

R E P O R T

ON

**THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE “WOMEN LEADERS AND SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT – GENUINELY EQUAL”**

**ORGANISED ON 2-3 OCTOBER 2019 BY THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR,
EMPLOYMENT, VETERANS AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

International Conference “Women Leaders and Sustainable Development – Genuinely Equal” was held on 2nd and 3rd October 2019 at the Hyatt hotel in Belgrade, in the organisation of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs – Anti-Discrimination Policy and Gender Equality Promotion Department.

The Conference was organised with an aim of the promotion of women leadership, experience and good practices sharing, which has been achieved.

1. CONFERENCE ORGANISATION

The welcome reception for the guests and participants from abroad was organised on Tuesday, 1 October 2019, at the Hyatt hotel, at 6.00 p.m. The welcoming speech was given by the State Secretary Ms. Stana Bozovic, PhD, wishing the guests pleasant stay in Belgrade and successful conference effort.

The welcoming reception was attended also by Minister Mr. Zoran Djordevic, State Secretary Ms. Bojana Stanic, State Secretary Mr. Zoran Antic. Acting Assistant Minister Ms. Nina Mitic, Acting Assistant Minister Ms. Mirjana Cojbasic, and members of the staff who have been involved in the organisation of the event, from the Antidiscrimination Policy and Gender Equality Department, Public Relations Office of the Ministry,

DAY 1 OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, 2nd OCTOBER 2019

The International Conference “Women Leaders and Sustainable Development – Genuinely Equal” was attended by a significant number of guests from the country and abroad. In total there were 200 attendees on the opening on 2 October at the Hyatt Hotel, including media representatives and guests, and participants. The Conference proceeded with the organisation of the first three panels that were followed by 107 persons, and the following two panels that took place on the second day, 3 October 2019, which was followed by 140 persons. The First Ladies from four continents were among the guests: First Lady of Belize, women holding offices and positions across various spheres of social life, women from the banking community, Governor of the National Bank of Serbia, ministers, lady ambassadors, President of the Constitutional Court, representatives of international organisations, women entrepreneurs, women holding offices at regional organisations, MPs, women with disability, and the representatives of the media.

The International Conference was opened by the First Deputy Prime Minister and the Foreign Affairs Minister, Mr. Ivica Dacic who in his address underlined the SDG 5 and the importance of

the promotion of the position of women living in rural areas. Also, Mr. Dacic expressed his hope that in the forthcoming period some of the women would be holding the office of the minister for foreign affairs in Serbia taking into account no women had held the office in the past.

Further, on behalf of the host of the conference, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs, Mr. Zoran Djordjevic took floor underlining the importance the family had for the achievement of full gender equality. Also, he emphasised the need for the prevention of any form of violence against women and girls and for the elimination of human trafficking, in particular women and girls who were most frequent victims of trafficking in human beings.

Minister Zoran Djordjevic invited the guests and participants to visit the exhibition organised to honour 15 renowned women in the history of Serbia, which was organised at the Studio of the Hyatt Hotel. The Director of the Museum of the History of Serbia, Ms. Dusica Bojic elaborated on the importance of every woman whose portrait was shown at the exhibition, as selected by the Antidiscrimination and Gender Equality Department of the Ministry for Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs. The exhibition was comprehensively covered by the media in the Republika Srpska, as were the public statements given by the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Ivica Dacic, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, Mr. Zoran Djordjevic, and the President of the Republika Srpska, Ms. Zeljka Cvijanovic.

The 1st Conference Session was focused to the topic of “Women Leaders – the Past, Present and Future”. It was attended by Ms. Zeljka Cvijanovic, President of Republic Srpska, Ms. Hijran Gusjenova, President of the State Committee for Family and Children from the Republic of Azerbaijan; Ms. Rennie Yotova, Director of the BRECO from the French Republic, Ms. Elena Bibikova, President of the Committee for Social Affairs of the Council of the Russian Federation Council; Ms. Jana Ljubicic, Executive Departmental Director of the “Telecom Serbia”, and Ms. Draginja Volk, the member of the Committee of the Belgrade City Assembly. The facilitator was Ms. Stana Bozovic, State Secretary of the MoLEVSA. The first session was extremely lively and dynamic, well received by the audiences. In the course of the session, the participants made suggestions and elaborated ideas that will be included in the conclusion of the Conference. They fully used their time to answer the questions posed by the facilitator, and also there was an opportunity to give answer to one question from the audiences. The special guest of the Conference was Ms. Zeljka Cvijanovic, President of Republika Srpska who gave answer to the question from the audiences. The session participants from France commended the multinational and multilingual character of the Conference, justifying the phrase ‘international’ in its title.

