

Women's Voice

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announcements

Women Demonstrate for Inclusion in Kosova's Final Status Talks.....**National Theatre, Prishtina, 12:00 March 8**

KWN Bimonthly Meeting**ATRC, 11:00, April 3**

Conference on Resolution 1325, Prishtina.....**March/April**

RRJETI I GRUPEVE TË
GRAVE TË KOSOVËS



KOSOVA WOMENS
NETWORK

www.womensnetwork.org

KWN Members Create 2006 Strategy

At the KWN Annual Meeting in December, participants separated into working groups where they discussed KWN's 2006 Strategic Plan. The three working groups addressed network empowerment, political empowerment of women and advocating for women's rights. The groups made the following recommendations.

1. Recommendations for Network Empowerment

- o Present more information about KWN member organizations' activities, including on the KWN website
- o Organize field visits to KWN members to gather information for profiles of each member
- o Exchange information during these field visits
- o One World offered to support KWN members by providing

matrixes for promoting the organizations, trainings in technology and trainings in preparing public relations materials

- o Cooperate more closely with the media, especially with local radio stations to reach more women
- o Cooperate more closely with Municipal Gender Officers
- o Cooperate with women's networks in the region

2. Women's Political Empowerment

- o Create a working group on this issue within KWN
- o Reactivate the 30 women's municipal advocacy groups
- o KWN members - raise women's awareness about the electoral system
- o Create and distribute guides to women voters
- o Increase communication between women politicians and

voters, not only during election campaigns, by 1) raising women politicians' awareness of UNSCR 1325 and 2) working with women voters

- o KWN working group - meet with government, UN and contact group
- o Organize a regional conference in spring 2006 and an international conference in autumn 2006 related to UNSCR 1325.

3. Advocating for Women's Rights

o Advocate regarding the law on termination of pregnancy, currently being drafted, by 1) contacting the work group that is drafting the law by 5 or 6 December, 2) sending the draft law to Norma for legal comments, and 3) organizing a roundtable discussion on this topic to which various experts, civil society representatives and the Prime Minister's Office will be invited.

o Organize a campaign against breast cancer by 1) advocating for the government to provide free annual breast examinations for women, 2) ensuring that all Kosovar municipalities have adequate equipment (currently, all patients are referred to Prishtina), and 3) raising awareness amongst women regarding their health, with an emphasis on breast cancer.

o Organize a campaign against trafficking of women and children that includes 1) awareness-raising that targets high school students, 2) media, 3) roundtables, and 4) close cooperation with governmental institutions, especially courts, police, and KFOR.



KWN members work on 2006 strategy at Hani i dy Roberteve restaurant during the KWN Annual Membership meeting in December.

KWN Drafts Code of Conduct

KWN began efforts towards drafting a code of conduct, entitled the Ethical and Accountability Code for KWN members in February. Following KWN Board approval, the code will be distributed to members who will voluntarily agree to follow the code for KWN membership. Members will

undergo an annual verification process to ensure that they continue to follow the code.

What is a Code of Conduct?

A code of conduct is an agreement among a group of organizations where they as NGOs agree to hold themselves ac-

countable to a certain set of values. KWN's Ethical and Accountability Code is a document of principles and benchmarks that support the enhancement of its members' professionalism and effectiveness as organizations working for the public good.

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February Meeting Notes

The meeting started with a moment of silence to mourn the late President Rugova and the letter written by civil society was read.

- o KWN Board reviewed members' recommendations for KWN work in 2005 and 2006.
- o KWN members formed two working groups for 2006 strategic planning (see pg. 1).

- o KWN is drafting a Code of Conduct for members (pg.1).
- o PVPT donated condoms to organizations dealing with premature pregnancy and family planning.

- o UNMIK Police announced cooperation between KWN, Kosova Police Service (KPS), KFOR, and UNIFEM towards implementation of Resolution 1325.

- o Prime Minister's Office for Gender Equality welcomed cooperation with NGOs (pg. 2).

