

**ENVER HOXHA**

# **THE ALBANIAN ANTI-FASCIST WOMEN FOUND THEIR ROAD OF SALVATION THROUGH THE NATIONAL LIBERATION WAR**

***Speech delivered to the 1st Congress of the Albanian  
Anti-fascist Women's Union<sup>1</sup>***

*November 4, 1944*

**DEAR COMRADE DELEGATES OF THE ALBANIAN ANTI-FASCIST  
WOMEN'S UNION,**

**ON BEHALF OF THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT OF ALBANIA AND  
THE GENERAL STAFF, I CONVEY MY HEARTFELT GREETINGS TO THE  
WORTHY REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ANTI-  
FASCIST WOMEN OF OUR COUNTRY, WHO HAVE GATHERED AT THIS  
HISTORIC CONGRESS.**

**FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE HISTORY OF OUR PEOPLE, THE AL-  
BANIAN WOMEN ARE TAKING A BRILLIANT PART IN THE POLITICAL  
AND MILITARY LIFE OF OUR COUNTRY; THEIR COURAGEOUS AND VA-  
LUABLE PARTICIPATION HAS BEEN SEALED BY THE BLOOD OF THE  
HEROINES WHO HAVE FALLEN ON THE FIELD OF HONOUR SIDE BY  
SIDE WITH THEIR BROTHERS, IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE LIBERATION  
OF ALBANIA AND, AT THE SAME TIME, OF THE ALBANIAN WOMEN.**

In this bloody anti-fascist liberation war, the women of our country recognized the danger that threatened their country and themselves. They broke the chains of old prejudices with matchless heroism and, following the example of anti-fascist women in progressive nations and peoples, proudly decided that it was better to die on

their feet than to live on their knees.

At the most difficult moments for our country, at the most critical hours of the beginning of this heroic struggle, the Albanian women, although still unorganized and backward from the political stand-point, felt a great pain in their hearts, a pain which they did not know how to express.

Shaken by the upheavals of the war, they searched for a way out, a way to salvation. The echo of our first clashes with the enemy awakened in their hearts the protective instinct, the instinct of mothers, sisters, wives, for their sons, brothers, and husbands who were fighting an unequal war against a ferocious enemy. However, the Albanian women could not yet comprehend the importance of this struggle, they still could not understand the great contribution the country expected from them; yet, right from the beginning, they were one, body and soul, with the boys who were fighting. In the difficult moments we have gone through, they opened the doors of their homes, opened their hearts to us and gave us courage. We will never forget the heroic deeds of our mothers and sisters when the indescribable terror reigned in Tirana, when every

night there were rifle shots and bomb explosions, when our valiant comrades were falling in the streets for the liberation of Albania. Undaunted, they helped us and protected us as the apple of their eye. I have always in mind the bright open face of an old mother, one of our indomitable fighters right from the beginning. A symbol of the Albanian woman in her mighty efforts, she said to us at the most critical moments: «I'm not as good at speaking as you are, but I have great faith that we will win, so forward, my sons, and I will die along with you!» This old mother, a comrade of our struggle and suffering, never lost faith and neither did all the other Albanian anti-fascist women. Today, despite her age, from the North Albanian mountains, where she is fighting rifle in hand, she writes to me: «What Qemal Stafa and the other comrades told me has come true, and now I feel stronger than ever.»

The Albanian anti-fascist women found their road, the road to salvation which they were seeking, and this was the road of the war. In our towns and villages, the precious blood of our mothers and sisters which flowed in the streets, was the signal of a new determination and a new world that was rising. The legendary struggle of our women comrades, who would not be stopped, but hurled themselves like lionesses upon the Germans and traitors, expressed a great new factor that was emerging in our country, one which we are witnessing at work today at this Congress, and which will play a role of primary importance in the new Albania we are building.

The anti-fascist Albanian woman has won her rights at the price of her blood, and these rights are guaranteed

by the people's power which she, together with her brothers, has set up, sacrificing all that was dearest to her. These rights are guaranteed to her by the army of the people.

The great historic Congress of the Albanian Anti-fascist Women, which we are now attending, will give a great impetus to the development of the Albanian women, who, to achieve their objectives better and more rapidly, will close their ranks in the organization of the Albanian Anti-fascist Women. All the women of Albania should take part in this organization. There they will rise to a higher cultural level and become educated in a new, progressive spirit. There they will become fighters for the defence of their rights, and worthy mothers of their country. New and brilliant horizons are being opened before the organization of Albanian Anti-fascist Women, and in order to achieve the lofty ideals for which their heroic comrades fell, our women, side by side with their men, and enjoying equal rights with men, must fully participate in the war and in the political and social life of our country. Only in this way can we hasten the complete liberation of Albania, reconstruct our beloved country, and the Albanian women attain the goals they desire and merit to achieve. The organization of Albanian Anti-fascist Women will have the full support of the Government and people's power on its road to progress just as the people's power and the Government will enjoy the valuable help of this organization.

To the mothers and sisters of our fighters who have liberated the whole of South Albania and are now poised around Tirana and Shkodra to realize

the liberation of the whole of Albania I bring the greetings of the National Liberation Army, assuring them that our fighters are proud of them. They feel stronger when they see their mothers and sisters, united as one, beside them in the fight for freedom. And you, the mothers of our comrades who have fallen heroically on the field of honour for the liberation of their people and country, lift up your heads and let your hearts be strong, because all our people and all the other freedom-loving peoples bow with respect and veneration before the precious memory of your beloved sons and daughters whom you raised and gave to your country. The bones of your sons and daughters, who shed their blood to shape and consolidate the foundations of the new Albania, form the sacred altar of the nation, from which daily and for ever more, our entire people, united and organized, will derive the spiritual strength which will carry them forward, towards progress and prosperity, towards the ideals for which they have sacrificed their lives.

Glory to our heroes who laid down their lives for the liberation of the country!

Long live the 1st Congress of the Albanian Anti-fascist Women's Union!

Long live the anti-fascist women of our country!

Long live the Albanian Anti-fascist Women's Union!

Long live free democratic Albania!

1 This Congress was held from the 4th to the 8th of November 1944, in Berat, with the participation of delegates from all the regions of Albania and from the detachments of the National Liberation Army.