At this panel, it was particularly emphasised how good-quality education was important for women, for taking leadership positions, while on the system of quota as an action for higher representation of women in political institution the opinion varied. For instance, the participants from Republika Srpska emphasised that “Thanks to the quota system for the elections, it may be said the representation of women in the legislature and at the central level is satisfactory. However, the situation is still not so good at local level, with unacceptably low numbers of women in the office of mayor, and it is the reason for the measures to be taken for the achievement of full gender

equality between men and women at local level“. Contrary, the guests from the Russian Federation held that quotas cannot lead to full equality of women. The participant from Azerbaijan, including other participants in this session underlined in the discussions the critical importance for genuine equality of the combating violence against women, including against sex violence, of flexible working time schedules, mandatory medical examinations of the staff, and in particular preventive medical examinations for women, balance and share of unpaid house work between men and women, networking of and support for women from other women, etc. Media were urged to refrain from covering in the media women as victims but also as the actors important for the development and to give more room to the content and conferences on women leaders and successful women in their professions and occupations.

Particularly it was emphasised that in the context of the prevention of discrimination and non-discrimination a lot has been achieved in the last decades, and in particular after the adoption of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women. However, it was said, a lot had still to be done, especially in the field of labour and employment, security, banking and finance, and that in future, the evolvement of international standards is expected to take the course towards the equalization of women and men in the said areas, which would invoke new leaders, and among whom women would be increasing their numbers.

A realistic and balanced pattern of work and other responsibilities but also of pleasures and free time which on the one hand is filled with work assignments and on the other family responsibilities, i.e. caring responsibilities was an important factor of success of one women leader, according to her words, and the session ended with the following conclusion: „For the success of women in the leading role and as someone who is at the forefront in their occupation, the support also from men is required, men who need to be allies in the achievement of the final objective – a life in wellbeing and dignity.“

The 2nd Session was on the topic of “Economic Empowerment of Women – World Without Poverty” participated by the following panelists:Ms. Jorgovanka Tabakovic, Governor of the National Bank of Serbia, Ms. Natalia Tretyak, the First Vice-President of “Gazprombank”; Ms. Dragina Djuric, Managing Director of the Intesa Banca Serbia; Ms. Jane Mugiai from the Toolkit Institute, Kenya; Ms. Jelena Trivan, Director of Official Gazette, Serbia; Ms. Natalia B. Pocinok, Rector of the State Social University of Moscow, Russian Federation, and Ms. Olja Jankovic, UN Women Serbia. The facilitator was Ms. Stefana Miladinovic, Member of the Parliament of Serbia.

In the course of this session, it was underlined that according to the Gender Equality Index, Serbia is at the credible 16 place in terms of power. Women in Serbia hold distinguished offices of the Speaker, Prime Minister, ministers, President of Constitutional Court, Republic Prosecutor, Governor of National Bank of Serbia, Equality Commissioner, etc. Governor of National Bank of Serbia gave motivational speech, stating among other things that: “A man without a woman can do, but the world cannot do without women, as there is no future without children,„. Also, it was said that “There are women who are three-times loved by their mother, husbands and children” and that “women who attribute to themselves power from powerful men stand behind them”.

However, gender equality was not about that, but about the human right that was about mutual responsibility of both men and women and the right to challenge that right.

The positive examples were numbered of socially responsible companies, such as Banca Intesa, which are in a position to ensure health care for all the members of family of their staff, covering the possibility to treatment abroad. Also, there are lending facilities for women living in rural areas who do not have any real estate registered on their name, which are available to them to start business, etc. It was said that women in the Russian Federation hold 63% offices and positions the requirement for which is to have university education and that system of social welfare institutions was wide and developed, including of the institutions that provide support to women in their child care, provision of the care to old persons, sick members of household, etc. However, the surveys showed that only 30% of women in Russian Federation were satisfied with their income and that 70% of paid house chores were done by women and 30% by men. Statistical data available with the UN showed that women on average work 2 hours longer than men doing unpaid house chores. Also, there was pay gap in all the countries across the globe, the span of which was 6% in New Zealand to 60% in Korea. Global indicators showed that men acquire strategic attitude to the issue, while women prioritized development of work capacities. The issues concerning cultural patterns had been prominent globally, because societies of individuals were dominant as well as the aged societies. Also, it was said that globally, by 2050, 1.5 billion people would be older than 50. The panellist from Kenya said that poverty of the population of Africa often was an obstacle for the acquisition of good-quality education that is precondition of a prosperous life of their families. In the course of the discussion, it was stated that women in Azerbaijan had launched the club of women working in banking sector which numbers 900 women members who provide help to other women. It was emphasised that critical relevance of the support from women to women was often disregarded.

