



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) International Programme: 2011-2015

Presented by the Executive Committee to the International Board of WILPF prior to the 2011 Costa Rica Congress

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is an international women's peace organisation founded in 1915. The insight of WILPF's foremothers remains valid today: in order to achieve peace and freedom, the causes of war must be eliminated; and economic and social systems based on profit and privilege must be transformed to societies based on political and economic equality, participation of women and men, and justice for all regardless of race, sex or creed. The economy of war works against human beings, against nature, and this must be challenged and transformed to an economy based on peace, human rights, and environmental sustainability.

Grounded in these principles, WILPF works to create fundamental change in addressing issues of gender, justice, militarism, peace, and security. WILPF has developed strategic goals, programmes, and leadership focused on these challenges. Our current work draws on the expertise and commitment of our members in 40 countries and formal Sections in almost that many countries (with hundreds of branches and thousands of members), our staff in the Secretariat and Projects operating in Geneva and New York, and a wide range of partners.

WILPF's country Sections around the world operate in very different environments and the work differs between Sections. The organisation's strength lies in its linkages between international, national, and local efforts to fulfil the aims and principles of the organisation. WILPF focuses on building the capacity of grassroots organisations to enhance their ability to use and develop existing international legal and political frameworks in order to achieve fundamental change in how States conceptualise and address issues of gender, justice, militarism, peace, and security. Our focus on education, information, and participation at the international level leads to concrete organizing and activism around the world, giving the organisation global and local ownership over the issues upon which it works.

WILPF's International Projects - the Women, Peace and Security Project (PeaceWomen Project/PW) and the Disarmament Project (Reaching Critical Will Project/RCW) - strive to ensure that the organisation's work at the UN is effective and relevant for local and national contexts. The projects also receive inputs from national Sections to help make our work at the international level diverse, accurate, and accountable. Information and recommendations provided by members in national Sections are taken to multilateral fora by the international staff. At the same time, information and analysis about what is happening internationally is disseminated for use by national Sections.

WILPF is a social movement organisation seeking to ensure continuity and consistency between issues, locations, and time periods. WILPF members and staff around the world have identified the core challenges and programmes of work under three broad areas: Challenge Militarism; Invest in Peace; Build the UN and Multilateralism. In addition to that, WILPF constantly works on adopting to the changing global environment in order to strengthen and build the organisation.

WILPF's overall aims and principles are to:

- Bring together women of different political beliefs and philosophies who are united in their determination to study, make known and help abolish the causes and the legitimization of war;



- Work toward world peace; total and universal disarmament; the abolition of violence and coercion in the settlement of conflict and its replacement in every case by prevention, negotiation and conciliation;
- Strengthen multilateralism and support the civil society to democratize the United Nations system;
- Support the continuous development and implementation of international and humanitarian law; promote political and social equality and economic equity; contribute towards co-operation among all people; and enhance environmentally sustainable development.

Programme Priorities 2011-2015:

War, violence, and militarism impact women differently than men and deepen the challenges women face as a consequence of the breakdown of the rule of law and the domination of power structures in societies. The marginalization of women's rights, the proliferation and use of weapons, and the inequality of gender relations are not only consequences of unrest but are the root causes of conflict. Patterns and violation of human rights exist not only during conflict but also before and after conflict. Furthermore, security built on militarism or assumptions that military action, or the threat of it, can solve problems have severe and long-term consequences and must be challenged. To effectively tackle these issues, we must monitor, engage and strengthen partners, states, and the international community.

WILPF continues to refocus the discourse on the causes of conflict to tackle widespread violence against women through activism, advocacy, and action. Building and maintaining sustainable peace cannot be achieved while women are excluded from decision-making and denied their rights. Indeed, engendering development, disarmament, and security policies contributes to the global effort to promote human dignity and human security.

To address these issues, WILPF's programme priorities for 2011-2015 are to **challenge militarism; invest in peace; and strengthen the UN**, with the overall aim to redefining Security. The international programme is developed to ensure a joint and comprehensive approach within the organization.

Challenge Militarism

Security built on militarism and assumptions that military action, or the threat of it, can solve problems and conflicts have severe and long-term consequences. These 'traditional' security approaches have proven to bring about adverse economic and political consequences that do not avoid conflict and can even increase injustice and inequality. WILPF strongly advocates rethinking security to broaden the perspective beyond the scope of solely military security. Hence, when we refer to "security" in our work and in this document, we refer to the broad understanding of "human security".

