



REGIONAL WOMEN'S LOBBY for PEACE SECURITY and JUSTICE in SOUTH-EAST EUROPE (WWW.RWLSEE.ORG)

Letter from the RWLSEE to the Brussels Dialogue facilitator and parties, EU, Kosovo and Serbia

July 15, 2020

To the attention of:

Josep Borrell Fontelles

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Miroslav Lajcak

EU Special Representative for the Serbia-Kosovo Dialogue and other Western Balkan regional issues

Avdullah Hoti

Primeminister, Republic of Kosovo

Aleksandar Vucic

President, Republic of Serbia

CC: Richard A. Grenell

US Presidential Envoy for the Kosovo-Serbia Dialogue

Subject: Call for a gender inclusive peace agreement and necessary equal participation of women in negotiating table in the Brussels Dialogue on the normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia

Dear officials of the Brussels Dialogue,

Regional Women's Lobby in South East Europe (RWLSEE) welcomes the resuming of the dialogue on normalization of relations between Kosovo and Serbia with the facilitation of Germany, France and the European Union and the support of the United States, which has taken place virtually on 12 July 2020, after the stall of this process in the past two years. We are glad to see that this peace process is back on track and, its continuation on 16 July 2020 in Brussels.

We truly hope and encourage for the final peace agreement on the normalization of relations between Serbia and Kosovo to be achieved soon, given that it has been almost 10 years of talks, which started in 2011 and have not come to an end yet.

We call for the final peace agreement to contribute to sustainable peace and stability in the region where peace is still fragile and to speed up the European and Euro-Atlantic integration of countries in the region ensuring a better future for all.

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We emphasize that the final international agreement between Kosovo and Serbia must be based on the European and Euro-Atlantic principles and it must result in a mutual recognition between two states, Kosovo and Serbia, as the only way to reach a sustainable peace in the Balkans. The new realities and new states born out of former Yugoslavia's disintegration must be accepted and recognized. The ruling out of dangerous ideas on border changes or land swap between two states, which was established in the Berlin Summit in 2019 and embraced recently by the EU, ensures that the Western Balkans is saved from new instabilities and from any unforeseen tragic consequences. RWLSEE has always been against such dangerous ideas since the beginning and we are very happy to see they ended.

RWLSEE has supported the Brussels Dialogue and has highly valued the reached agreements, while it provided concrete support in the promotion of this peace process and the implementation of agreements through its platform for dialogue between women politicians and parliamentarians for Kosovo and Serbia and the region of Western Balkans as well, which has been going on for over ten years now.

This second track peace process provided by the RWLSEE was ongoing even in the past two years when the formal dialogue in Brussels was stalled. It showed the women's vision and commitment for peace and peaceful relations in the region and for moving the region towards a brighter future; thus not letting the tragic past stay in the way of creating the future that should be the one of peace, democracy, prosperity, justice, reconciliation and good neighbourly relations.

However, we have not been satisfied with women's under-representation in the formal peace dialogue held in Brussels in the past years and neither with the gender sensitive quality of agreements. We consider that this practice must change in order to ensure equal participation and representation of women in delegations of both parties as well as of facilitators, and gender sensitive outcomes as well.

Therefore, the RWLSEE calls for formal peace processes to integrate gender inclusive agreements and necessary equal participation of women around negotiating tables, with a specific request on the Brussels dialogue authorities from Serbia, Kosovo and EU. The normalization of the relations between Kosovo and Serbia must be achieved for the sake of lasting peace and stability in the region and its European future; therefore, the women's role in this process is crucial given women's capacities as peace drivers.

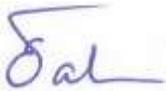
In our peace dialogues of second track, we observed that women politicians and MPs from Kosovo and Serbia came to conference and discussed in a dialogue spirit, showing an increasing culture of peace, a culture of dialogue and a culture of respecting diversity. They showed readiness of taking the responsibility for making peace and not letting the open bilateral issues become a burden for young generations who need prosperity rather than having problems.

This year marks two historic anniversaries on gender equality and women, peace and security agenda: the 25 years of Beijing Platform for Action, where one of 12 critical areas is the women's role and contribution in peace building processes, as well as the 20 years of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Hence, we expect that the Brussels Dialogue will undertake break ground changes in favour of gender equality.

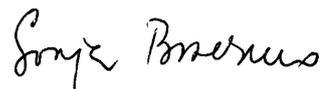
Without the women's contribution in the peace building processes, there will not be a sustainable and inclusive peace process which is the key to fragile peace and democracies in the Western Balkan.

We remain hopeful that our request will be taken into serious consideration and it will result in gender inclusive peace process and outcomes in the Brussels Dialogue.

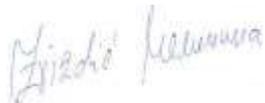
Sincerely yours,



Edita Tahiri
Chairperson
Kosovo



Sonja Biserko
Member of Steering Committee
Serbia



Memnuna Zvizdic
Member of Steering Committee
Bosnia and Herzegovina



Nada Drobnjak
Member of Steering Committee
Montenegro



Gordana Sobol
Member of Steering Committee
Croatia



Eglantina Gjermeni
Member of Steering Committee
Albania



Irina Pockova
Member of Steering Committee
Macedonia



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The Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in Southeast Europe (RWLSEE) was established in 2006 with the support of UN Women (then UNIFEM). The RWLSEE is a regional women organization for gender equality, peacebuilding and Euro-Atlantic integration of the countries in the Western Balkans region, through having women play a central role. RWLSEE promotes political and advocacy actions to advance peace and stability, justice and reconciliation in our region of a troubled past, including the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, which calls for a large representation of women at all levels of decision making. The organization is composed of women from seven countries of Western Balkans; Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. The members are prominent women leaders, including politicians, members of parliaments and governments, holding high governmental or public positions, as well as representatives of civil society.