



# Kosova Women's Network

Serving, Protecting and Promoting the Rights of Women and Girls

## Letter of Support for Activists in Serbia

**The Kosova Women's Network condemns threats and attacks against women's peace activists in Serbia and calls upon the Serb government to immediately condemn such threats, as well as international governments to pressure the Government of Serbia.**

The Kosova Women's Network (KWN) is deeply concerned about the recent violence in Serbia and impact that such nationalist sentiment has on women peace activists. Since the declaration of Kosovo's independence on 17 February, there has been an increase in threats targeting women peace activists in Serbia.

We are particularly concerned about the personal safety of Women in Black activists located throughout Serbia. For more than two decades, Women in Black activists have outspokenly opposed war, militarism, and violence, promoting peaceful resolution to conflict and social responsibility. Women in Black activists have risked their lives defending human rights and international law. They are long-term advocates of human rights and justice for war criminals no matter their ethnic or political background.

Since the end of the wars dividing the former Yugoslavia, they have worked toward a peaceful, democratic future in the region through initiatives like the Women's Peace Coalition that brings together activists from Serbia and Kosovo of all ethnic groups to devise strategies for future cooperation and women's involvement in political decision-making in the region, as well as the Regional Women's Lobby for Peace and Security in South East Europe.

Rather than defending these advocates for peace and democracy, publicly denouncing violence, and ensuring that internationally recognized human rights values are upheld, the Government of Serbia has as much as condoned the violence. It has argued that Serb citizens are upset, which justifies their actions. The Serbian government has lacked political leadership that supports peaceful resolve, freedom of speech, and democratic values.

We call upon the Government of Serbia, particularly the Prime Minister and President, to immediately publicly condemn the harassment, hate speech, and violence targeting women peace activists

We implore international leaders, especially the European Union, to support and protect women peace activists and human rights defenders by immediately pressuring the Government of Serbia to denounce hate speech, harassment, and threats to their personal safety.

Sincerely,

The Kosova Women's Network

*KWN is a network of 81 women's organizations in Kosova, working to support peace, democracy, and women's rights in particular in Kosova, the region and internationally. KWN member organizations have cooperated closely with Women in Black Network activists through the Women's Peace Coalition. For more information, see [www.womensnetwork.org](http://www.womensnetwork.org) or contact Igballe Rogova, Executive Director, [igorogova@yahoo.com](mailto:igorogova@yahoo.com) or [info@womensnetwork.org](mailto:info@womensnetwork.org).*