Dear \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ MP

Last November, I attended a seminar in London organised by the Women’s International League for Peace & Freedom (UK WILPF), to give voice to women refugees and raise awareness of their plight. Their testimony convinced me that the British the asylum process under the current Conservative Government is built on an assumption of disbelief rather than a culture of compassion.

From this event, UK WILPF produced a booklet, Tales from Women Seeking Asylum, detailing the stories of three women who have come to the UK seeking refuge. I have attached a copy of this booklet for you to read.

It is no surprise to me that now more than a hundred women are on hunger strike at Yarl’s Wood, the immigration detention centre in Bedfordshire, to protest the conditions in which they are imprisoned. Their detention ignores UN and international guidelines on how women refugees should be treated when they apply for asylum.

The human cost of indefinite detention is immeasurable; these women will suffer long-term damage to their physical and mental health, while their children experience the distress of separation. The financial cost is high; indefinite detention is robbing people of their lives and taxpayers of their money.

Every day that indefinite immigration detention exists further undermines Britain’s tradition of civil liberties. Indefinite detention is neither right nor necessary, and there are practical and humane alternatives to detention which allow people to contribute to society.

I urge you to ensure that the British Government and the Immigration officers stick to justice and compassion as the guiding principles in the treatment of asylum seekers, forced migrants and refugees.

I ask you to speak out in support of the women in Yarl’s Wood.

Kind regards,

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