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2006

Kosovar

Women's Voice

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announcements

KWN Annual Meeting.....
.....**Hani i Dy Roberteve,**
Prishtina, 10:30, Dec. 9

**KWN Wishes You a
Happy Holiday
Season!**



www.womensnetwork.org

Marte Prenkpalaj Receives International Prize

Marte Prenkpalaj, a women's activist from Has, along with thirteen other laureates around the world won the Women's World Summit Foundation's Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life for 2006. KWN presented her with the award during a ceremony held on 15 Oct. at the Grand Hotel in Prishtina. Politicians and famous artists performed and spoke in honor of Prenkpalaj's achievement and more than 300 citizens from Prishtina, Has region and Krushe e Vogel village attended the ceremony.

Prenkpalaj was born in the small village of Zym, located in Has region. As a rural woman growing up in the 1970s she fought for the right to an education. There were no secondary schools in Has, and students had to walk two hours to and from school each day, a journey girls were not permitted to make. After a struggle, Prenkpalaj convinced her family to let her attend classes. She completed secondary school and went on to get her teaching degree in Biology and Chemistry.

In 1990, she became involved in an illiteracy campaign for women. Empowered by this experience and motivated by the changes she saw in her community, she became active in establishing the Association for the Education of Women Motrat Qiriazhi in 1995 together with Safete and Igballe Rogova. In 1995 she also became the first female director of a school in the entire Prizren region.

Knowing how hard she had struggled for her education, Prenkpalaj worked with the community to support higher education for women. The community raised funds and secured permits to build schools in their community, so girls and boys would not have to travel so far to receive an education. Prenkpalaj secretly transported funds from the Albanian Diaspora in Croatia to



Marte Prenkpalaj receives international prize for women's creativity in rural life in Prishtina on 15 Oct.

Has at great personal risk, so the community could build a school.

Today, 50% of the teachers in Has are women Motrat Qiriazhi supported in continuing their education in the 1990s. All the medical centers in Has are staffed by women and men educated in Has. "Now-a-days there is no discussion whether girls should continue their secondary education, but rather how to find ways to support them financially so they can continue on to university," Prenkpalaj said.

When the Serbian military invaded Krushe e Vogel village, Prenkpalaj used her tractor to take women and children across the river to safety. After they escaped across the Albanian border, as a refugee, she continued to support women and children.

Upon returning to Kosova, Prenkpalaj worked with women from Krushe who had lost many family members, mourning with them, assisting them with rebuilding their community, teaching them to drive cars and tractors and helping them learn to support themselves.

In the last decade, Prenkpalaj has worked with her community

to establish local health clinics, train local medical experts, build two community centers, construct three secondary schools, install water pipes to connect villages and supply water in every home, open 11 local libraries, pave roads, host Balkan-wide cultural dance competitions, organize volleyball and basketball sports teams for girls and teach hundreds of women to read and write. With her dedication, creativity and courage, she has led her community to say: "We did this ourselves!"

Prenkpalaj continues to involve citizens and sometimes the government in raising funds to meet community needs. Thus, Motrat Qiriazhi has become one of few non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Kosova that does not rely on international funding, but rather receives full support from the community.

Prenkpalaj's activism is exemplary not only for women's NGOs in Kosova, but for rural and urban women's activists around the world. KWN congratulates Prenkpalaj for the much-deserved international recognition she has received.

Nov. Notes

The 2007 priorities to be discussed at the annual meeting are anti-trafficking, empowering women in politics and decision-making positions and women's health.

Habit Hajredini from the Prime Minister's Office of Good Governance (OGG) said the unit for reporting on international conventions was formed and is reporting on economic, social and cultural rights. The governmental group for anti-trafficking, which includes two civil society representatives, created working groups for preventing trafficking and protecting victims. OGG also formed a committee for children's rights led by Prime Minister Agim Çeku and nine other ministries. OGG seeks cooperation with civil society.

Sevdije Bunjaku from Kalabria said their cooperation with KFOR and the Kosovo Police Service resulted in closing a bordello near their center.

Hamijet Dedolli from Protect Victims Prevent Trafficking requested cautiousness in helping victims of trafficking.

Marta Prenkpalaj from Motrat Qiriazî invited members who have important issues or information to appear on TV Opinion in Prizren where Motrat Qiriazî now has a monthly one-hour program, also on TV Opinion's website.

