

REGIONAL WOMEN'S LOBBY FOR PEACE, SECURITY AND JUSTICE IN SOUTHEAST EUROPE (RWL SEE)

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 23 members from the 7 different countries of the region: 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 advice on a wide range of issues related to Women, Peace and Security in SEE.

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Meeting Declaration

Istanbul, Turkey

December 10, 2012

The Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in Southeast Europe (RWLSEE), in support of a dialogue between women Members of Parliament (MPs) from Kosovo and Serbia, organized a Meeting on December 10, 2012 in Istanbul, Turkey.

With the support of UN Women and the Embassy of Finland in Prishtina, the RWLSEE organized the regional women's meeting on the "Status of women, their impact on regional cooperation and European integration", during which, women politicians, parliamentarians and civil society activists from the RWL member countries discussed the increased role of women in fostering regional cooperation and European integration of the region. The central part of this meeting was focused on the dialogue between women parliamentarians from Kosovo and Serbia, which was held in a very constructive spirit.

Women MPs from Kosovo and Serbia and RWL members participating in the meeting established a joint declaration as follows:

- ❖ We, the participants of the RWL regional meeting held in Istanbul, express our commitment to work together towards the goals of advancing the status of women in South-Eastern Europe, fostering regional cooperation and the European integration for the region.
- ❖ We call on all countries in the region to increase their support for the empowerment of women in decision making, peace and security processes, for the sake of true democracy and a just society. Women represent half of the human capital in the region, and there should be investment in women to realize their potential to improve democracy and development in our region.
- ❖ We consider that dialogue and regional cooperation are values that contribute to building sustainable peace and stability in the region, and speed up the European integration process; therefore we call on all countries in the

region to show more political will for realizing these values as they serve the interest of the region and the EU agenda.

- ❖ We support the dialogue on normalization of relations, facilitated by the European Union and supported by the US, between Prime Minister Hashim Thaçi and Prime Minister Ivica Dačić, and strongly believe that it will contribute to peace and stability in a region which has a troubled past.
- ❖ We welcome the beginning of implementation of the IBM¹ agreement reached in the EU facilitated Technical Dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, and call on parties to continue to fully implement this Agreement that provides for the European model of cooperation between countries, to the benefit of freedom of movement of people and goods and better control and security.
- ❖ We strongly believe that it is in the best interest of the region that all countries will be guided by European policies, in the joint path towards European integration.

¹ One party recognizes the line as a border; the other party recognizes the line as an administrative boundary