- o The Women's Wellness Center asked for KWN support in asking the government to take more responsibility for supporting shelters. Since the meeting between the shelter managers and the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare in July 2005, nothing has been done.

- o NGO Violete is seeking donations for a new computer.

- o IREX - Civil Society Program announced an open competition for the media to promote gender equality (www.irex-kosova.org). Also, the Foundation for Democratic Initiatives (FDI) announced its second round of grants in March (www.fdi-kosova.org).

- o Serbian women's organization Lepsa Buducnost presented the organization's activities.

- o After the meeting, participants paid their respects to the late President Rugova. RTV21 aired the event in prime time news.

Civil Society Mourns President Rugova's Death

Members of civil society sent the following letter of condolences to former President Rugova's family and the Presidency. It was also read to the people of Kosova on RTV21.

Members of Kosovar civil society assemble to grieve the death of the President of Kosova, Dr. Ibrahim Rugova, expressing their deepest condolences to the Rugova family, to the Presidency and to the people of Kosova.

The late President left us in a most important time, when the foundations of an independent Kosova are being established, a wish of his that we all impatiently await, a wish that includes the formal recognition of a sovereign Kosova, a Kosova that is inclusive and loving to all.

Civil society's path towards the creation of a democratic society and an independent and sovereign Kosova remains unchanged, as it has since the beginning of the '90s.

We, as representatives of civil society, request that all political factions stand united and realize together the dream of the visionary and missionary who dedicated his entire life to the creation of an independent, democratic, and sovereign state of Kosova.

*Kosova Women's Network
Kosova Women's Lobby
KIPRED*



KWN members pay their respects to President Rugova at his gravesite in Prishtina, following the KWN bimonthly meeting on February 6.

*Advocacy Training and Resource Center
Partners Kosova - Center for Conflict Management
The Foundation for Democratic Initiatives*

In Memoriam

Feride Dërvishi, Women's Activist, Passes Away

On 7 January, Feride Dërvishi suddenly passed away in the USA. Her sudden death, at the age of 38, was a great loss for the people of Kosova, its medical society as well as the patients, who were much loved and respected by her.

She was among the rare Albanian women oligofrenologists, dedicated with all her being to a profession that was as idealist as it was human.

Feride was also active in the activities of Kosova's women, the emancipation and the rights of which were not coherent with the time, society and the scale of development in which they lived. The war of 1998-1999 found her on duty, working primarily with internally displaced persons from the Drenica region (where she was born), as well as from Mitrovica, Vushtrri and other regions. She was always smiling, willing and devoted to aid the wounds caused by war,



Feride Dërvishi (1967 - 2006) was a humanist and women's activist who touched many people during her life.

displacement, trauma, stress and other phenomena linked to the situation.

Along with activists from "Motrat Qiriazhi" association, she continued her mission towards lessening the pain felt by the violently displaced people of Kosova. Who would better understand the situation than her? She was constantly alongside the sick, the hungry and the stressed who left their homes, making the open sky their roof and the cold spring

soil their bed.

She knew how to give them comfort and calm them even in the most severe cases, when people lost their closest family members, parents or children, brothers or sisters, loved ones.

Feride cooperated with many humanitarian organizations, including UNICEF, Save the Children, SOROS, Motrat Qiriazhi, OXFAM and Catholic Charities of USA.

May you rest in peace, Feride Dërvishi.

Fahri Buçinca, Vetran of Women's Education

In 1993, accompanied by his wife Naxhije and a group of other devoted teachers, Fahri Buçinca formed the Association of Veterans of Education with the purpose of identifying and then supporting girls from Vushtrri region who had not finished school in continuing their education. During the 1990s, the Serbian Regime closed most schools that were taught in the Albanian language, barring Albanian teachers and students from entering the schools. As educational opportunities deteriorated, teachers mobilized, organizing education in private houses and other premises. Many parents in the villages were confused by the situation, did not trust this informal education and would not allow their daughters to attend classes. A new wave of illiterate youth was created.

