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STATISTICS ABOUT VIOLENCE STILL DOMINANTLY FEMALE

Youth Group of the CentrE for Civic Education (YGCCE) in occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women uses the opportunity to point out, once again, the existence of the problem of violence against women within the Montenegrin society, but also the need for more serious approach to this topic in order to create conditions for safe lives of woman who have suffered violence, as well as systematic assistance to all the women who have been suffering violence to get liberated from it.

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women was firstly established in 25 November 1981 and the UN, governments and NGOs around the world use the day to invite all social actors to get involved in activities aimed at preventing of violence against women. At first feminist meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean, which was held in Bogotá (Colombia), from 18 to 21 July 1981, the 25 November has been declared for International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. ‘Feminist meetings’ were the conferences of feminists from Latin America who gathered every two to three years in Colombia in order to exchange experiences and to reflect on the status of the women's movement. At that first feminist meeting, women resolutely condemned all forms of gender-based violence, from beatings in family, raping, sexual harassment, violence committed by the state, including torture and maltreatment of women who are political prisoners. The 25 November was chosen to commemorate the murder of Mirabal sisters (Patria, Minerva and Maria Teresa) happened on 25 November 1960. Mirabal sisters have operated under the name ‘Las Mariposas’ (Butterflies) and because of the revolutionary activities and fight for democracy and justice they were arrested several times. Mirabal sisters were murdered by the dictatorship of Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic. In 1999, the United Nations, officially recognized 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Recent surveys have shown that women are dominantly present among the victims of violence in the Montenegrin society. That violence usually lasts for years (the largest number of women victims of violence, more than 70%, seeks the way out from the violence just after many years of abuse) whereupon a total devastation of women personality occurs preventing her to continue with her normal personal and social life.

Respect of women in Montenegrin society is still mostly declarative. Discrimination on the grounds of sex, misogyny and underestimating of the importance of investing effort to improve women's rights and achieve gender equality are firmly enrooted in the patriarchal and traditionalistic approach towards women which is quite difficult to change despite a



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solid legal framework. This environment causes the consideration that tackling of rights of women is considered as women whim, and not real need of the society that pleads to be democratic. If more than 70% of the respondents in the research replies to agree with the statement saying that the primary role of women in society is to be a good wife and mother, if every fourth respondents (male) states that violence against women is justified in certain situations, that violence is the guilt of a women that suffers it because she is not able to leave the abuser, that the women is to be blamed for beating because she caused it by her behavior, it is clear that we deal with a social climate in which violence against women is acceptable because it is in the service of a woman to be good and obedient.

Youth Group of CCE appeals to the responsible within the institutions to understand that family violence, besides women, causes suffering also to other family members and especially children, who often witnessing but also suffering domestic violence. This is a problem of all of us because it represents an obstacle in achieving equality, equal access to human rights and in the final instance development of the society. Institutions are obliged to take all measures prescribed by law to protect women who are being abused, no matter where it happens and by whom it is done. Greater efforts need to be invested in order to create conditions for the establishment of new supporting mechanisms for woman victims of violence, better cooperation between institutions and NGOs dealing with violence against women in terms of securing sustainability to programs aimed at raising awareness about the problem of women victims of violence, but also the rights of women in general. **It is particularly important for institutions to stop with ignoring these issues and tolerating violence because data show that the number of reported cases of violence against women getting higher from year to year until there is a huge gap between the number of reported and prosecuted cases. This clearly indicates that the penal policy is more lenient than the law prescribes which allows the violators to receive the minimum sentence sending in that way a terrible message that violence is a legitimate and socially acceptable.**

Montenegro signed the new Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating family violence and violence against women, which is the first legally binding international instrument that provides comprehensive protection from this kind of violence. Therefore, its ratification as soon as possible, as well as securing its immediate implementation in practice is of great importance for the solving of this problem that burdens our society and more efficient path toward the EU.

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