During the period 2011-2015, WILPF will continue to challenge militarism by redefining security. WILPF will provide information, evidence and lobbying tools for increased and focused protest of military security concepts, institutions, and spending, and will urge for human and economic resources to be converted to human, economic, and environmental security needs. In this work, disarmament is a main priority. War can only be avoided by actions focused on prevention of conflict, regulation of the arms trade, and disarmament.



Strategies:

- ⤴ Make WILPF's position clear through statements on conflicts, especially about their causes and prevention;
- ⤴ Oppose military security structures and policies and support and initiate alternatives;
- ⤴ Expose and inform about the interests of the military-industrial complex and its effect on people and the environment through arms production, wars, and occupations;
- ⤴ Disclose military spending, publicise figures, show the alternatives, compare military research and development compared to peace research budgets;
- ⤴ Support anti-NATO efforts;
- ⤴ Highlight the connection between armament policies, gender relations, patriarchy, and concepts of masculinity;
- ⤴ Demand the broader inclusion of women as decision- and policy-makers on issues related to disarmament, arms control, and non-proliferation;
- ⤴ Monitor and advocate for disarmament through multilateral processes, including the nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty and the Conference on Disarmament;
- ⤴ Work for nuclear disarmament by opposing modernization programmes, promoting a nuclear weapons convention, and demanding compliance with disarmament obligations;
- ⤴ Highlight the illegality of the use of nuclear weapons under international humanitarian law and support efforts that challenge nuclear deterrence theories;
- ⤴ Participate in the Global Day on Action against Military Spending and other key campaigns;
- ⤴ Work for successful negotiations of a robust, legally-binding Arms Trade Treaty;
- ⤴ Develop advocacy, education and awareness campaigns for action and/or policy developments; and
- ⤴ Connect disarmament demands to economic and social justice issues in national Sections.

In order to support Section's political lobbying, the international offices in Geneva and New York will continue to provide Sections with background material and information.

Invest in Peace

The marginalization of women's rights, the proliferation of arms, and the inequality of gender relations are not only a consequence of unrest but are some of the root causes of conflict. The effects of gender discrimination and inequality can be seen across many sectors. Building and maintaining sustainable peace cannot be achieved while women are excluded from decision-making and denied their rights. The promotion and realization of human rights including gender, economic, and social equality, and a functioning civil society are decisive for sustainable peace and development. Women's active role in conflict prevention and the process of building peace is crucial to the achievement of sustainable peace and security.

In parallel to the changing context of conflict, there is growing recognition of the valuable contribution women can make to conflict prevention and the building of sustainable peace, and the skills and resources they bring to these processes. United Nations Security Council resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security highlights the importance of women's participation in all levels of decision-making in the sphere of peace and security, as well as the need for an integrated gender perspective. Since 2000, SCR 1325 has been followed by four additional resolutions: 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960, which together form the Women Peace and Security agenda (WPS agenda).

During the period 2011-2015, WILPF will continue monitoring and advocating for the full implementation of the WPS agenda in the UN Security Council and by all Member States as well as



focus on the work of the UN Human Rights system for further implementation.¹

Strategies:

- ✦ Overall, WILPF will advance the rights and concerns of women, including issues of access to justice, and specifically prosecutions and reparations; participation; and socio-economic rights;
- ✦ Analyse, monitor, and advocate in sectors such as military spending, the arms trade, and disarmament in relation to implementation of the WPS agenda and investing in peace;
- ✦ Inform about the climate crisis, focusing on the contribution of the military sector to climate change, challenging the lie that nuclear power is a safe and clean alternative energy source, and advocating for investment in renewable energy technologies;
- ✦ Utilize a gender perspective in analysing economic and social justice;
- ✦ Enhance access, ownership, and awareness of the WPS agenda at local level and national level;
- ✦ Raise awareness and understanding at a national level with targeted women's civil society organisations vis-à-vis the integrated approach to Women, Peace and Security; and
- ✦ Develop advocacy, education, and awareness campaigns for action and/or policy developments.

In order to support Section's political lobbying, the international offices in Geneva and New York will continue to provide Sections with background material and information.

Strengthen the UN

From the outset WILPF called for an "organization of the society of nations" and in 1919 welcomed the establishment of the League of Nations and actively followed its work. In 1948, WILPF was in the first group of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to receive consultative status with the United Nations through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), under Article 71 of the UN Charter, the entry point for NGOs. Since its establishment, WILPF has monitored and supported the United Nations, but has also often been critical when governments, who drive and comprise the UN, fail to uphold the spirit and letter of the UN Charter.

