round of interviews with international and local institutions, such as the Prime Minister's Office UNMIK, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Kosova Police Service, KWN began the second round of interviews in July 2005. During this round, KWN interviewed UNMIK Special Representative to the Se-

cretary General (SRSG) Søren Jessen-Petersen.



*Søren Jessen-Petersen,  
United Nations Mission in Kosova  
Special Representative to the  
Secretary General*

"To what extent has the resolution been implemented inside UNMIK?" the KWN representative asked.

"Apart from some changes that I have made, such as asking the Office for Gender Affairs to be in my office in order to be more centrally located, we have not really been too good," he said. "I wanted to use the opportunity of changes in the pillar heads, but they were all replaced by men. Despite my repeated requests both in New York and to our administration here to identify qualified women candidates, we failed. So our own leadership is still very male dominated, which is not a good signal."

## June KWN Meeting Notes

In the last meeting, KWN announced that the Network now has 77 officially registered member organizations. A short presentation of KWN activities and events during the last two months followed.

One notable activity was KWN's meeting with the Prime Minister concerning the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. In this meeting, KWN representatives stated that civil society is monitoring the government in its implementation of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality in Kosovo.

On May 27th-28th in Thessalonica, Greece, the World Bank organized a regional conference on "Labor Markets, Poverty Reduction Strategies." The Ministry of Economy and Finance presented the report on Kosovo, and KWN Executive Director Igballe Rogova presented a report on behalf of civil society.

KWN members and partners (local and international) exchanged information about their activities and projects:

- o Medica Kosova gave an overview of their projects, which provide women with psychosocial, gynecological and legal support.
- o The Prime Minister's Office for Good Governance presented the Kosovo Action Plan for Combating Trafficking of Human Beings and the establishment of the Agency for Gender Equality within the Prime Minister's Office.
- o The International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) Project on Civil Society, which began on June 1st, will soon begin its program to support civil society in Kosovo.
- o The Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC) in Prishtina, a network member, released *How do Women in Kosovo Vote?* The publication is online at [www.womensnetwork.org](http://www.womensnetwork.org) (see the article on page 3.)

## Kvinna till Kvinna Advocates for "Engendering the Peace Process in Kosovo"

Stockholm, Sweden, 8 July 2005

Dear SRSJ Sören Jessen-Petersen,

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation is concerned that the expertise, knowledge and experience of the women and women's organisations of Kosovo will be disregarded in the coming preparations for the status talks. We remind you that Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security explicitly demands that women and women's organisations are invited and enabled to participate in all stages and all levels of formal and informal peace processes. Now is the time for women in Kosovo to participate, with decision making power, both in the political and expert positions created in the formation of the Forum, the Secretariat, the Expert Group and the following Working Groups for the future status of Kosovo.

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation has been supporting and working with women's organisations in Kosovo since 1994. These organisations are well established in their communities and many of them are involved in political processes and decision making on different levels in Kosovo society. They are already building peace across conflict lines and finding common ground. To be able to reach sustainable and democratic solutions for the future of Kosovo the ongoing processes need these women's knowledge.

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation urges UNMIK and especially you as SRSJ to implement Resolution 1325, and to:  
- take action for women's full and equal participation in the on going processes for the future of Kosovo,  
- ensure that all actors involved adopt a gender perspective.

Sincerely yours,

Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation

## "Know Your Rights" Campaign Crosses Kosova

Through the "Know Your Rights" Campaign, KWN aims to inform citizens about their rights and existing gender mechanisms. The performance includes theatrical plays and songs as education tools in reaching citizens. The actors

use monologues and dialogues to interact with the audience.

The first phase was launched on November 25, 2004 in Prishtina, marking the International Day against Violence against Women. The performance was repeated in Decem-

ber 2004 in Prizren and Mitrovica.

The second phase started in April 2005 and visited many cities and villages around Kosova. RTV21 was the media sponsor and the campaign was financially supported by UNIFEM.



Safete Rogova, one of the actors in the "Know Your Rights" Campaign, interacts with citizens in Has, Kosova.

## UN Transfers Ombudsperson Institution to Locals

The Ombudsperson Institution, established under UNMIK regulation 2000/38, promotes and protects the rights and freedoms of individuals and all citizens of Kosova. To date, an international appointed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRS) led the institution. Now, the Ombudsperson Institution, UNMIK Pillar III for Institution Building and the Parliamentarian Legislative Commission of the Kosova Assembly are leading a working group for transforming the Ombudsperson Institution into a local institution.

In the first working group

meetings, one of the NGOs representing civil society was KWN. In this meeting, the "draft framework" for the institution was presented and civil society was asked to contribute through proposals, comments and suggestions to create proper institution for Kosova's citizens. In the end, the participants agreed to consult with civil society regu-



larly throughout the phases of the project's preparation.

## KWN Helps Draft Strategy for Human Rights

On July 15th, the division for gender issues within the Prime Minister's Office for Good Governance, organized an inter-ministerial meeting for the achievement of gender equality in Kosova, on the subject of "Draft strategy for human rights in Ko-

sova" emphasizing the chapter on women's rights. KWN has been an active participant in these meetings since they were established. In early September, KWN will organize a roundtable to discuss the draft strategy for human rights and make recom-

mendations that will be addressed at the inter-ministerial working group. At the inter-ministerial working group, participants agreed that Kosovar institutions must be pressured to address gender representation and improve the anti-trafficking plan.