Sakibe Doli from the Safe House said that through their trafficking prevention project, they have worked with women in villages and will work with women in cities, teachers, and perhaps ministries.

Agron Gashi from UNICEF proposed NGOs discuss women's health more.

Naxhije Buçinca from the Veterans of Education Group asked KWN to demand NGOs be released from the Value Added Tax.

Participants discussed forming an anti-trafficking support group.

Regional Women's Lobby Advocate in Vienna

Prominent women politicians and civil society representatives from South East Europe gathered on 9-10 Sept. in Vienna for a meeting on "Negotiation processes and beyond: Women's Summit for Sustainable Peace in South East Europe."

Women from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania and Kosova met to strategize how they could enhance the visibility and impact of women's contributions towards ensuring peaceful and viable solutions to unresolved political disputes in the region. Women analyzed and assessed women's past contributions and their still untapped potential for advancing justice and reconciliation. Women concluded their participation in political processes was crucial for attaining sustainable peace in the region.

After the workshop, some participants met with UN Special Envoy for Future Status Process for Kosova Martti



The Regional Women's Lobby meets with UN Special Envoy for Future Status Process for Kosova Martti Ahtisaari on 10 Sep. to advocate for implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

Ahtisaari and presented the group's statement on the future status process for Kosova. The statement requested full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 that calls upon all state parties to ensure representation of women at all decision-making levels. For the first time, regional women also agreed publicly on Kosovar citi-

zens' right to self-determination.

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) Office for Central and Eastern Europe supported the regional consultation. The workshop was hosted by the Austrian National Committee for UNIFEM and Bruno Kriesky Forum for International Dialogue.

2000 Campaign against Violence against Women T-shirt Travels across Europe



While in Vienna, KWN Executive Director Igballe Rogova saw a man sporting the t-shirt made for the 2000 Kosova Women's Network campaign "Men against Violence against Women." Marsei from France had bought the shirt in Poland and was now wearing it in Vienna. He had never heard of the original campaign in Kosova, but he was spreading the message, "Men against violence against women."

Sep. Notes

The meeting began with members sharing their emotions after the Women's Peace Coalition conference in Struga, Macedonia, "Resolution 1325 of the United Nations Security Council - Women, Peace, Security" and discussing the conference's results.

KWN announced it had visited members to discuss and sign the KWN Ethical and Accountability Code.

The KWN members' pamphlet will soon be published.

Womens Center "Ato" declared that although the organization had not functioned for a long time, they would reopen without donated funds.

The Kosovar Gender Studies Centre announced that the University of Prishtina recently adopted a policy against sexual harassment.

The Women's Wellness Center from Peja signed a contract with the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare for the ministry to support the shelter, but the centre still has not received the money.

The Office for Good Governance announced they are organizing a conference in October on integrating Roma people into Kosovar society. She asked members working on this issue to participate.

Karl Kulesa from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) informed members about an upcoming meeting between UN agencies and civil society for future cooperation.

Women Show Goods at Cultural Heritage Days

On 16-20 Sept., the "European Cultural Heritage Days - Balkan Artisans - Kosova" was held in Prishtina. Artisans showed crafts made of wood, hay, ceramics, weaving, painting, sculpture, filigree, copper, rope, traditional clothing made by women (Albanians, Serbs, Roma, Ashkali, Gorani, Egyptian), and miniature traditional homes (Kulla) which have played a great role in preserving Kosovar cultural heritage. She-era Businesswomen's Association and Open Door (Dera e Hapur) were involved in organizing the event.

The exhibition and fair was attended by many local and international visitors, including representatives from the U.S., Swiss, Greek and British liaison offices. Government officials from the Ministry of Trade and Industry and Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports also attended. The director of the



Two women sew and sell their products at the "European Cultural Heritage Days - Balkan Artisans - Kosova" in Prishtina on 16-20 Sep.

Kosova Museum expressed an interest in showcasing some crafts at the EMINGJIK Museum in Prishtina. Municipal representatives from Prishtina, Gjakova, Peja, Mitrovica, Gjilan, and other municipalities also came.

Many students attended, including those from the Prishtina and Gjilan technical high schools, visited. Students from the textile high school in Gjilan said they planned to make similar crafts in the future. During discussions with organizers, participants expressed their interest in continued professional and technical assistance, such as trainings, advice, craft designs, and promotion of their products.