"Although I knew the population of the region pretty well, we needed many hours and days to convince parents to let their children of both sexes, but especially girls, attend school," Professor Buçinca said. "We had to explain to parents that a lack of education among children, and especially girls, does not only damage themselves, but also the future of the nation."

Buçinca said that it was not easy for them, as old teachers, walking and traveling around, trying to convince people. However, their belief in the future gave them the motivation to continue. "The window to the future is through the education of our children," he would say.

Slowly, many girls went back



Fahri Buçinca has dedicated his life to educating children, and especially girls, for more than 13 years.

to continue their education. With scholarships donated by local donors, they went on to higher education. A considerable number have graduated and are extremely grateful for the aid provided.

This success was the fruit of tireless work and effort on behalf of Professor Buçinca, Naxhije Buçinca, Faketë Kusari and other teachers who did not spare their age, health or time in providing women and men with better access to education.

The Vushtrri secondary schools, proclaimed Professor Buçinca and Naxhije Buçinca "Honorable Parents," as a couple who never stopped working to bring education to various generations and emancipated a generation that will serve Kosovo in the future.

Through his work over the last 12 years, Professor Buçinca has demonstrated his commitment to equality between women and men. He believes that the family functions in a healthy manner when women take the place they deserve in the family as well as in society.

The Buçincas have educated their children, Xheraldina and Genc, based on their own model of life. They continue to raise their grandchildren the same way, in the spirit of love, understanding and equality.

An Albanian proverb says, "Lost is only when you turn your back on the reality." Professor Buçinca has decided not to turn his back on the continuous struggle for girls to receive a better education and their place as equals in society.

Code of Conduct, Continued from pg. 1

It also provides for a coordinated approach and action towards gender equality and women's rights in Kosovo.

Why have an Ethical and Accountability Code?

Although many NGOs in Kosovo are working hard to serve their communities, a few NGOs have given the entire NGO sector ("civil society") a bad name because

they have misused money or been "donor driven" with their programs. In order for their work to be successful, KWN members need public support. They also depend upon a diverse body of individuals, foundations and donor organizations to provide moral, technical or financial support. Therefore, KWN members must maintain a trusting and trans-

parent relationship with the public as well as their supporters. With the purpose of strengthening public support and trust, KWN members have developed and agreed to follow the KWN Ethical and Accountability Code. This will show their partners, citizens, and donors that they are ethical, accountable, and in service to the public.

Annual Meeting Notes

KWN held its annual meeting in which 95 people participated, including network members, staff, partners and supporters. At the meeting, KWN presented its work for 2005 and presented awards to three members. The participants discussed the 2006 strategy, elected two new board members and evaluated KWN's work over the last year.

2005 Activities Report

The network now has 81 members, making KWN the largest network in Kosovo and the region. In 2005, KWN fulfilled its mission by continuing to build the capacity of KWN; participating in local, regional, and international meetings; cooperating with and advocating in the government; and, cooperating closely with international organizations and donors to organize various campaigns. For specific information about KWN's 2005 activities, please visit: <http://www.womensnetwork.org/KWN%20Reports/reports.htm>.

Strategizing for 2006

Participants separated into working groups to discuss KWN's plans for 2006. Please see the 2006 strategy on pg. 1.

Election of Board Members

KWN members and partners elected two new KWN board members: women's rights activist Marta Prekpalaj from Prizren/Has and Besim Kajtazi from the Legal Office in the Ministry of Public Services.

For the full meeting minutes, please visit www.womensnetwork.org.

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Delina Fico
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"Kosovar Women's Voice" was
written and designed by
Alba Loxha, with assistance from
Nicole Farnsworth.

www.womensnetwork.org

Kvinna till Kvinna Advocates for UNSCR 1325

Stockholm, Sweden, 16 January 2006

To: UN Special Envoy for the future status process for Kosova Mr. Martti Ahtisaari
Copy to: UN Security Council, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, UN SRSG in Kosova
Soren Jessen-Petersen, Swedish Foreign Minister Laila Freivalds

Dear Mr. Martti Ahtisaari,

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation welcomes your comment at the press briefing 23 November saying that you "would welcome more women to participate in the process" of Kosova's future status. We also welcome the message given by your office in Vienna that there will be a good gender balance in the office, including on high level positions, and that the office will ensure that women leaders and organisations in Kosova will be consulted during the status process.

