

We are here, we are strong!! (Online Article)

Historical Note

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Content

!!We are here, we are strong!!

We stand here today, not just as a reminder that the 25th of November is the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, but because we want to remember all the feminist struggles that were the reason for such a day to exist.

In 1960, the Mirabal sisters were murdered because of their anti-fascist and feminist ideas against the dictatorial regime of the Dominican Republic. Their murders sparked a decades-long wave of protests across Latin America; outraged women took the streets and denounced the state violence over their own bodies.

Let's also recall the recent movements of #NiUnaMenos (Not one less) and El Violador Eres Tu (The rapist is you), demonstrating how the fight and movement against gender-based violence is strong, timeless and ongoing.

It was due to such recent social circumstances that Kores Xapolytes were born, inspired by other international feminist movements. We met for the first time in the streets of Nicosia, on the 7th of March in 2021. We organized around the strong need of our voices to be heard and to communicate the experiences and traumas that we carry because of the Cypriot patriarchal society we live in.

Today, therefore, with our strong presence here, we demand that:

- All kinds of violence become visible: physical, sexual, financial, psychological, along with emotional and any other action not involving consent.
- Learning about these issues is strengthened both in the women's movement as well as in formal education.
- Support structures for women and femininities who have suffered violence, are multiplied, and that essential support is given to every single one who reports incidents of gender-based violence by offering direct access to emergency call lines and shelters
- All operators receiving calls and reports of violence are properly trained, as they are responsible for the support and protection of women reporting incidents of violence
- Care structures are created, ensuring the smooth and safe return of women who have suffered gender-based violence, back into the public space (either at home or at work/school etc)
- Justice for gender based violence is not trapped in legal barriers only, by just asking for the exemplary punishment of the guilty. It's time we start working collectively to highlight the deeper reasons that drive and intensify the outbreaks of gender-based violence, such as the impoverishment of society - especially of female workers and immigrants - the patriarchal structures that affect people's lives and decisions and generally the tolerance to the silencing of

violence. Let us no longer allow the covering up of abusers because of what society would say or because we were taught to keep quiet.

We are here and we are strong!

Kores Xapolytes

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