

**KWL Demands: Involve Women in Status Talks**

The Kosova Women's Lobby (KWL) wrote a letter to the government and parliament demanding that women take part in negotiations on Kosova's final political status, set to begin in fall 2005 (please see the letter below).

The Prime Minister replied that the cabinet and ministers are aware of the importance of cooperating and consulting with civil society actors, especially to gain from their previous experiences. He promised that the Kosovar government would consult and work closely with KWL in discussions regarding Kosova's independence.

"Your suggestions are always welcome," he said in a letter to KWL.

KWL previously sent a letter to the government and UNMIK, requesting to be part of the Belgrade-Pristina dialogues. While some women have been involved in the process so far, KWL is requesting that the government further involves and consults with women.

KWL is a group of women leaders in politics, civil society and the private sector that engage in and support constructive critical thinking, as well as strategic and progressive actions on important issues of political, social and economic development in Kosovo, in particular those of interest to women. Membership in KWL is on an individual basis, and the members do not officially represent the institutions where they work.

Dear Sir,

We recently learned about your initiative to establish a forum responsible for negotiating Kosova's final status. We support this initiative and we consider it a very important step towards involving all key political actors in making decisions on a highly important issue for all of us.

The solution of Kosova's status is a vital issue for all Kosovars and will strongly affect the political, economical and social advancement of our country. Women, who comprise half of Kosova's population, are interested and have the right to fully and actively participate in the negotiations process on final status. Furthermore, women have always been and still are very important actors in all aspects of Kosova's efforts for freedom and independence, especially during the last fifteen years. Thus, women can and should bring their ideas, experience and their energy into this very important process of decision making for our common future. At the same time, the involvement of women in talks for the final solution for peace is a basic provision of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which is also applicable in Kosova.

For these reasons, the Kosova Women's Lobby requests that you and the political institutions that will decide on the principles and the concrete mechanisms for establishing the forum on the status talks, create opportunities for and ensure the equal and effective involvement of women within these structures.

We appreciate highly your continuous support for the initiatives of Kosovar civil society and we count on your energetic support for ensuring the equal participation of women in the critical process for deciding the final status of Kosova.

Kosova Women's Lobby welcomes a meeting or a working dinner with you where we could further discuss the concrete steps for involving women in this process.