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Best practices from the Western Balkans on eliminating violence against women and girls shared in Central Asia

5 – 6 November 2018 | Bishkek, The Kyrgyz Republic

Western Balkans experience on the role of the police in combatting violence against women and girls shared with more than 60 government and parliamentary representatives from Central Asia gathered at a United Nations regional conference in Bishkek.

One in three women worldwide experienced a form of violence, often from someone they trust. This violence transcends generations as children witnessing or experiencing abuses at home can become victims or perpetrators as they become adults. The police, as the first state representatives that a victim of violence comes in contact with, has a key role to play in both combating and preventing the gender-based violence pandemic.

Sanja Sumonja is an inspector in the Ministry of Interior of Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina and chair of the board of Ministry of Interior Women's Network. Sanja has been working with SEESAC on mainstreaming gender in the police since 2010. At the conference in Bishkek, Sanja shared her experience on the role of women police networks in instilling institutional change to combat violence against women and girls. Sanja's mission was enabled by SEESAC regional security sector reform platform, a mechanism that enables sharing expertise on niche rule of law areas, from small arms and light weapons control to gender equality, from the Western Balkans to the world.

The two-day conference, "Turning policies into action: Eliminating gender-based violence against women and girls in Central Asia," was organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in partnership with the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The participants examined best practices from around the region and beyond to prevent and end violence against women. They discussed how to strengthen national policies in line with international standards, ensure that survivors receive quality health, police, legal and social services, and transform social norms that perpetuate violence against women and girls. The conference concluded with participants pledging to strengthen regional cooperation to eliminate gender-based violence against women and girls in all countries in Central Asia.

Find out more about the conference [here](#).



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