



REGIONAL WOMEN's LOBBY for PEACE SECURITY and JUSTICE in SOUTHEAST EUROPE-RWLSEE (<http://rwlsee.org/>)

PRESS RELEASE

Women in the Western Balkans call for peace agreements to become a reality and for women's equal participation in formal peace processes that lead to sustainable peace, security and stability in the region and beyond, at the Regional Conference led by Edita Tahiri

(Skopje, North Macedonia, May 22-23, 2026) The Regional Women's Lobby in South East Europe (RWLSEE) and INTEGRA have organized the Regional Dialogue Conference on the topic "Translating Peace Agreements into Reality: Women Lead Sustainable Peace in the Western Balkans", supported by the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Foundation (WPHF) RRW and UN Women, held on 22 May 2026 in Skopje, North Macedonia.

The Regional Conference was held in the context of these sensitive times accompanied by crises, conflicts and geopolitical tensions in the world and the region, as well as taking into account the stalled implementation of the 2023 Brussels Peace Agreement (Ohrid Implementation Annex), and the under-representation of women in leadership, decision-making and formal peace processes.

This Conference provided the platform for high-level regional dialogue between women parliamentarians from Kosovo and Serbia and civil society activists from wider region, mediated by RWLSEE, enabling women's call for the resumption of the implementation of the peace agreement reached at the Brussels Dialogue in 2023 and it's full implementation for the sake of sustainable peace in the region and beyond, as well as for the necessity of gender equality in peacemaking and peace-building to be heard by the public, decision-makers and policymakers and the Brussels Dialogue Authorities (EU, Kosovo, Serbia), with a strong emphasis that peace cannot come with papers and without women, but with political will and by having women in peace negotiations table.

The opening of the Conference began with the plenary session with welcoming remarks by Edita Tahiri, former Deputy Prime Minister of Kosovo and Chair of RWLSEE, and Kushtrim Koliqi, Director of INTEGRA.

The conference was addressed virtually by keynote speakers, prominent international personalities: 1. Caroline Ziadeh, Permanent Representative of Lebanon to the United Nations Office at Geneva; 2. Peter Sorensen, EU Special Representative for the Kosovo-Serbia Dialogue, who sent a Letter to the Conference, namely to Edita Tahiri, Chair of RWLSEE, read at the

Conference by his envoy Andrea Slomsek; 3. Tonni Ann Brodber, Head of the WPHF Secretariat; 4. Dr. Natalia Peral Maccaroni, international expert on the Balkans and the WPS Agenda as well as RWLSEE's expert. The keynote speakers delivered visionary and highly inspiring speeches, setting the tone for the Conference, inspiring participants and receiving strong applause.

Edita Tahiri expressed gratitude to the keynote speakers for their important contribution to the proceedings of the Conference, she thanked in particular Peter Sorensen, who in his letter announced the establishment of the Women's Advisory Board as a formal part of the Brussels Dialogue.

Edita Tahiri said that today we wrote history, we established official links between formal peace processes and informal peace processes, namely between the Brussels Dialogue and the RWLSEE's Regional Women's Dialogue Platform for Peacebuilding, where the main component is the Dialogue between women parliamentarians of Kosovo and Serbia and civil society from the wider region, which has been operating for more than twenty years.

The Regional Conference addressed the challenges of fragile peace, security and stability in the region and the consequences of the stalled implementation of peace agreements, the absence of women in the Brussels Peace Dialogue and the lack of gender provisions in peace agreements, the importance of regional cooperation for peace and European and Euro-Atlantic integrations as well as the way forward towards sustainable peace, inclusive transitional justice and societies, emphasizing that sustainable peace agreements and peace do not come with words or on paper but with their full implementation and only when women are fully and equally included in formal peace negotiations, as required by the WPS Agenda in line with UNSCR 1325, the Beijing Platform and the PfA and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

It also focused on promoting gender-inclusive peacemaking and peace-building, calling for informal peace processes (track 2 peace processes) to be considered as an official part of formal peace processes by international mediators and negotiating parties to ensure sustainable peace, given the recognized peace potential of women and their added values, including providing legitimacy to peace processes and implementing peace agreements, as women are directly linked to their local communities.

