

# Women's Voice

## what's inside

- 2 WiB Mark Anniversary of UNSCR 1325
- 2 KWN Educate Voters about Women Candidates
- 2 KWN Monitors Election Campaign Promises
- 2 KWN Attends Seminar on GEM & ICT
- 2 Safe House Gjakova Raises Awareness about violence
- 3 KWN Promotes Health, Combats Gender-based Violence
- 3 KWN Networks with Kvinna till Kvinna Partners
- 3 PVPT Opens Library
- 4 Association Kalabria Combats Trafficking, Supports Regional Cooperation
- 4 Open Door Organizes Handcraft Fair
- 4 "Vita-Jeta" Helps Women Pensioners

## announcements

Executive Summary of UNSCR 1325 Report.....  
 Public Release.....  
 ....**Grand Hotel, Prishtina,**  
 .....**Dec. 5, 12am**

**RRJETI I GRUPEVE TË GRAVE TË KOSOVËS**



**KOSOVA WOMENS NETWORK**

[www.womensnetwork.org](http://www.womensnetwork.org)

## Let Us Continue to Make Our Voices Heard!

Dear KWN members, Board members, partners and friends of KWN,

We wish to thank you for your cooperation this year. Thanks to you, we had another successful year in 2007.

On 1 Nov. 2001 we published the first KWN Newsletter with support from The Advocacy Project in the United States. In Nov. we celebrated the sixth birthday of our newsletter, "Kosovar Women's Voice." "Kosovar women on the Internet... Event of the day... Miracle of a time..." the letter began six years ago. A miracle that started long ago, our use of the internet, has continued to grow because we know that information is power. In the world today we can use this power for information-sharing and building bridges of cooperation regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation or ability. This is what we tried to do this again year, and we believe that we succeeded thanks to our close cooperation with you.

Who is a Kosovar woman today? Women in Kosova are demonstrating their courage by playing a vital and integrated role in the political, cultural and economic development of their country. Even though some professions were once taboo for women in our society, thanks to the hard work of women's organizations, many KWN members, women have taken their place in society as professionals, as doctors, journalists, politicians, economists... Today, women are leaders in various spheres of life. Women help and support their fellow women to build decision-making skills and advance their positions within their families and in the workplace.

Women comprise more than 50% of the population in Kosova. They come from different backgrounds: from cities and rural areas, from every level of education and varying economic statuses. Women from all these backgrounds came together more than seven years ago to form a network, a network that year after year continues to grow in its membership, skills and strength. Many people thought that women's organizations "only talk about shopping," but women have proven them wrong, continuing to gather, powerfully uniting towards common causes.

We wish you a great end of the year holiday season and thank you again for the work we have accomplished together. We hope to enter into 2008 with the motto: "Let us continue to make our voices heard!"

With respect,  
 KWN Staff

## Kosovar Women Attends Symposium in Vienna

A representative of KWN, KWN member organizations and women experts representing various professions in Kosova attended a symposium entitled "Shaping our European Future - Networking of Serbian and Kosovar Women" in Vienna on 5-6 Nov. 2007. Women from Serbia and Kosova divided into working groups to discuss issues including "Education - Strategies for Developing a European Identity," "Media - Strategies for Conflict Prevention and Reconciliation by

Changing the Image of the 'Other'" and "Economic and Social Affairs - Strategies for Enhancing Women's Participation." Participants presented their recommendations to Austrian Federal Minister for European and International Affairs Ursula Plassnik and international decision-makers at the end of the conference. At the end of the symposium, participants reaffirmed their commitment to prosperity, stability and security within a united Europe.

### KWN Distributes Executive Summary of UNSCR 1325 Report

On the anniversary of the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, KWN broadly circulated via the internet the executive summary of its monitoring report on the degree to which the Resolution has been implemented in Kosova.

The summary is available at [www.womensnetwork.org](http://www.womensnetwork.org).

The full report will be released on 5 December at the Grand Hotel in Prishtina at 12:00.

## Women in Black Mark Anniversary of UNSCR 1325

On the seventh anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, Women in Black – Belgrade organized a press conference on 31 Oct. at the Sava Center in Belgrade. In 2005, on the fifth anniversary of UNSCR 1325, Women in Black – Belgrade delivered to the Assembly of Serbia a resolution entitled "Women, Peace and Security." The Assembly did not respond, so the request was repeated in 2006. The Assembly has yet to respond. Respect for international standards and conventions is one way for Serbia to actively include itself in the international community, but refusing to implement an important document like UNSCR 1325 shows that Serbia is still not ready to start down the path of democratization, reconciliation and creating a lasting peace, Women in Black – Belgrade stated.

Also to mark the anniversary of UNSCR 1325, Women in Black – Belgrade held a performance entitled "We are Secure when We Can Choose" at Andriæev Venac. They also delivered demands to the Assembly of Serbia.

