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REGIONAL WOMEN'S LOBBY for PEACE SECURITY and JUSTICE in SOUTH-EAST EUROPE (RWL SEE)

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April 7, 2016

### **RWLSEE's reaction to the discriminatory statement by Mr. Jakup Krasniqi**

In view of the recent interview given by Mr. Jakup Krasniqi in which he shamelessly discriminates against women participating in Brussels Dialogue, our Regional Women Lobby wants to condemn this sort of arguments. While Mr. Krasniqi is entitled to his opinion regarding the Brussels negotiation, it is unacceptable that his argument is grounded on the gender of those participating in such process. For centuries women have been discriminated in politics and in all areas of life with arguments of this sort. Women have been treated as weaker or inferior gender and many along such history have used this argumentation as a tool to ignore and silence the voice of women within various political processes.

In October 2000, the UN Security Council approved the 1325 resolution that urges all actors to increase women participation in decision-making and in peace and security. In October 2013, the 2122 resolution reiterated the importance of the engagement of women in conflict prevention, resolution and peace-building. We have gone a long way since the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) approved in 1979. These are the international norms that Mr. Krasniqi has not only disregarded but also violated.

We are concerned with the sort of misogynist arguments as those expressed by Mr. Krasniqi because they are oriented to deprive women from their role on the political decision-making processes. It is because women are not treated as equal partners of men but rather as their inferior that some decide to point fingers to the gender of those engaged in the Brussels Dialogue instead to discuss their ideas and strategies. In light of this, we feel disturbing that a public figure makes an excuse to discriminate women.

Krasniqi's case reflects the roots of worldwide reality of women engagement in peace-building processes. The UN report of 2010 and 2012 on Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations<sup>1</sup> informed that only 9 % of negotiating delegations are women, and only a 4% is signatory in peace-processes, while women is absent from "chief mediating roles in UN-brokered talks". Kosovo case is therefore an outstanding example from which we all in the region should feel proud of. Kosovo has been the only country in the region that engaged women in leadership position in the negotiation process in 1999 Rambouillet Conference

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<sup>1</sup> See "Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: connections between presence and influences", UN Women 2010 first edition, 2012 second edition, <http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2012/10/wpssourcebook-03a-womenpeacenegotiations-en.pdf>

and the current one since it started in 2011. The same report shows that in our region there was never any more women in lead negotiator position. In Croatia 1995, there was women participation of 11% within the negotiation teams; in Macedonia 2001, 5%, in Kosovo 1999, 3%; Bosnia 1995, 0%. Not only women has been low in number as team members but also they have been absent as witnesses, peace signatories and most importantly, as lead negotiators.

If male political actors continue arguing that women are not suited for political decision-making and actively discriminate women in such positions, the participation of women in discussing the relevant agenda of security and peace will continue to be neglected in the world and in our region. Brussels Dialogue has been the exception for the Balkans. Part of the political task of advancing peace and security in this area is to end violence and discrimination against women, and part of finishing with such practices is standing against the excuses to such discrimination that political actors do in public media as we can see in this unfortunate example of Mr. Krasniqi.

It is with this concern at hand that the RWLSEE stands today against this discriminatory argument of Mr. Krasniqi.

#### **Members of the Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in the Southeast Europe (RWL SEE):**

**Albania:** Marieta Zace, , Eglantina Gjermeni, Majlinda Bregu

**Bosnia and Herzegovina:** Memnuna Zvizdić, Nada Tesanović, Meliha Alić, Ismeta Dervoz

**Croatia:** Grodana Sobol, Morana Paliković Gruden, Lovorka Marinović

**Kosovo:** Edita Tahiri, Teuta Sahatqija, Luljeta Vuniqi

**Macedonia:** Irina Pockova, Teuta Arifi, Savka Todorovska

**Montenegro:** Nada Drobnjak, Slavica Striković, Ljubomirka Mira Asović

**Serbia:** Sonja Biserko, Natasa Mičić, Liljana Radovanović, Stasa Zajović

*The Regional Women's Lobby (RWL) for Peace, Security and Justice in South –East Europe was established in 2006 with facilitation from UNIFEM, now UN Women. The Lobby promotes advocacy and political action to advance peace and stability in the region, including full implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, which calls for increased representation of women at all decision-making levels. The group includes members of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. Its members are prominent women leaders, including politicians, members of parliaments, holders of governmental or public positions, as well as representatives of civil society.*