RTV21, BBC, Kosova Life, FOKUS magazine, Koha Ditore, Bota Sot, Zeri, and Express covered the event. RTV21's broadcasts in Europe and the U.S. led She-era to make contacts with businesspersons interested in selling products in the U.S. market.



Women Present Handmade Goods at Handcraft Fair

In Shkodra, an ancient city beneath the fort of Rozafa, women from Shkodra, Montenegro and Kosova presented clothes and handmade goods during a handcraft fair held on 25-28 Oct.

The fair was organized by the Shkodra Women Intellectual's Association (Gruaja Intelektuale Shkodrane). The association's director, Zejnepe Dibra, opened the fair by stating, "We are from the same trunk, which is why we have the same handmade goods and wears and cooking tradi-

tions. We differ only in the regions that we present."

The representatives from Kosova presented handmade work from Peja, Deçan, Has, and Gollak.

Belgjzare Muharremi, director of Open Door (Dera e Hapur), said she was very pleased when she received the invitation because it was the first time after the war that Kosova took part in a regional handcraft fair. "Kosovar women are known for traditional work with the vek, (an old tool women used for carpet mak-

ing) and knitting," she said. Most women who contributed work for the fair were the heads of their households, she said, so the fair brought them some modest income as well.

Artistic activities were also held during the fair. Safete Rogova wore the traditional Has costume and did a poetry reading. A youth group performed traditional dances from Shkodra region, and another group from Montenegro sang.

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*"Kosovar Women's Voice" was
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KWN organized a meeting with the Global Fund for Women at Hotel Prishtina on 10 Oct.

During the meeting, Angelika Arutyunova-Needham, Global Fund for Women Program Officer for Europe and the Former Soviet States, introduced the fund and its priorities.

The Global Fund for Women (GFW) is a nonprofit grant-making foundation that advances women's human rights worldwide. They are a network of women and men who believe that ensuring women's full equality and participation in society is one of the most effective ways to build a just, peaceful and sustainable world. They raise funds from a variety of sources and make grants to women-led organizations that promote the economic security, health, safety, education and leadership of women and girls.

GFW is working in almost 120 countries around the world. They support groups of women



Angelika Arutyunova-Needham, Global Fund for Women Program Officer for Europe and the Former Soviet States, introduced the fund and its priorities at a meeting with KWN members on 10 Oct. in Prishtina.

working together, organizations that demonstrate a clear commitment to women's equality and women's human rights, organizations that are governed and directed by women, and organizations based outside the United States.

After the GFW presentation,

KWN members discussed their concerns and the problems they face in their communities. Arutyunova-Needham said it was a very fruitful meeting and encouraged members to send projects to GFW. For more information on how to apply for a grant from GFW, visit www.globalfundforwomen.org.

KWN Shares Experiences at Basque Women's Meeting in Spain

On 23-24 Oct., Luljeta Vuniqi represented KWN at an International SARE (Network of Women in Basque) meeting entitled "Women Generating Peace" organized by the Basque Women's Institute (Emakunde) in San Sebastián, Spain.

Emakunde, an organization created by the Basque Parliament and supported by the Presidency of the Basque Government, works in support of equal opportunities for women and men in all areas. Emakunde organizes the annual International SARE Meeting to serve as a forum for discussing equal opportunities, paying tribute to women activists and creating new networks. This year organizers

sought to discuss the role of women in peace processes, especially opportunities for Basque women's participation in their country following the announcement of the permanent ceasefire by the Basque Homeland and Freedom (Euskadi Ta Askatasuna - ETA). By learning from other women activists' experiences in conflict situations and peace negotiations, they hoped to "enlighten" their own peace processes, the organizers said.

During the meeting, Vuniqi spoke on "Women Building Coalitions," providing examples from the women's movement in Kosova and the newly formed Women's Peace Coalition. The Women's Peace Coalition that joined women

activists from the Kosova Women's Network in Kosova and the Women in Black Network Serbia provides an example of how women can put aside geographic boundaries to advocate for women's involvement in peace processes and common political platforms.

Aside from the official program, Vuniqi, Stasa Zajovic from Women in Black Network Belgrade and a representative from Israel met with the parliamentary group for human rights in Vitorias parliament.

For more information about SARE, visit: www.sare-emakunde.com. For more information about Emakunde see: www.emakunde.es.