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**Feminist Appeal**

# **Let's get our lives back!**

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**The European Network for Solidarity with Ukraine has launched an appeal that on 28 September, International Abortion Rights Day, we should highlight the situation of Ukrainian women in the context of the widespread and global attack on women's right to control their own bodies. We publish the appeal below.**

In recent years, we have witnessed intense and coordinated attacks on women and LGBTI people's reproductive rights. These rights have been won through feminist struggles and are now in jeopardy. We have witnessed an unprecedented increase of gender-based violence, including physical aggressions against women, the feminist movement and feminists individually.

These attacks are carried out by patriarchal and misogynistic governments and networks of far-right and fundamentalist conservatives in Europe and all other continents.

The aim of this growing far right all around the world, including macho world leaders like Vladimir Putin, Donald Trump, Narendra Modi, Victor Orban and Jair Bolsonaro, is to control the bodies and reproductive capacities of women and LGBTI people. This is part of a wider strategy to centralize and strengthen the state and social control over women's lives. All in the service of a reactionary power that hates women, rejects refugees, mistreats the detained and discriminates on the basis of gender, race, sexuality, religion and social status. Women are being forced into a division of labor in which they are reduced to a subordinate role of mere reproducers.

Gender hierarchies, but also race and class hierarchies, are being strengthened. This is because constraints on access to reproductive health, including the possibility to either terminate or carry a pregnancy to term, disproportionately impact:

- migrant and undocumented women and LGBTI people .
- those who are under constant threat of criminalization or deportation.
- those who are poor and do not have the resources to travel abroad or attend a private clinic.

In several countries, bans on abortion coexist with racist policies. Policies that systematically target the bodies and reproductive rights of racialized women: forced sterilization, forced contraception, obstetric violence.

The state reserves the right to decide who is allowed to reproduce or obliged to reproduce and decides the extent and the purpose.

In Putin's Russia, there are policies that incite women to adhere to the so-called "traditional values" of the "Russian World". To produce more cannon fodder for its militarist projects. In countries such as Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and several states in the US, abortion rights are severely restricted or banned altogether. While femicide and violence against women and LGBTI people has reached unprecedented levels all over the world, many of these countries have also refused to ratify or to implement the Council of Europe's Convention of Istanbul (2011) on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.

The war in Ukraine has brought home to us some of the most brutal forms of this all-out attack. Women's and LGBTI rights obtained by feminist struggles in Ukraine are used in Russian propaganda as one of the pretexts for Russia's invasion. Russian troops use massively war rapes as a strategy to subdue the Ukrainian people. Ukrainian refugees,

## Let's get our lives back!

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victims of war rapes, who are faced with unwanted pregnancies are mostly unable to access safe and legal abortion in Poland or in neighbouring countries, where abortion is criminalized and even abortion pills are being made illegal.

These attacks do not go unanswered. In the United States, Brazil, Poland and Russia, feminists are collectively organising and resisting against patriarchal-white supremacist-neoliberal power and for the right of all women and LGBTI people to regain control over their own bodies and lives. Feminists from all over the world are standing in solidarity with feminists in struggle.

In recent years, the exemplary struggles of feminists against sexism, racism, reactionary policies, militarism and war have rightly led to the recognition of the feminist movement as the vanguard of popular resistance, as the movement that fights on the front line against the reactionary, anti-democratic, corrupt and liberticidal policies of our governments. We are inspired by these struggles that take their place in the centre of politics, such as by the US march against the inauguration of Donald Trump, by the Chilean feminists who helped inflict defeat to the far-right presidential candidate José Antonio Kast and by Polish women who inspired massive rallies in all corners of Poland to protest against the anti-abortion law and instilled fear in the conservative establishment. Today we are particularly inspired by the armed and unarmed resistance of Ukrainian women and their resilience in the face of war, as well as by the anti-war movement of Russian feminists who are the main force of opposition in Russia.

It is time to react together and on a massive scale. Organizing national responses and demonstrations is no longer enough! The enemy is international and is creating alliances that go beyond national borders. It is time to reinforce the impetus for a great feminist transnational movement to defend the rights of all women and LGBTI people worldwide, regardless of race, class, religion or nationality. And take the initiative to create broad alliances against the reactionary, misogynic and racist far-right all over the world.

So let's come together, let's coordinate, let's act internationally!

Let's fight back to regain control over our bodies and our lives!

As a first step we call on feminists around the world to raise prominently solidarity with Ukrainian and Polish women in their mobilizations in defence of abortion and reproductive rights on the occasion of 28 September, International Day for Abortion Rights.

#AgainstAbortionBacklash

Source [European Network for Solidarity with Ukraine](#).

PS:

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