## Reforma 2004 Shows Voting Trends, Requests Continued Support

On July 8th, Reforma hosted a roundtable on the subject of election trends in Kosova and proposed changes to the current electoral system. The roundtable aimed to inform stakeholders of negative affect that the current electoral system may have had on voting trends and to identify support for the new Reforma 2005 campaign, set to begin this fall.

Reforma's organizing committee, the Kosova Women's Network (KWN), Kosovar Institute for Policy, Research and Development (KIPRED) and Council for Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms (CDHRF), hope to involve numerous stakeholders in a broad coalition like the Reforma 2004 Coalition, which sought to change the electoral system last year.

During the roundtable, KIPRED presented their report, "Election Trends in Kosova: 2000-2004." After the presentation, representatives from the Central Election Commission, Organization for Security

and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Election Department and many other local and international organizations discussed the report and gave suggestions for reforming the electoral system.



*Reforma representatives present voting trends and propose changes to the electoral system at a roundtable discussion at the Grand Hotel in Prishtina on July 8th.*

## Gender Studies Center Releases Two More Publications

The Kosovar Gender Studies Center (KGSC) in Prishtina, a network member, released *How do Women in Kosova Vote?* on May 20. The research offers information about:

- o What Kosovar women want from politics
- o Who they vote for
- o Their involvement in political processes
- o Their preferred electoral system
- o What they think about the role of the state in society and much more

The random sample included 1005 Kosovar women of different ethnicities, geographic regions, ages and education levels.

On July 5, KGSC cooperated with the Urgent Action Fund to release *Rising Up in Response: Women's Rights Activism in Conflict*. The book by Jane Barry serves as an important resource for present and future employees of the United Nations Mission in Kosova (UNMIK), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and all other internationals working in Kosova or other post-conflict situations. It provides concrete examples of ways that internationals can improve their response to post-conflict situations. More importantly, it emphasizes the important role that women activists can and have played in post-conflict situations.

Earlier this year KGSC released *The Gender Studies Reader* (in Albanian) and *The Directory of Women NGOs in Kosova*. Copies of all four publications are available at the center or KWN.

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*"Kosovar Women's Voice" was written by Arbnora Kastrati, edited by Jessica Glynn and designed by Nicole Farnsworth.*

www.womensnetwork.org

## KWN Member Announcements!

### Opportunity for Psychosocial Counselors to be Licensed

From late September to early December, One to One Kosova in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, the University of Prishtina, Department of Psychology, the Association of Psychological Assistance in Zagreb and the University of Zagreb will organize a training and licensing of psychosocial counselors. This is an important step in Kosova, as it creates an opportunity for this profession to be officially recognized. One to One Children's Fund in London will finance the training.

Based on interviews held in August, 12 candidates will be chosen to attend the training. For more information, please contact: qkgff\_kosova@hotmail.com.

### Open Door Hosts Arts and Crafts Festival

Open Door, a KWN member, with financial support from the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport will organize an arts and crafts festival on September 15 - 20 at the Center for Youth and Sport in Prishtina. Artists and citizens who wish to display their work are invited to participate. Woodcrafts, sewn goods, paintings, frescoes, leatherwork, ceramics, cooper, silver and musical instruments are among the things that will be on display. Everyone is invited to come and listen to live traditional music, which will be played each day.

### Establishing Legal Aid in Kosova

As part of the project for establishing a comprehensive Legal Aid system in Kosova, a working group entitled "Legal Experts and Institutional Panel for Future Legal Support System" was established.

KWN was invited to participate in the working group as one of the stakeholders in the future Legal Aid System. Previously, two different systems for legal assistance existed. The first, led by the UNMIK Justice Department, addressed criminal issues. The second system, financed by the European Agency Reconstruction (EAR), was for civil and administrative issues. Norma, a KWN member, was one of the implementing partners for this department.

Under the new Legal Aid

Regulation, the two previous systems will combine into one. The working group will prepare the secondary legislation and necessary procedures for the regulation to be implemented after it is approved. This working group will meet every two weeks in about six months.

### Press Conference on Action Plan against Trafficking

On August 5th, the Prime Minister's Office for Good Governance organized a press conference to inform the public about the Kosova Action Plan to combat Trafficking in Human Beings. The Kosovar government approved this plan in early August. In addition to the media, representatives of local and international institutions were also present.



*KWN consults with numerous local experts from across Kosova for the Network's programmatic planning.*

## KWN Meeting with Minister Selmanaj, Continued

Jonuzi from NGO Liria in Gjilan and Arbnora Kastrati, Program Manager at KWN. They presented the following issues:

- o The Law on Social Services has not been fully implemented
- o Shelters were not included in the Kosova consolidated budget
- o The United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) Department of Justice, which is obliged to help and support cases referred to them, sends cases straight to the shelters. This means that the Provisional

Institutions of Self-Governance (PISG) and UNMIK use the services of the shelters without supporting them financially.

Minister Selmanaj requested more data on the number of women who have suffered from gender violence and other related information from KWN members. He said that the institutions are willing support and help them, but the issue requires commitment from both sides. He proposed to arrange a meeting with the

parliamentarian group on Health and Social Welfare to address this problem in the highest lawmaking body.

Minister Selmanaj thanked the KWN representatives for addressing their concerns through institutional channels. He said that this was the first time that these problems were discussed directly and that he would work with the government to address these issues. He voiced his appreciation for the shelters' work.