In connection to the aforesaid topic, the conclusion is that there are two strategic directions for action in international community, at national and local levels: 1) in the form of economic support and empowerment of vulnerable groups, the most numerous being women, and 2) poverty reduction.

The Third session was on the topic of “Prevention of Violence Against Women and Combating Human Trafficking of Women “. It aroused big attention of the public, and the panellists were Ms. Nela Kuburovic, Minister of Justice of the Republic of Serbia; Ms. Kim Simplis Barrow, wife of the Prime Minister of Belize; Ms. Biljana Popovic Ivkovic, State Secretary of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia; Ms. Julia Zigulina, Director of the Foundation “Our Future” from Russian Federation; Ms. Suzana Paunovic, Director of the Office for Human and Minority Rights of the Republic of Serbia. The facilitator was Ms. Ivana Ckonjevic, journalist of the Radio and Television of Serbia national media outlet.

The session emphasised good solutions and results of the two-year application of the Prevention of Domestic Violence Law. Unfortunately, it was said, there were still murderous cases despite the declared zero-tolerance towards violence against women. The justice minister underlined, as a special valuable trait of the Law, the possibility of so called preventive action by prosecution and law enforcement, including the regular and permanent activity of the coordination group that in

the previous period took into consideration in total 109.000 reported cases of domestic violence, on the basis of which 3000 orders had been issued by the competent authorities. Also, the provision allowing taking of the “emergency measure” had not been in place in Serbia before, and since its enactment in total 38.000 such emergency measures for the removal of the offenders from family were taken. From the enactment of the State –Funded Legal Aid Law, women victims of domestic violence have access to legal aid free of charge. In Belize, every fifth woman was the victim of psychological, physical or sexual violence, leading to the conclusion that the topic of gender equality was inevitably accompanied with the topic of sexual harassment that mostly women and girls were exposed to.

State Secretary of the Ministry of Interior of Serbia who is chairing the group on combating violence set up by the Ministry said that women not only suffered from violence inflicted by their partners, but domestic violence, and that right at the moment when the Conference was being held, two women were murdered by their sons. She stressed the importance of fight against violence against women which make 70% of victims of domestic violence in Serbia, but also of human trafficking and the exploitation of women forced to be involved in the prostitution. It was said that since January 2019, there were 14 criminal charges brought against 28 offenders of human trafficking and 13 for sexual exploitation. There was a successful implementation of the project by the Ministry of Interior which is focused to the strengthening of the security and safety of women in Serbia, in cooperation with UN Women.

In the conclusion of this session it was stressed that there were diverse cultural patterns that had impact on various approaches to be taken towards the phenomenon of violence against women and that legal provisions adopted for combating violence against women vary across countries, but however that elimination of all forms of violence against women is required for full emancipation and equality of women.

DAY 2 OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE, 3rd OCTOBER 2019

On the second day of the International Conference, two sessions or panels (5th and 4th) were held, including bilateral meetings on the margins of the conference of the Minister Zoran Djordjevic with individual international guests, and the Declaration on International Cooperation was signed between the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs and Khanty- Mansi District in the Russian Federation – Yugra in the Russian Federation and also, the Memorandum on Cooperation between the MoLEVSA and Moscow Social State University from Russian Federation, all in the organisation of the Antidiscrimination and Gender Equality Department and Office of the Protocol of the Ministry.

The fourth session that was held on the second day of the Conference was on the topic of “Gender Stereotypes and Presentation of Women in Media“. The panellists were Ms. Ksenija Vucic, Journalist and Director of TV PINK 3, Ms. Irena Vujovic, President of City Council Savski Venac, Colonel Ms. Katarina Strbac, PhD, Director of the Directorate for European Integration and Projects SPO of the Ministry of Defence, Ms. Elma Elfic Zukorlic, PhD, General Manager of International University in Novi Pazar, Ms. Milena Popovic Ivanovic, Advisor to the Prime

Minister, Ms. Natasa Tasic, an opera singer, Ms. Bojana Radakovic, Undersecretary of the Secretariat for Urban Planning and Construction of the City of Belgrade. The session was utterly dynamic and vivid, and well accepted by the audiences. The facilitator was Ms. Dajana Paunovic, journalist.

The discussion was about the Public information in Media Law, its advantages and shortcoming what was the role of gender councils set up at local level, in particular Belgrade and how they contribute to gender equality in cooperation with socially responsible companies, and on what every individual might do to have a society of diversity, but without inequality. The emphasis was on personal experiences of the panellists, good and bad, in terms of their representation in media. The need for women with a career in science to be presented in media was mentioned, and to empower Roma women in terms of their occupational affirmation.