Up until now the International Community has failed to live up to its obligations in Kosova stated in UN Security Council Resolution 1325: to increase the number of women on all decision making levels in their organisations and to involve local women in peace processes. Women have been excluded from almost all high positions within the UNMIK, KFOR, OSCE and PISG and women in the region have too often been excluded from important processes and there are wide implementation gaps regarding policies and laws which should protect women's human rights. One example is the standard process. Even though there are gender indicators for each standard it hasn't lead to any real change for women and girls.

Based on our experience we are extremely concerned that the international community once again fails to respect women's right to fully participate. There are several facts which increase our concerns.

There are no women in the Kosova delegation and only one in the Serbian. Men dominate other formal leading positions in the societies. This threatens to make the process unfair, vulnerable and undemocratic. Furthermore the international community, especially the US, EU and NATO, has so far failed to appoint a woman to any of the four Liaison Officers connected to your office. Russia is yet to publish the name of their Officer.

Special Envoy, Mr. Kai Eides, review of the situation in Kosova was a starting point for the status talks. However his report is gender blind and does not reflect the specific situation and challenges that women and girls face and therefore fails to describe the true situation in Kosova today. This is dangerous for the status talks since it increases the risk for wrong conclusions and misinformed decisions and priorities. The situation for women, cross ethnic and religious lines, is very serious. Strong and deep patriarchal structures, boosted by the order within the international community, create an atmosphere which undermines women's status, security and participation. Men's violence against women is widespread, especially within the family, and there is very little governmental support for the women who dare to challenge the norms and stigma and report the abuses.

Your Deputy, Albert Rohan, has pointed out that the Contact group calls on all parties to reject any form of violence. This must also include the most widespread violence of all, violence against women. Likewise it is pivotal to empower women to end poverty. If women and women's human rights are marginalised there will never be just peace or real security.

In the guiding principles for the future status process for Kosova the Contact Group says that "The settlement of the Kosova issue should be fully compatible with international standards of human rights, democracy and international law and contribute to regional security". To enable this we urge you to: Ensure a gender balance, on all levels, in your office in Vienna; Ensure that women and women's organisations in the region fully and equally participate in the status talks; Ensure that women's situation and their rightful and equal role in the peace and democratic processes is made visible for the different actors involved in the status talks; Ensure that all actors involved in the implementation of the standards respect their obligation according to 1325 and take women and girls situation into account and strengthen women's human rights.

There are many strong women and women's organisations in Kosova and Serbia who for many years have been in the forefront in building peace. They have a crucial role in the future of Kosova and the region as a whole. Their participation is a precondition for democracy. To exclude them would be a great loss for everyone in Kosova and Serbia. We are looking forward hearing from you regarding these questions.

Yours sincerely, Kerstin Grebäck, Secretary General, The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation

News in Brief

Every year, master's students from the European Inter-University Centre for Human Rights and Democratization, based in Venice, Italy, cooperate with students from the University of Prishtina to visit Kosovar institutions as well as the Kosova Women's Network (KWN). On 14 January, they met with KWN representatives at the Humanitarian Information Center where they discussed Kosova's current political situation and the status of women in Kosova.

In December, USAID invited everyone who participated in their Participant Training Program (PTP) in 2005 to receive awards. Those awarded included representatives from the government and civil society. Representatives from KWN who participated in



Prime Minister Bajram Kosumi, US Chief of Mission Phillip Goldberg and USAID Director Ken Yamashita congratulated KWN representatives.

the "Strengthening the Advocacy Capacity of KWN" PTP Program also received awards.