WILPF works with the UN system in order to influence the international policy framework on women, peace and security, human rights, and disarmament. A key component in WILPF's strategy is scrutinizing, monitoring, and addressing the work of multilateral UN bodies.² Part of the strategy is to educate and influence at the international level through interaction with diplomats and foreign affairs ministries.

During the period 2011-2015, WILPF will continue to monitor and report on the UN to stimulate discussion, awareness, and a renewed commitment to the United Nations system. Furthermore, WILPF aims to coordinate engagement between the national Sections and International Offices with government policy at the General Assembly to promote increased compliance, accountability, respect, and implementation for UN resolutions and treaties.

Strategies:

- ✦ The projects, Offices, and UN representatives will routinely send updates to Sections when their governments make statements or state positions at the UN;

¹ "Human Rights System" refers to a range of bodies and mechanism including: Treaty bodies (particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women/ CEDAW), the Human Rights Council, Special Rapporteur and Special Procedures.

² The Security Council; General Assembly (GA); Human Rights Council (HRC); Human Rights system (including CEDAW); Disarmament fora (Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Arms Trade Treaty, 1st Committee of GA, and the Conference on Disarmament), the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping (C-34)



- ✦ Advocate for Security Council implementation of the WPS agenda and Article 26 of the UN Charter;
- ✦ In New York WILPF will monitor and report on the work of the Security Council and the General Assembly, in particular the GA First Committee on international security and disarmament issues and the GA Third Committee on social humanitarian and cultural issues, and the Commission on the Status of Women;
- ✦ In Geneva, WILPF will present statements on human rights issues and conflict areas at the Human Rights Council and will monitor the CEDAW Committee and the Conference on Disarmament;
- ✦ Promote the improvement and reorganization of the UN system in order to fulfil the spirit of the UN charter;
- ✦ Provide input (formal and informal) to the UN system reflecting the holistic aspects of the Women, Peace and Security agenda;
- ✦ Support UN Women to ensure that it ends up with real power and authority;
- ✦ Establish a communication system to ensure links between local/national activities and work at international level, going both ways;
- ✦ Provide recommendations and policy advice on legal approaches related to the WPS agenda to the Human Rights mechanisms, including the treaty bodies and the Human Rights Council;
- ✦ Increase the understanding of Member States/UN/Civil Society on the linkage between disarmament, militarism, military expenditure, insecurity, and the denial of human rights;
- ✦ Monitor systems to track the inclusion of the WPS agenda in Security Council resolutions and work across their geographic and thematic work; and
- ✦ Provide accountability mechanisms for national actors to use in advocacy and local work.

Implementing our Programme

This international programme identifies priorities for our Sections, staff, and offices and provides opportunities for simultaneous coordinated WILPF action. For this work to be successful, it is crucial that Sections are able to take unified action and to hold their states accountable for international policy. In order to reach our programme priorities, WILPF aims to base the work on an integrated approach, so that activities on different levels are related to, and strengthen, one another.

WILPF's integrated approach to challenge militarism, invest in peace, and strengthen the UN

For almost a century WILPF has articulated the need to address the root causes of war and the necessity of the participation of women, as being fundamental both to prevention and ultimately to ending armed conflict as a means of dispute resolution. Central to the WILPF approach at the national and international levels is integrating these subject areas in our advocacy and activism. It is not feasible to invest in peace without challenging militarism and strengthening multilateralism. Investing in peace requires implementation of the Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security³ while ensuring development and respect for human rights and supporting disarmament programmes and regulation of the arms trade. It is not feasible to discuss disarmament, both weapons of mass destruction and conventional, without consideration of international humanitarian law, gender, and human rights. It is not feasible to ignore the economic and social costs of resource exploitation and arms production, in particular from a gender perspective. In all of these areas it is not feasible that the institutions charged with their consideration do so in isolation from the workings of others.

³ UN Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010) together constitute the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS agenda).



Fundamental to all is the need to look at the reality in the countries where the issues are most burning. For this, the role of civil society at the local, grassroots level is absolutely vital.