The fifth session was on the topic of “Women and Family: Science, Culture, Climate Change, Technological Development and Innovation – Gender Perspective, Social Protection of Women – Policies, Practice and Perspectives“. Panelists – Ms. Natalya Komarova, Governor of Khanty-Mansi District Ms. Slavica Djukic Dejanovic, Minister without Portfolio for Demographics and Population Policy, Ms. Ketlin Chaba, Ambassador of Canada in Serbia, Ms. Regina de Dominicis, UNICEF Representative in Serbia, Ms. Stana Bozovic, State Secretary MoLEVSA. The session was facilitated by Ms. Natasa Stanisavljevic, City Secretary for Social Welfare.

Russian experience in the work of the European Women’s Forum was presented, on the better alignment and adjustment of the roles of men and women in parenthood to ensure better quality career development, on the change of social roles that would enable women not to be talked of in their roles as homemakers and mothers, but as scientists, politicians, or successful businesswomen. The positive experience was shared by the Russian Federation in gained in the context of the support programme Woman to Woman.

According to the available demographic data obtained on the basis of the Census in Serbia, there are in total 215.472 families, among which 51,8% are one-child families. The Financial Support for Families with Children introduced a number of novelties and empowered family in Serbia by increasing the grant for the first child from 38.000 to 100.000 dinars. However, the law needs to be amended.

The experience of Canada in the legal sphere and everyday living were shared, which in particular empower women, indigenous people, persons with disability, etc. All the documents and all the programmes in Canada must be subjected to gender analysis and great attention is paid to funding of the gender sensitive programmes. If a person is exposed to violence and is afraid to report it, a regular phenomenon in the case of women, the police is bound to investigate all the circumstances and to bring charges ex officio. Then, the woman is not exposed to the burden of proof and to standing as a witness of the violence she had been exposed to.

Also, Italian experience and practice were shared, as the UNICEF representative comes from the South Italy. In addition, personal experience was shared from the beginning of her career when she found herself at the managerial position in the typically men’s occupation. She also expressed

her belief that solidarity among women existed and that it was extremely important, but that systemic support is required for their empowerment.

The UN Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 is accepted by 193 countries, among which is Serbia, and Serbia as the host of the Conference, but also in the terms of the achievement of its goals, has a lot to do yet. According to the UN Women survey in 2019, the age limit for marriage for both genders has increased. In Serbia, according to that survey, there is 38% one-child couples, 27% of families with more children и 8% single-parent households, among which women are more represented than men. The global ageing trend is concerning, the Vision of the Plant 5050 also, and thus demographic and climate change should concern us more than the gender division, and to in fact unite us.

Given that the great many panellists expressed their appreciation to the MoLEVSA for hosting the Conference, and specially to Minister Mr. Zoran Djordjevic personally, State Secretary Ms. Stana Bozovic took the opportunity as the last panellist to thank all the participants and the guests to their contribution for the success of the event.

The Conference was closed by Minister of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs Mr. Zoran Djordjevic who thanked all the participants and guests and wished for many more such conferences to take place as a condition for progress and creation of equal opportunity policies in all the spheres of social life.

2. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

3.

1. International Conference “Women Leaders and Sustainable Development – Genuinely Equal” was held on 2nd and 3rd October 2019 at the Hyatt hotel in Belgrade, in the organisation of the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs – Anti-Discrimination Policy and Gender Equality Promotion Department. The Conference was organised with an aim of the promotion of women leadership, experience and good practices sharing, which has been achieved.
2. The International Conference “Women Leaders and Sustainable Development – Genuinely Equal” was attended by a significant number of guests from the country and abroad. In total there were 200 attendees who fully contributed to the affirmation of the UN and in such a context to the equality and promotion of the position of women.
3. The conclusions of the International Conference is that there are multiple strategic directions of action in international community, at national and local levels, which need to unify both genders through the following 1) economic support and empowerment of vulnerable groups, among which women are mostly represented and 2) poverty reduction, 3) sound and accessible health care; 4) good-quality education; 5) gender equality; 6) Decent work and elimination of pay gap; 7) social action for reduction of harmful climate change; 7) commitment for peace, justice and development of strong and sound institutions.
4. On the basis of experience and practice sharing of participants in the International Conference, it is concluded that the for the genuine gender equality sound and good-quality legal framework is required, as well as effective fight against violence including sexual

violence, and also flexible working hours, mandatory medical examinations in particular preventive ones for women, and networking and support from women to women.

5. At the International Conference, the importance of the family for full gender equality was stressed, and the need to balance unpaid chores in the household between sexes and prevent any form of domestic violence against women and girls.
6. All the countries were called upon to stop human trafficking, in particular of women and girls, who are most frequent victims of trafficking in human beings.
7. Media were urged and called upon to give the picture of women not as victims but as the relevant actor of development and to cover more the contents and conferences on women leaders and women with successful careers.