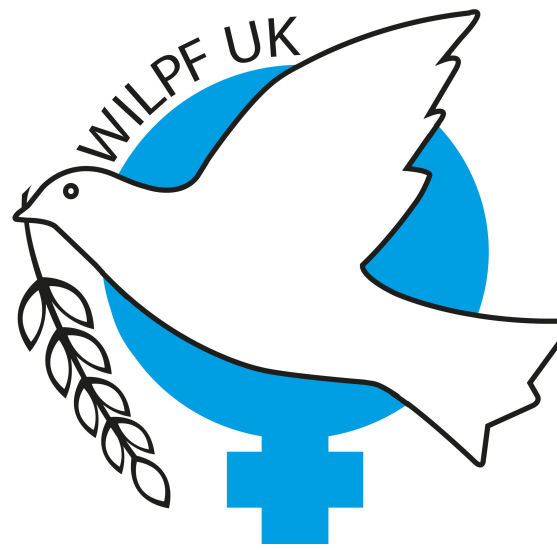


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PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AT WWI CENTENARY, WOMEN *STILL* EXCLUDED FROM PEACE PROCESSES

In 1914, within an hour of the delivery of the Kingsway Hall resolutions to Downing Street, Britain's ultimatum to Germany expired and the countries were at war. WILPF UK is re-enacting the rally from 11 am to 12 pm on 4 August 2014, near Holborn underground station, and will then deliver a letter to 10 Downing Street requesting meetings with ministers to discuss peaceful solutions to the world's conflicts.

Today is the centenary of the women's anti-war rally held at Kingsway Hall, Holborn, and the centenary of the declaration of war on Germany, and we, the women of WILPF UK, urgently call on the Government to do more to find solutions to conflict through negotiation and to reaffirm its commitment to involving women in every level of peace-building.

By commemorating the rally held on 4 August 1914, WILPF UK (the longest-serving women's peace organisation) reminds those in power that women are crucial to peace. Women around the world offer non-violent alternatives to militarism and violence. Earlier this year, WILPF International helped bring women activists from Syria to the Geneva II talks, where *they were not admitted to the discussions*.

In every conflict, in every country, women are integral to the creation of stability, yet they are almost always excluded from all negotiations, including ceasefires, peace resolutions and post-conflict nation building.

The UK is one of six countries that export more than 75 per cent of the world's weapons, including to 27 countries the UK designated as a 'country of concern' (including Saudi Arabia, China and Zimbabwe). WILPF UK urges the UK Government to stop the sale of arms, particularly to all countries in areas of tension or conflict; to work towards reducing our economic dependence on the sale of arms, since arms fuel conflict; and to commit to participating in specific actions to help prevent violence and conflict wherever and whenever possible.

As an important partner in the recent Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, WILPF continues to challenge systemic problems by calling for gender equality, disarmament and participation. We do this through our PeaceWomen, Reaching Critical Will and Women Stop War campaigns and programmes.

Let's not be too late this time. Include women in every aspect of conflict resolution, negotiation and peace-building.

ENDS

Notes for editors:

- **About WILPF:** The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is an international non-profit, non-governmental (NGO) peace organisation with National Sections spanning every continent. We have Branches and groups across the UK. *Brighton and Hove; Leicester; London; Orpington; Scotland; Sheffield; Cornwall (group)*
- **An International Secretariat** works out of New York and Geneva and focuses on the work of the United Nations (UN). In 1948, WILPF was part of the first group of NGOs to receive consultative status with the UN through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). We also have consultative status with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
- **WILPF's mission** is to end and prevent war, ensure that women are represented at all levels in the peace-building process, defend the human rights of women, and promote social, economic and political justice.
- To achieve this mission, **WILPF conducts programs** in three areas:
 - Disarmament; www.reachingcriticalwill.org
 - Gender, Peace and Security; www.peacewomen.org
 - Human Rights
- **Crisis Response:** During periods of transition or conflict, WILPF reacts by developing responsive projects. In 2014, WILPF has two active projects.
 - *MENA Agenda 1325:* This project advocates for women's rights in the Middle East and North African region by building the capacity of women to participate in peace and security issues and emphasises the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325.
 - *Women Organising for Change in Bosnia and Syria:* This project focuses on sharing and learning from the different experiences of women living in conflict-affected societies in order to better understand how to organise and participate in change.
- **Women's Power to Stop War** is WILPF's global movement in the year prior to our centenary in April 2015. The movement's goal is to strengthen, connect and celebrate the past 100 years of peace-building from a gender perspective. In April 2015, we will return to The Hague to host an international conference on Disarmament, Gender and Security and forge a new peace agenda for the 21st century. www.womenstopwar.org
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