The conference conducted its proceedings through four thematic panels related to advancing the role of women in peacemaking and building a sustainable peace in the Western Balkans and in the world.

The conference continued with working group sessions to prepare recommendations, which were discussed and approved in the plenary session with the aim of sharing them with policymakers, decision-makers at the national, regional and international levels, and the public.

The Conference approved the RWLSEE's "Shadow Mechanism"s for Monitoring the Implementation of the Peace Agreements reached in Brussels, which would be submitted to the EU Facilitator for the Brussels Dialogue for cooperation, for which a preliminary understanding had been reached between Edita Tahiri and Peter Sorensen. Sorensen's letter confirmed the formalization of this cooperation, namely the establishment of an official link between formal peace processes and informal peace processes as a contribution to inclusive peace and inclusive societies - a path towards sustainable peace.

After the Regional Conference, a local-regional level Conference entitled "From Inclusive Processes to Inclusive Peace" was held the next day. This conference provided a platform for dialogue among women at the local level in the regional context. The conference emphasized that peace is built from a "Bottom-up" approach, because this ensures legitimacy and ownership over the implementation of peace agreements.

The overall objectives of both Conferences were to promote the Women, Peace and Security agenda, gender equality in politics, decision-making, leadership and official peace processes, and regional cooperation as a path that accelerates sustainable peace, European and Euro-Atlantic integration of the countries of the region and the wider region,

The participants of both Conferences discussed, provided important ideas and recommendations in a constructive atmosphere, contributing to the strategy for strengthening the equal participation of women in politics, decision-making and leadership in all areas of public life, especially in formal peace processes, as well as in the integration of gender approaches in policy-making, peacemaking and peacebuilding.

Conference participants have included women in politics and civil society, from parliaments, governments, representatives of international partners, experts, practitioners, researchers, members of the RWLSEE's Steering Committee Members from RWLSEE focus countries such as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and UN Agencies, UN Women and other international organizations.



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The Conference was attended by: Edita Tahiri, Kushtrim Koliqi, Alenka Verbole, Andreja Slomsek, Anna Oreg, Arbana Pasholli, Arberesha Dedinja, Ariana Musliu Shoshi, Arta Desku, Angelina Buzarovska, Caroline Ziadeh, Diana Cekaj-Berisha, Edlira Cepani, Flora Macula, Gordana Comic, Gordana Nestorovska, Irina Pockova, Ioannis Psimopoulos, Jelena Banjac, Jelena Markovic, Jovana Trencavska, Liridona Beqiri, Klementina Meci, Katarina Adjancic, Marina Duhani, Melita Mulic, Melita Petrova, Memnuna Zvizdic, Milena Maneva, Milica Pralica, Mimoza Ahmetaj, Nada Drobnjak, Nargis Azizova, Natalia Andrea Peral Maccaroni, Olivera Milosevic, Oumou Diawara, Reyes Charle Cuellar, Rine Abrashi, Rozafa Ukimeraj, Sadbere Vllasaliu, Savka Todorovska, Shefkije Mehmeti, Natasa Dokovska, Nadire Selman, Olga Stamenkova, Olgica Avramovska, Rosana Stamenkova, Shpresa Muharremi, Slavica Radovanovic, Slavica Stanojlovic Urosevic, Slavica Strikovic, Snezana Jakovljevic, Sonja Biserko, Sonja Pernat, Taibe Canolli Brajshori, Tonni Ann Brodber, Vetone Velu, Verka Gakeva, Vesna Ivanovikj-Castarede, Visare Berisha-Shabani, Vlora Tuzi Nushi.

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