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Croatia

# March 8, 2021 – Manifesto by fAKTIV

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**fAKTIV is a feminist collective based in Croatia fighting for women’s labor and social rights, advocating for reproductive and sexual rights, and against gender-based violence.**

The collective started out in 2016 in opposition to ubiquitous social and economic inequalities, fascism, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia, with the aim to organize extra-institutional actions and create feminist practices as part of a broader anti-capitalist movement.

In 2016, fAKTIV organized the first Night March on International Women’s Day (March 8) in Zagreb – a protest that keeps on bringing together several thousand protesters each year. On March 8th we celebrate past feminist struggles and victories, we point out the main problems women face today, and work on connecting the feminist movement with other movements.

This year we will not organize the Night March because of the pandemic, but we raise awareness about the consequences of the pandemic for the labor and lives of women. We also highlight our concerns about sexual violence, advocate for sexual education, and address the constant threat to the right to abortion. Finally, with the same regard and urgency, we point out the problems that transgender people face in our society and draw attention to the horrific treatment of refugees and migrants at the borders of the European Union.

Also, we are running a social media campaign that points out the value of women’s usually invisible, unappreciated, and underpaid work. We are inviting women to take a rest for an hour or a day and send us their photos on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. The photos are shared with the hashtag #odmor8mart (#rest8march).

March 8 Manifesto

It seems like overnight the most important people in our lives became the women working in retail, the cleaners who disinfect the shops, hospitals, and clinics, the caretakers, the nurses who calm down frightened patients with ease and tell them everything will be fine, while they are the ones who didn’t hug their loved ones for a year, trying not to infect them.

All of these workers have always been essential, we have only now begun to name them as such collectively. A multitude of underpaid jobs that were considered infamous and secondary have become of extreme importance around the world – and those jobs are mostly done by women. This year we ask of you to think about the great burden women carried throughout this pandemic. Our resistance this year is an invitation to rest. A one-hour rest, a one-day rest – as a pledge for the future when all the burden of care will not be placed on the backs of women.

We also ask of you to think about the brave and loud women who have shared their experiences of sexual violence in the street, in the workplace, in the educational system, in maternity hospitals and gynecology offices.

We don’t want to hear the questions “Why didn’t you report it sooner?”, “Why did you keep quiet?”, “Why didn’t you leave that job, relationship, marriage, college?” anymore. We don’t want women to blame themselves, and we don’t want others to blame women. The women were not silent. The women are silenced! But we will not be silenced anymore!

We also won’t be silent about the attacks and discrimination against transgender people, most often trans women, that end up thrown to the very margins of society. The lives of trans women and trans people in general, their access

to health care or employment, must not depend on those who would be at peace only if trans people did not exist at all.

This year we also think about the violence at our borders. Refugees and migrants are called illegal, their right to exist is questioned on a daily basis in our society. No one questions the wars from which they escaped. Poverty is accepted, but the poor are persecuted. We will continue to stand in solidarity with refugees and migrants. No one is illegal, and no one deserves violence and death just because they are trying to survive.

Rosa Luxemburg's last words were: "I was, I am, I will be!". This International Women's Day we stand together in hope, resistance, and rebellion and say: "We were, we are, we will be!"

*PS:*

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