



**Twenty Resolutions Adopted by the
International Congress of Women
The Hague, Holland: 28 April - 1 May, 1915**

I. WOMEN AND WAR

1. Protest

We women, in International Congress assembled, protest against the madness and the horror of war, involving as it does a reckless sacrifice of human life and the destruction of so much that humanity has laboured through centuries to build up.

2. Women's Sufferings in War

This International Congress of Women opposes the assumption that women can be protected under the conditions of modern warfare. It protests vehemently against the odious wrongs of which women are the victims in time of war, and especially against the horrible violation of women which attends all war.

II. ACTION TOWARDS PEACE

3. The Peace Settlement

This International Congress of Women of different nations, classes, creeds and parties is united in expressing sympathy with the suffering of all, whatever their nationality, who are fighting for their country or labouring under the burden of war. Since the mass of the people in each of the countries now at war believe themselves to be fighting, not as aggressors but in self-defence and for their national existence, there can be no irreconcilable differences between them, and their common ideals afford a basis upon which a magnanimous and honourable peace might be established. The Congress therefore urges the governments of the world to put an end to this bloodshed, and to begin peace negotiations. It demands that the peace which follows shall be permanent and therefore based on principles of justice, including those laid down in the resolutions' adopted by this Congress, namely:

- That no territory should be transferred without the consent of the men and women in it, and that the right of conquest should not be recognized.
- That autonomy and a democratic parliament should not be refused to any people.
- That the governments of all nations should come to an agreement to refer future international disputes to arbitration or conciliation and to bring social, moral and economic pressure to bear upon any country which resorts to arms.
- That foreign politics should be subject to democratic control.
- That women should be granted equal political rights with men.

4. Continuous Mediation

This International Congress of Women resolves to ask the neutral countries to take immediate steps to create a conference of neutral nations which shall without delay offer continuous mediation. The conference shall invite suggestions for settlement from each of the belligerent nations and in any case shall submit to all of them simultaneously reasonable proposals as a basis of peace.

III. PRINCIPLES OF A PERMANENT PEACE

5. Respect for Nationality

This International Congress of Women, recognizing the right of the people to self-government, affirms that there should be no transference of territory without the consent of the men and

women residing therein, and urges that autonomy and a democratic parliament should not be refused to any people.

6. Arbitration and Conciliation

This International Congress of Women, believing that war is the negation of progress and civilization, urges the govern-merits of all nations to come to an agreement to refer future International disputes to arbitration and conciliation.

7. International pressure

This International Congress of Women urges the governments of all nations to come to an agreement to unite in bringing social, moral and economic pressure to bear upon any country, which resorts to arms instead of referring its case to arbitration or conciliation.

8. Democratic Control of Foreign Policy

Since war is commonly brought about not by the mass of the people, who do not desire it, but by groups representing particular interests, this International Congress of Women urges that Foreign Politics shall be subject to Democratic Control; and declares that It can only recognize as democratic a system which includes the equal representation of men and women.

9. The Enfranchisement of Women

Since the combined influence of the women of all countries is one of the strongest forces for the prevention of war, and since women can only have full responsibility and effective Influence when they have equal political rights with men, this International Congress of Women demands their political enfranchisement.

IV. INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

10. Third Hague Conference

This International Congress of Women urges that a third Hague Conference be convened immediately after the war.

11. International Organisation

This International Congress of Women urges that the organization of the Society of Nations should be further developed on the basis of a constructive peace, and that it should include:

- a. As a development of the Hague Court of Arbitration, a permanent International Court of Justice to settle questions or differences of a justifiable character, such as arise on the interpretation of treaty rights or of the law of nations.
- b. As a development of the constructive work of the Hague Conference, a permanent International Conference holding regular meetings in which women should take part, to deal not with the rules of warfare but with practical proposals for further international cooperation among the states. This conference should be so constituted that it could formulate and enforce those principles of justice, equity and good will in accordance with which the struggles of subject communities could be more fully recognized and the interests and rights not only of the great powers and small nations, but also those of weaker countries and primitive peoples gradually adjusted under an enlightened international public opinion.

The International Conference shall appoint: A permanent Council of Conciliation and Investigation for the settlement of international differences arising from economic competition, expanding commerce, Increasing population and changes in social and political standards.

12. General Disarmament

The International Congress of Women, advocating universal disarmament and realising that it can only be secured by international agreement, urges, as a step to this end, that all countries should, by such an International agreement, take over the manufacture of arms and munitions of war and should control all international traffic in the same. It sees in the private profits accruing from the great armament factories a powerful hindrance to the abolition of war.

13. Commerce and Investments

- a. The International Congress of Women urges that in all countries there shall be liberty of commerce, that the seas shall be free and the trade routes open on equal terms to the shipping of all nations.

b. Inasmuch as the investment by capitalists of one country in the resources of another and the claims arising there from are a fertile source of international complications, this International Congress of Women urges the widest possible acceptance of the principle that such investments shall be made at the risk of the investor, without claim to the official protection of his government.

14. National Foreign Policy

a. This International Congress of Women demands that all secret treaties shall be void and that for the ratification of future treaties, the participation of at least the legislature of every government shall be necessary.

b. This International Congress of Women recommends that National Commissions be created and International Conferences convened for the scientific study and elaboration of the principles and conditions of permanent peace, which might contribute to the development of an International Federation.

These commissions and conferences should be recognized by the governments and should include women in their deliberations.

15. Women in National and International Politics

This International Congress of Women declares it to be essential both nationally and internationally to put into practice and principle that women should share all civil and political rights and responsibilities on the same terms as men.

V. THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

16. This International Congress of Women urges the necessity of so directing the education of children that their thoughts and desires may be directed towards the ideal of constructive peace.

VI. WOMEN AND THE PEACE SETTLEMENT CONFERENCE

17. This International Congress of Women urges, that in the interests of lasting peace and civilization, the conference which shall frame the peace settlement after the war should pass a resolution affirming the need in all countries of extending the parliamentary franchise to women.

18. This International Congress of Women urges that representatives of the people should take part in the conference that shall frame the peace settlement after the war, and claims that amongst them women should be included.

VII. ACTION TO BE TAKEN

19. Women's Voice in the Peace Settlement

This International Congress of Women resolves that an international meeting of women shall be held in the same place and at the same time as the Conference of the Powers which shall frame the terms of the peace settlement after the war for the purpose of presenting practical proposals to that conference.

20. Envoys to the Governments

In order to urge the governments of the world to put an end to this bloodshed and to establish a just and lasting peace, this International Congress of Women delegates envoys to carry the message expressed in the Congress Resolutions to the rulers of the belligerent and neutral nations of Europe and to the President of the United States.

These envoys shall be women of both neutral and belligerent nations, appointed by the International Committee of this Congress. They shall report the result of their missions to the International Women's Committee for Constructive Peace as a basis for further action.

The text of this document is taken from 'Towards Permanent Peace: A record of the Women's International Congress held at the Hague, 28 April – 1 May 1915