## KWN Educates Voters about Women Candidates and the New Electoral System

In Nov., KWN cooperated with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and UNIFEM to educate voters about the new election system in Kosova and women candidates running for office. KWN member organizations arranged for meetings attended by more than one thousand citizens representing all ethnic groups

throughout Kosova.

During meetings, KWN members provided tips for using the new open list electoral system, as well as distributed a publication with information about women candidates, prepared by the Centre for Training and Gender Studies. KWN representatives also appeared on local media talks shows to explain the electoral system.

During the elections, KWN also cooperated with the Women's Caucus and women Members of Parliament to discuss how women in civil society could support women in politics to reach voters during their pre-electoral campaigns. For this and other aspects of its cooperation with women in politics, KWN received support from UNIFEM.

## KWN Monitors Election Campaign Promises

Since 1999, Kosovar political leaders have used Kosova's final political status as an excuse for failing to meet citizens' every day needs. Once Kosova's political status is decided, the numerous social issues plaguing Kosovar society will percolate up (e.g., high unemployment, bad roads, inconsistent electricity, and water). Politicians will no longer be able to hide behind a United Nations administration for their failure to meet the

needs of citizens living in Kosova. At the same time, the elections in November employed an open list electoral system, through which citizens elected individuals rather than political parties. The new election system further enabled citizens to hold decision-makers accountable. Now citizens have the power to monitor how individual elected officials, as well as political parties, are meeting their needs and following through with promises made during the

electoral campaign.

In Oct. and Nov. 2007, with support from the Balkan Trust for Democracy, KWN began monitoring the promises politicians and political parties made to citizens in the media during their pre-election campaigns, as well as collecting political parties' platforms. In the future, KWN will use these to help citizens hold elected officials accountable to their promises.

## KWN Attends Seminar on GEM & ICT

On 19-21 Oct., two KWN representatives participated in a regional Gender Evaluation Methodology (GEM) seminar in Sarajevo organized by One World Platform for Southeast Europe (OWPSEE) with support from the Association for Progressive Communications (APC) and ZaMirNet. The seminar aimed to discuss matters related to women's rights with a special focus on integrating gender into Information and Communication

Technologies (ICT). The conference resulted in a new regional online network, through which conference participants planned to share information regularly.



*Participants from region, during seminar on GEM & ICT, held on 19-21 October, in Sarajevo.*

## Safe House Gjakova Raises Awareness about Violence against Women

On 30 Nov., Safe House Gjakova plans to hold a manifestation to recognize the international 16 days of activism against violence

against women. The manifestation to be held in restaurant "Veranda" will include an information session, essays and drawings where youth reflect on the

problem of violence against women. The campaign received financial support from UNFPA via KWN.

## KWN Promotes Health, Combats Gender-based Violence throughout Kosova

Since June 2007, KWN has been actively involved in a project supported by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) entitled "Providing Security, Promoting Health; Combating Gender-Based Violence in Kosova." The project aims to offer support to women and children suffering from gender-based violence throughout Kosova as well as to improve access to quality reproductive healthcare.

While much progress has been made since the end of the war, Kosovo still lacks the necessary infrastructure for supporting women and children suffering from gender-based violence. Since 2000, KWN has been actively involved in addressing this problem, but gender-based violence remains a serious issue.

The existing shelters that protect victims of violence lack sufficient financial support for providing adequate healthcare to victims, protecting them and assisting with their reintegration into society. In addition, there has been a lack of consistent coordination among all actors dealing with gender-based violence. KWN initiated this project in close cooperation with KWN member organizations to meet the great need to establish specific systems of cooperation among safe houses and other key actors, so as to better protect, assist and support victims of violence.

Through this six month project supported by UNFPA, KWN has provided direct support to four shelters in Kosova. Support has enabled shelters to



*Shelters representatives and research team during a training on how to make interviews with their clients, held on 10 October, at KWN office in Prishtina.*

cover some of their basic operational costs not financed by other donors or the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, as well as to provide improved access to healthcare for the women they are sheltering. The shelters have also met regularly to create Kosova-wide standardized procedures for assisting victims of violence and maintaining records for Kosova-wide monitoring. In addition to the shelters, Medica Kosova also received direct support, which it has used to provide health services to women in rural areas, as well as examinations for early detection of breast cancer, a serious health issue affecting women in Kosova.

At the same time, in cooperation with these partner organizations, KWN is conducting exploratory research on the extent of gender-based violence in Kosova and its potential relation to women's reproductive health. The research, the first of its kind in Kosova, aims to provide the

most up-to-date information available on this issue, as well as to pose policy recommendations that will be used in the KWN media/advocacy campaign, implemented in close cooperation with network member organizations. KWN will also use the research recommendations to advocate to relevant institutions for regular support for shelters and policy changes regarding other issues identified through the KWN research.

