



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

UK Section Limited Company number 14007981

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Consultative
Status with
United Nations
ECOSOC,
UNCTAD and
UNESCO

Special
Consultative
Relations
with FAO,
ILO and
UNICEF

4 October 2023

Dear Home Secretary

Upholding the United Nations Refugee Convention

The UK has a proud tradition of welcoming refugees who have suffered persecution, and Britain was a founding signatory to the United Nations Refugee Convention (1951). We in the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom UK (WILPF) are therefore concerned to hear the suggestion that the provisions of that Convention may be watered down.

The Convention promised to protect people fleeing war and persecution, and for the international community to offer sanctuary. WILPF believes that understanding the crises facing individuals and communities, and cooperating to find solutions, are the way forward for the international community and that all nations, and particularly the UK, need to play their part.

War and persecution often leave women at greater risk of trafficking, violence and sexual abuse, while in some parts of the world homosexuality is still criminalised – and women and men are targeted and killed for being gay. All these people fleeing persecution have a right to safety and we are morally bound to play our part.

WILPF is concerned that the UK has fallen short on this obligation:

- failing to provide safe routes into this country for asylum seekers
- failing to provide enough personnel to process those people who have reached Britain by whatever means
- failing to house them adequately
- failing children and people with disabilities in particular

The UK needs to continue to cooperate internationally to maintain the world order.

At the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, we are working to reach a world at peace. To achieve this, we are aware that we need international agreements, treaties and conventions. Following the horrors of the Second World War, the world came together to establish the United Nations (UN) to which WILPF has been accredited since its foundation. The UN has provided the majority of the world's nation states (currently 193) with a forum for discussion and a means of agreeing to rules whereby we can support each other, avoid conflicts and set up agencies to support this positive work.

We are seeking your assurance that the UK will continue to welcome those refugees who seek sanctuary here because of persecution in other countries and to provide them with safe routes to reach the UK.

Yours in peace

Paula Shaw
National Secretary, for WILPF UK Executive Committee

The Rt Hon Suella Braverman KC MP
Secretary of State for the Home Department
Home Office
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Challenge militarism: invest in peace



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The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Prime Minister
Cabinet Office
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