

REGIONAL WOMEN'S LOBBY FOR PEACE, SECURITY AND JUSTICE IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE

Founded in 2006, the *Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in Southeast Europe* brings together women politicians and activists from the region who are committed to the goals of deepening human security, promoting women's rights and participation in decision-making processes and breaking barriers of ethno-centric politics. The Lobby has a total of 27 members from the seven different countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

The RWL's activities focus on lobbying and advocacy at the national, regional and international levels through meetings with politicians, seminars, roundtables, international conferences, press releases and other actions. The RWL is open to requests for information, media inquiries and expertise and advising on a wide range of issues related to Women, Peace and Security in SEE.

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Conference Declaration

June 28, 2010

Skopje, Macedonia - The Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in Southeast Europe held an international conference in Skopje on June 25, 2010 entitled Women and Peace building in the Western Balkans. This year marks the 10th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which calls for the increased participation of women in decision making, security sector and peace-building. The aim of the conference was to discuss the lessons learned in implementing SCR 1325 in the past ten years since its adoption and to prepare a set of concrete and actionable recommendations to present to the UN Security Council at the 2010 Open Debate on 1325 +10. Below is a declaration of principles expressed by the conference participants.

1. **Women's political empowerment and participation in decision-making**

We call on full support for women's participation in politics and decision-making at international and national levels. The empowerment of women political leaders has to be a priority. The next decade should mark a critical shift from words to actions. Implementation of Resolution 1325 and other supporting resolutions should be enforced by additional tools, including clear statements of political will by leaders and measured progress through the Secretary General's Indicators for 1325.

We call on the UN to:

Address this issue in September General Assembly session as a topic of high relevance prior to marking tenth anniversary of 1325.

Establish a *Department for Empowerment of Women in Politics and Decision Making* within the new UN Gender Composite Entity.

UNSC Resolution 1325 "Urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels..."

Allocate sufficient resources for empowerment of women, including special budget lines in all operations for this purpose.

Reiterate that implementation of Resolution 1325 and other supporting resolutions are compulsory for national governments and monitoring and evaluation structures must be implemented.

Prioritize the presence of the Composite Gender Entity in post-conflict environments such as the Western Balkans.

Establish an official reporting structure for 1325 in the same manner as CEDAW, allowing civil society to prepare 1325 Shadow Reports that reflect women's experiences at local levels.

We call on the EU to:

Prioritize support for regional women's advocacy organizations in Southeast Europe.

Appoint a Special Representative for Implementing SCR 1325.

Support consolidation of UN and EU policy on gender equality and 1325.

Support the creation of an official Roadmap towards 1325 implementation in Southeast Europe.

Ensure that EU Progress Reports on southeast Europe countries have gender issues mainstreamed in each section.

We call on National Governments to:

Take substantial steps in empowering women in decision-making. The figures in our region speak of underrepresentation of women at all levels (less than 5% in all countries at the executive level, less than 22% at parliamentary level). Governments should implement rule of law, hence the law on gender balance should be implemented with no delays.

Mark the tenth anniversary of 1325 by special parliamentary sessions to address the issue of empowering women and reconfirm commitment to 1325 by drafting 1325 National Action Plans.

Pass electoral legislation that takes into consideration women's perspectives, gender equality and quotas.

Use gender responsive budgeting analyses to identify inequalities and formulate strategies on addressing these structural inequalities.

UNSC Resolution 1325 "Urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels..."

Allocate sufficient resources for women's empowerment, women's human rights and women's needs through a special budget line.

Improve cooperation between its own organs, civil society and international organizations.

Include basic human rights, peace and gender awareness within the education system.

Support increased commitment to combating human trafficking in the region and its links to insecurity, organized crime and corruption.

Establish councils for civilian oversight of the security sector that prepare reports to parliament.

We call on Political parties to:

Increase representation of women in party leaderships. There should be a quota for women representation in harmony with national laws on gender equality and SCR 1325.

Provide strengthened support for women candidates in their political campaigning plans.

2. Women in peace processes

Women should be given a greater role in peace processes, peace negotiations and peace-building. Existing practices must change and mechanisms must be developed to ensure that women are included in all political and constitutional negotiations relevant to the national interests of their country.

3. Women in security sector

Women's participation in the security sector must be increased: in policy making, in national security institutions of countries, in monitoring bodies and in police and military and peacekeeping missions. The women already active in the security sector at national and international levels should have support for building their capacities.

4. Women and economic security

The high rate unemployment of women must be addressed. National policies should ensure gender balance in employment. National governments and the international community should support women entrepreneurs and women's economic capacities.

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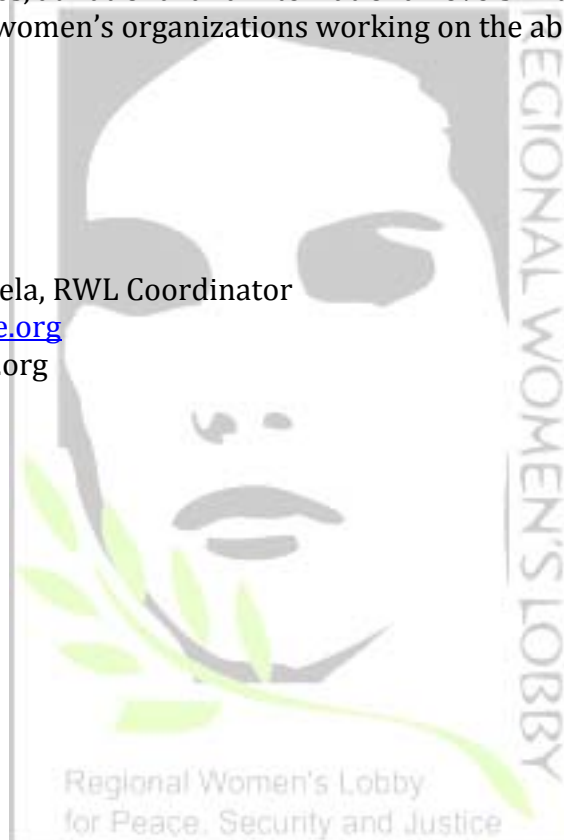
5. Women Minorities and Reintegration

Special support should be provided to increase participation of women of ethnic minorities in politics and government. Also, special care and support must be provided for women returnees, particularly through the development of education and economic programmes at the national and international level.

6. Women's Civil Society

Mechanisms must be implemented to ensure the participation of women's civil society in all policy making and decision making processes, in harmony with democratic principles, at national and international levels. International and national funding of women's organizations working on the above issues must be strengthened.

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