



## WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE EUROPE

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### **17<sup>TH</sup> annual WAVE Conference: Women's Collective Power to Stop Violence!** 2<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2015, THE HAGUE/THE NETHERLANDS

The European network WAVE – Women against Violence Europe held its **17<sup>th</sup> annual Conference** on the **2<sup>nd</sup> of November 2015**, at Hague University of Applied Sciences (De Haagse Hogeschool) in **The Hague/the Netherlands**. The conference gathered more than **100 representatives**, experts and researchers from about **40 European countries**, as well as representatives from organizations in Australia, Israel, Rwanda, and the United States. WAVE was also happy and honored to welcome the current **UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its causes and consequences, Dubravka Šimonović**. Titled '*Women's Collective Power to Stop Violence!*', the conference took the format of a one-day network event open to all WAVE members.

WAVE was founded in **1994** and its secretariat is located in Vienna, Austria. As of November 2015, the network includes **111 members** in **46 European countries**. With two decades of experience, WAVE has developed a large and comprehensive expertise in the field of combating violence against women and their children, through projects and activities including networking, research, lobbying, and capacity-building.

The morning of the conference included a Keynote speech by WAVE President Rosa Logar, who focused her speech on the collective strength of women's organizations to end violence against women and girls, and emphasized the issue of VAW in war and armed conflicts. Her speech was followed by a first Panel Session, where good practice examples in the field of lobbying and awareness-raising activities at the network level were presented by network members from Belgium, Ukraine, Serbia, Croatia and the United Kingdom. A second Panel Session included the presentation of good practice examples in the area of strengthening networking activities, by network members from Poland, Russia, Malta, Romania, Turkey and the Netherlands. The afternoon of the conference started with a Keynote speech by UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women Dubravka Šimonović, who addressed 'synergies and implementation of global and regional instruments on violence against women' and in particular the CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention.

*"The CEDAW Convention encompasses violence against women as a form of discrimination against women [...], while the Istanbul Convention [...] explicitly defines violence against women as a form of discrimination and human rights violation. It recognizes that as such it contributes to the elimination of*

*other forms of discrimination against women. Such provisions [...] are providing a platform for synergy between the CEDAW Convention and the Istanbul Convention, whereas the more detailed standards of the Istanbul Convention specify and complement global CEDAW standards and provides for their reinforcement.” – said UN Special Rapporteur Dubravka Šimonović.*

Dubravka Šimonović’s speech was followed by **four parallel workshops** on issues ranging from WAVE campaigning on the implementation of the Istanbul Convention in Europe, to strengthening network communication and cooperation, and discussing new perspectives and innovative work in the field of combating violence against women. The first **WAVE General Assembly** since the formalization of the network in May 2014 saw the re-election of the WAVE Board for a two-year term. The 17th WAVE Conference closed on the **Corinna Seith Award 2015**, attributed this year to Fiona Vera Gray and Alison Gregory jointly. Present on the event day, Fiona Vera Gray presented the winning research paper 'On Situated Agency', using Simone de Beauvoir to extend on theoretical framings.

A year and half after the formalization of the WAVE Network, the 17<sup>th</sup> annual conference provided a platform for the network members to connect and exchange on their work at the national level, and to discuss challenges and strategies for the upcoming year 2016, as individual organizations and national networks, but also as members of the WAVE Network.

**WAVE is a feminist network and the WAVE Conference provides each year a platform to exchange ideas among professionals working in the field of combating violence against women and their children, and to create new recommendations and strategies to improve the right of all women to live free from violence!**



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