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EUROPEAN CORNERSTONES ON WOMEN HUMAN RIGHTS – CASE STUDY OF SERBIA

***“Women are in double jeopardy. Discriminated against as women,
 they are also as likely as men, if not more so,
 to become victims of human rights violations...
 today, what unites women internationally
 — transcending class, race, culture, religion,
 nationality and ethnic origin
 — is their vulnerability to the denial and violation of their
 fundamental human rights,
 and their dedicated efforts to claim those rights.”
 (Amnesty International, Human Rights are Women’s Rights)***

The paper analyses European cornerstones on women human rights – with the insight on situation in Serbia related to women’s human rights in the light of European principles. Women’s human rights are integral part of universal human rights. However, women are *de facto* and *de iure* very often treated unequally and therefore the phenomenon of improving gender equality is always present. The term “women’s human rights” in its definition includes, besides usual approach to universal human rights, being an inherent part of every human being, also the application of certain affirmative actions aimed at achieving real equality for women.

There are several areas of concern that require immediate action and gender equality improvement in order to obtain equal opportunities for women in



granting their human rights. EU envisages that candidate countries must fully embrace the fundamental principle of equality between women and men. Furthermore, monitoring the transposition, implementation and enforcement of EU legislation in this area remains a priority of the enlargement process. One of the main political priorities of Serbia, like other countries in the region of Balkans, is the accession to the European Union (EU). Consequently, Serbia is to transpose European principles on gender equality and to achieve gender mainstreaming in the national system.

At the same time, Serbia, being a participating country in the OESC, has recognized equality between men and women as a fundamental aspect of a just, secure and democratic society. Case study of Serbia in the field of protection of women's human rights indicates that Serbia, as an OESC member state, has recognized gender equality as part of the universal human rights in its Constitutional provisions, primarily, but also in its relevant legal provisions. Legal framework of Serbia related to women's human rights is to a great extent harmonized with the relevant European cornerstones. The importance of European cornerstones lies in the fact that they represent important guidelines for transition countries, like Serbia, on its way to modernization of society and of national legal framework together with public policy measures in the domain of protection of women's human rights.