Not only are the subject areas isolated but also the mechanisms for dealing with them are fragmented. For instance, although there now exists a system of international law, legal doctrines and policies addressing conflict, with multilateral and regional mechanisms, fragmentation and compartmentalization has prevented the system from realizing its potential. WILPF aims to address the challenges of the changed international environment to make the system more effective. Crucial to this approach is the capacity of civil society to translate what is occurring in countries into human rights terms and to ensure that what is actually being experienced or observed can be addressed to the appropriate body so that there can be timely and effective response. Equally important is the access to the key mechanisms and the monitoring of policy developments. The capacity to connect the local to the global is critical to achieving WILPF's goals.

WILPF is uniquely positioned to work towards our visions, having a large number of Sections, many in conflict and post-conflict countries, as well as affiliated organisations with whom we work closely. Within the Secretariat in Geneva, we have experts who provide information on reporting, give direct assistance and input into reports to the UN mechanisms, and undertake advocacy. Through WILPF's work on disarmament and gender through the PeaceWomen project and the Reaching Critical Will project, WILPF can contribute to the analysis of militarization and its impact on the implementation of the Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.

What is set out in this programme is a pragmatic and achievable approach to ending the compartmentalization of peace, security, development, disarmament, and human rights. By linking the Women, Peace and Security agenda with human rights and disarmament, and ensuring that the issues are raised in all the relevant fora, WILPF will contribute to fulfilling the goals of challenging militarism, investing in peace, and strengthening the UN. Simultaneous work on the local, national and global level is necessary.

WILPF's integrated approach from the local to the global

WILPF's strength lies in its linkages between international, national, and local efforts to fulfil the aims and programme strategies. It is critical that we strengthen links between international and national work to maximize the implementation at all levels. We aim to advance these connections between local and international policy and implementation by improving the flow of information from the international level to the local level.

WILPF has been engaged in gender, peace, and security issues for over 95 years and has been able to show a number of sustainable results despite limited funding and mainly relying on voluntary resources. In order for our work to continue work efficiently, communication, structure and organization is crucial.

The voice and input from civil society is fundamental to ensure the knowledge and protection of human rights. WILPF has built upon and ensured a structure of national Sections to provide specific country context analysis on human rights issues and the Women, Peace, and Security agenda.

WILPF International Secretariat will focus on institutional learning and transfer of knowledge between the national Sections and various programmes; this will ensure that the lessons learned from local initiatives are spread throughout the organisation. It will also ensure an element of sustained knowledge and constant communication that exceeds this particular programme period.



WILPF does not work alone, but in partnership with a number of organisations, locally, regionally, and internationally. Through these partnerships there is a mutual sharing of information and expertise in order to facilitate a more concrete and coherent response to the Women, Peace, and Security, disarmament, and human rights issues. Although the programme is ambitious in scope and objectives, working with already established partnerships, will increase the ability to reach the targets. The cooperation is in itself a factor for sustainability, as the knowledge gained from the programme will be spread to a large number of organisations.

The national Sections constitute the foundation of WILPF. In order for our organizations to work more efficiently, it is important both to strengthen the Sections, and to improve communication and organization structures. Sections can be strengthened by for example increased membership and fundraising. The structure can be improved by for example better communication through an updated website, monthly newsletters, reports, interaction between sections, and administrators at the International Offices. Building WILPF will both regarding membership and structures should be integrated in all identified focus areas.

The programme is:

- ⤴ Decided at the International Congress, the highest decision making body of WILPF;
- ⤴ Focused and prioritised by an International Board made up of representatives from each Section and its Executive Committee;
- ⤴ Elaborated and implemented through the Executive Committee, the International Board, National Sections, the International Projects (RCW and PW), thematic Working Groups and Standing Committees that broaden the basis for participation in WILPF's international work and create closer links between the national, regional, and international levels;
- ⤴ Carried out through Sections working on the national level in cooperation with the international Secretariat and the UNO

WILPF Sections/Groups

Africa: Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Nigeria and Sierra Leone

Middle East: Israel, Lebanon and Palestine

Europe: Albania, Belarus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and UK

South Asia: India, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan

Asia-Pacific: Aotearoa/New Zealand, Australia, French Polynesia, Japan, Philippines

Americas: Argentina, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru, USA

WILPF Executive Committee and International representatives (TBC):

Presidents	International Representatives	International Representatives
	<i>UN Geneva:</i>	<i>ILO Geneva:</i>
Vice-Presidents	<i>UN New York:</i>	
Treasurer	<i>UNESCO Paris:</i>	<i>FAO Rome:</i>