The media campaign has aimed to raise awareness about the problem of violence against women, its affect on reproductive health and to make public the recommendations identified through the aforementioned action-based research to all relevant actors working to combat gender-based violence.

Through these activities, KWN and its member organizations are trying to reach women and men in rural and urban areas. Therefore the media campaign has involved both local and national media.

### Center to Protect Victims, Prevent Trafficking Opens Library

In Nov., the Center to Protect Victims and Prevent Trafficking in Human Beings (PVPT) opened a library. The mission of the library at PVPT is to offer important resources related to the field of human anti-trafficking; gender equality and women's empowerment; psychology and counseling; organizational management; justice and human rights; education; and other fields.

The library now contains 245 titles, among them 66 books, 51 guides and manuals, 106 reports and 22 laws, plans, programs and declarations from around the world. The library is open to all organizations and individuals dealing with human anti-trafficking, domestic violence, gender equality, women's empowerment and other related fields.

In order to use the materials held in PVPT's library, individuals should register as library members. The PVPT library is open from Monday to Friday 9:00 – 17:00. It will be closed during the weekends and official holidays.

For more information please visit:  
[www.trafikimi.net](http://www.trafikimi.net)

## KWN Networks with Kvinna till Kvinna Partners

On 2-4 Nov., the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation (KtK) held a regional meeting in Albania. Since KtK cooperates with local women's organizations that generate projects themselves on the basis of the needs in their society, they gathered

their partner organizations from Kosova and Albania to discuss women's concerns and how KtK can contribute regionally to addressing these issues. Participants divided in two working groups: women in decision-making and vio-

lence against women. During working groups, women from Kosova and Albania discussed causal factors influencing these issues and how they could cooperate regionally. They also discussed future regional campaigns.

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www.womensnetwork.org

## Association Kalabria Combats Trafficking, Supports Regional Cooperation

This year Women's Association "Kalabria" has been busy. In July, the association initiated a campaign against human trafficking in close cooperation with woman's center "Dera e Hapur" (Open Door). With support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office for Good Governance, Office of the Prime Min-

ister and the Finnish government, they raised awareness about trafficking in Prishtina region.

In another important project entitled "Women of Kosova Joined against Human Trafficking," "Kalabria" cooperated with "Ruka - Ruci" to raise awareness about trafficking. With support from IOM, they used a

performance to spread information about trafficking throughout Prishtina region.

"Kalabria" is also a member of the Women's Peace Coalition. As such, in Sept. representatives of the association participated in Women in Black - Belgrade meetings held in Krusevc and Novi Pazar.

## Open Door Organizes Handcraft Fair

On 28-30 Sept. at the center for Youth and Sports in Prishtina, Women's Center "Open Door" (Dera e Hapur) organized a Kosova handcraft fair called: "Opened Doors - Kosova's Handcrafts 2007," where artisans, women and men of different ethnicities from various regions of Kosova, showed various pieces of work demonstrating Kosova's cultural heritage. The handcrafts were made of and included wood, stone, metal, leather, needlework, paint, ceramics, jewelry, sculpture, musical instruments, copper, flowers and traditional foods.

The fair aimed to promote values of cultural heritage in Kosova, integrate different cultures in Europe, revitalize cultural values and stimulate local trade. Further, organizers hoped to support trade and export of handcrafts as long-term sources of employment for ar-



*Some handmade clothes that were exposed during a Handcraft Fair called: "Opened Doors - Kosova's Handcraft 2007", organized by Open Door on 28-30 September, in Prishtina*

tisans and economic growth.

The activity was part of "The days of European Heritage 2007" held under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport of Kosova in

cooperation with Council of Europe and its implementing partners: "Cultural Heritage Without Borders," "Interos" and "Open Door."

## "Vita-Jeta" Helps Women Pensioners

In the last three months, the Association of Women Pensioners "Vita-Jeta" in Prishtina has worked on a project entitled "Life during the Third Period."

As part of the project, they signed an agreement with Medical Rehabilitation Center "MIGUN BALLKAN" in Prishtina, which has agreed to contribute to improving the health of the association's members,

providing physical therapy free of charge. The association has also made an agreement with the laboratory BioCHEM - Prishtina, enabling the association's members to undergo analyses for half price. BioCHEM has agreed to offer diabetes analyses free of charge to the association's members. In cooperation with Kosova's Humanitarian Association Mother Teresa (Nëna

Terezë), Vita-Jeta procured 100 pairs of glasses bifocals glasses for association members, and in cooperation with NGO "Kosova Charity," Vita-Jeta has secured 24 pairs of tennis shoes for members.

The project received financial supported from UNHCR, Pro-Credit Bank and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, etc.