



Kosovo Women's Network

Serving, Protecting and Promoting the Rights of Women and Girls

2 February 2022

Subject: KWN Seeks Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Dialogue

Dear EU Special Representative for Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue, Mr. Miroslav Lajčák:

Dear Head of EU Office in Kosovo/EU Special Representative Ambassador Tomáš Szunyog:

This week Mr. Lajčák has met with several officials and civil society representatives related to the Serbia-Kosovo Dialogue in Kosovo. We are writing to express our deep concern that, once again, neither the Kosovo Women's Network (KWN) nor, to our knowledge, any activist representing women's rights organisations (WCSOs) has been invited to these discussions. Despite our ongoing close cooperation with the EU as a key partner on many other fronts, including related to women's political engagement specifically, we have not been informed as to whether any WCSOs have been invited or the extent to which Dialogue agendas are including attention to gender equality and issues that women in Kosovo consider priorities for the Dialogue.

KWN is a multi-ethnic network of 189 women's rights organisations from throughout Kosovo, including Albanian, Serbian, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, Turkish, Bosnian, and Gorani women among our members. Our members include rural and urban women of diverse abilities, religions, and positions in Kosovo. We have been recognized among the largest and strongest civil society networks in Kosovo and the Western Balkan region. As a formal Network, we have been engaged in transitional justice and peace processes since we were formed in 2000, and the Rural Women's Network that eventually grew into KWN, has been involved in peace processes in the Former Yugoslavia since 1996. Our work has included making women's voices heard in the negotiations and peace processes, including through parallel dialogues and open letters printed in media, which highlighted women's priorities when women were consistently left out of negotiations and dialogues over the last two decades. In addition to our extensive experience in peace-building, we have published four reports and several papers related to the peace process, including, most recently, [A Seat at the Table](#), which includes diverse women's voices and recommendations for the Dialogue, based on extensive research and conversations with women of all ethnicities.

Despite our broad, diverse constituency, extensive knowledge on the topic, and years of experience working in this area, we are deeply concerned that once again Mr. Lajčák and his team, and those engaged in organising this visit, have not considered it necessary to include KWN, WCSOs or women rights activists among the persons consulted. Kosovo has a very vivid, knowledgeable, and experienced civil society, and women's rights activists' experience and contributions should not be underestimated during discussions of such importance.

We would like to recall that United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNCSR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and several of its "sister" resolutions, as well as the EU's *Strategic Approach to Women, Peace, and Security* all clearly call for consultations with women's rights groups, as well as the direct involve of women in peace processes.



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We acknowledge that a few women leaders such as President Atifete Jahjaga, Editra Tahiri, and Vlora Citaku have been in decision-making related to peace processes. Nevertheless, women have been significantly under-represented among experts and in consultations with diverse women and men more generally (e.g., as part of essential track II diplomacy). Moreover, in the most recent EU-facilitated Dialogue, women's participation is lacking and their views have been under-considered. As we have informed you previously, we remain ready to suggest qualified persons, as well as to support the organising of public consultations, towards a more transparent, inclusive process and lasting peace. Experience worldwide suggests that involving women in peace processes can contribute to lasting peace, as UNSCR and the *EU Strategic Approach* have recognised.

As we, WCSOs, and women generally, continue to be marginalised from these important processes and consultations, we would like to share with you the key points raised by the 434 women from different ethnic groups consulted to inform [*A Seat at the Table*](#):

1. Ensure the meaningful participation of women in decision-making processes related to the Dialogue, through participation in the official negotiation teams, as experts and through public consultations with diverse women and WCSOs; strongly consider involving leading WCSOs with broad constituencies from Kosovo and Serbia on the negotiation teams to push forward the negotiations;
2. Ensure the return and/or transparent, accurate information regarding the fate of all missing persons of all ethnicities;
3. Request that Serbia recognise publicly and apologise for the well-documented crimes committed against civilians by the state;
4. Ensure prosecution of all persons who committed war crimes, including sexual violence perpetrated during the war, thereby ensuring justice in accordance with UNSCR 1325; and
5. Secure compensation and reparations for the destruction of civilians' livelihoods by the government actors responsible, including the return of pensions to the people of Kosovo.

KWN will continue to monitor the implementation of UNSCR 1325 by the EU, Government of Kosovo, and other stakeholders. We hold high hopes that the EU, as our partner, will ensure a democratic, transparent, gender responsive, and participatory process, crucial for lasting peace and security in Kosovo, Serbia, and the region. Thank you for your attention and immediate action to address these issues.

Sincerely,

Igballe Rogova
Executive Director
Kosovo Women's Network