



WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE

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WAVE's Statement on the current war in Ukraine

Vienna, March 1, 2022

The WAVE Network strongly condemns the Russian military invasion of the Ukrainian territory which violates Ukraine's sovereignty and endangers the lives of all its people. We reject the indiscriminate attacks on civilian infrastructure such as schools and homes, which is in violation of international humanitarian law. These actions negatively impact women, the elderly, youth, and children, while aggravating the fragility of other populations such as LGBTQI+ persons, black people, people of color, and migrants among others.

While conflict inflicts suffering on everyone, women and girls are particularly affected by its short and long-term effects. In the short term, women and children are often forced to flee their homes, and women are expected to assume the role of main breadwinners, caregivers, and national rebuilders whilst experiencing trauma. Likewise, women, girls, as well as LGBTQI+ people can be victims of sexual assault and exploitation which are frequently used tools of war. In the long term, domestic violence can be further aggravated by armed conflict. Research has shown that war trauma can lead to higher rates of violence against women, perpetrated by the military and traumatized soldiers returning to their homes. This is further exacerbated by reinforcement of traditional gender roles, with women and children fleeing and men staying behind on the fronts. Thus, WAVE calls for the protection of all civilian populations by the parties in conflict and for the international community to exercise its Responsibility to Protect (UN Resolution 63/308) duty.

The WAVE Network also expresses its support to the Ukrainian people, and to the Russian dissidents who have mobilized against this unlawful military operation. We uphold everyone's humanity and reject the expressions of racism and xenophobia in the process of evacuation, as well as the racist reporting of the conflict by some news outlets using a troubling, racialized framing of non-Western war-torn countries while explaining the situation in Ukraine. WAVE calls on all feminists in Europe to mobilize and request their governments to offer protection to Ukrainian refugees and to carry out responsible foreign policy decisions to prevent further escalation of this conflict.

WAVE as a network of Women's Specialist Support Services is ready to offer support to women and girls who suffer from male violence in this conflict and will continue to protect the human rights of all women and girls.

The WAVE Network.