

STATEMENT

URGENT MEASURES NEEDED!

ANOTHER FAILURE TO PREVENT AND PROTECT VICTIMS OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE!

TO:

His Excellency Mr. Ilir Meta, **THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA,**

THE PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA,

Att: Mr. Gramoz Ruci, Spokesperson of the Parliament of the Republic of Albania,

Mr. Edi Paloka, Deputy Spokesperson, Parliament of the Republic of Albania,

Mrs. Vasilika Hysi, Deputy Spokesperson, Parliament of the Republic of Albania,

Subcommittee “On gender equality and prevention of violence against women” of the Parliamentary Committee responsible for Labor, Social Issues and Health, ,

THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ALBANIA,

His Excellency, Mr. Edi Rama, Prime Minister

Mrs. Ogerta Manastirliu, Minister of Health and Social Inclusion

Mrs. Etilda Gjonaj (Saliu), Minister of Justice

Mr. Fatmir Xhafaj, Minister, Minister of Interior

Another shocking news for girls and women in Albania. The 21-year old, third-year Law student at Tirana University, Ariela Murati, lost her life due to violence. Just a few days ago, an attempted murder took place against a 14-year-old girl from her adult relative. Paola Bisha, another 21-year old was also murdered under similar circumstances in Vlora, in 2015.

These cases show how important it is to take urgent measures that aim to increase reporting on all forms of gender based violence, including threats to commit acts of violence both in the domestic context and the public one.

Urgent measures need to be taken to raise awareness among Albanian population on gender equality. No one has the right to consider girls and women as their property. The right of girls and women to refuse a forced relationship or marriage, as well as the right to interrupt these relationships, is a human right and an expression of personal liberty and should be respected as such by everyone.

Members of the Monitoring Network against Gender Based Violence strongly call upon all actors of the Albanian society to take the following measures:

- **First**, the national legislation needs to be revised to provide for emergency protection measures not only for cases of domestic violence, but for all forms of violence against women. This is an obligation stemming from Article 53 of the Council of Europe Convention “On Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence” (Istanbul Convention) and GREVIO’s¹ recommendations to Albania, which require that protection measures (emergency barring orders) are available to victims of all forms of violence.
- **Second**, the responsible authorities at the national and local levels should undertake coordinated actions to eradicate harmful social and gender stereotypes and attitudes that condone gender based violence.
- **Third**, the management of many cases of violence is ineffective as the result of lack of coordination among relevant institutions. Thus, these institutions in collaboration with civil society organizations should take more effective and coordinated measures to raise awareness, prevent violence and offer specialized support services for victims of all forms of gender based violence.
- **Fourth**, we, civil society organizations, call upon every girl and woman who feels threatened, scared and is a victim of violence in the domestic context and not only, to report without hesitation these cases to the police and civil society organizations that offer services to women victims of violence. On the other hand, the police authorities need to be better prepared to properly address the cases of threats and thoroughly assess potential risks in order to prevent violence.

¹ Group of Independent Experts in Charge of Monitoring the Istanbul Convention

- **Fifth**, the responsible institutions at the national and local levels, in collaboration with active CSOs working on ending violence against women, should undertake awareness raising campaigns that help prevent these extreme cases of violence. Media should also play an important role in this context by not reporting these cases as “crimes of passion” but as gender based crimes.
- “The Monitoring Network against Gender Based Violence” consisting of a group of active CSOs in the field of gender equality, gender based violence including domestic violence, will make every effort and engage every day to avoid having another Ariela, Paola or Liljana killed from gender based violence. This network will intensify its efforts to address all forms of gender-based violence in collaboration with all responsible actors and authorities at the national and local levels including the Albanian Parliament.

Members of the Monitoring Network against Gender Based Violence

1. Center for Civic Legal Initiatives
2. AWEN – Albanian Women Empowerment Network
3. Women to Women Organization, Shkodër
4. Gender Alliance for Development Centre (GADC), Tiranë
5. Me, the Woman, Pogradec
6. Agritra Vizion, Peshkopi
7. Woman Forum Elbasan
8. Jona Organization, Sarandë
9. Office for Boys and Men, Shkodër
10. Human Rights in Democracy Centre (HRDC)
11. Network of Community Centers “Today for the Future”
12. “Different and Equal”
13. YWCA Albania
14. Institute of Social and Economic Development
15. Albanian Institute on Public Affairs
16. Albanian Center for Population and Development
17. Mary Ward Loreto Foundation
18. Albanian Committee of Helsinki
19. “Children of Today” Center
20. Albanian Group for Human Rights
21. National Center for Social Services
22. Center for Psychosocial Services “Vatra”
23. Roma Women Rights Centre
24. Albanian Disability Rights Foundation
25. Organization of Professional Women Organization
26. “In the Family for Family” Center
27. National Organization of Social Workers

28. Organization for Persons who live with HIV/AIDS
29. Organization for Women with Social Problems
30. National Organization "STOP – AIDS"
31. Reflections Organization
32. Integrated Legal Practices and Services Center
33. Counselling Line for men and boys;
34. National Counseling for Women and Girls, 116117;
35. Center "Free legal Service" TLAS.
36. The Voice of Children"
37. 'Ad Litem'
38. Center for the Rights of Children in Albania – CRCA
39. ALO 116;
40. Pink Embassy / LGBT Pro Albania;
41. "Woman Towards Integration"