



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

UK Section Limited Company number 14007981

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[Facebook.com/UKWILPF](https://www.facebook.com/UKWILPF) | [Twitter @UKWILPF](https://twitter.com/UKWILPF)

Consultative
Status with
United Nations
ECOSOC,
UNCTAD and
UNESCO

14 January 2024

Dear Prime Minister

WILPF UK says NO to unleashing and accelerating violence against Yemen

Special
Consultative
Relations
with FAO,
ILO and
UNICEF

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is an international NGO which has Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council. WILPF UK is one of 40 sections in countries across the Americas, Africa, Europe, Asia-Pacific, South Asia, and the Middle East and North Africa.

Our origins lie in efforts from women around the world to bring an end to the bloody carnage afflicting Europe in 1915 and to demand respect for their right to equal representation. We continue to speak internationally for equality and peace.

More than a hundred years later, we condemn the UK Government for the decision and action to send British aircraft to collude and participate with the USA's actions in bombing Yemen.

We are horrified by your rush to expand the needless death and destruction in the Middle East. As a member of the UN Security Council, the UK's role is to take all and urgent actions to assure a ceasefire in Gaza and relief for the people of Gaza that could resolve the situation in the Red Sea.

We are mindful of the words of WILPF women at their first Congress in 1915:

"The people in each of the countries labouring under the burden of the war believe themselves to be fighting, not as aggressors but in self-defence. 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 governments of all nations must refer international disputes to arbitration or conciliation, and we can bring social, moral and economic pressure to bear upon any country which resorts to arms." WILPF Congress 1915

We understand this analysis to be as true today as it was 109 years ago. In addition, there are new international mechanisms in place – and skilled people able to act – in facilitating conciliation and developing mediation in international disputes. WILPF urges application of the principle of UNSCR1325 in insisting that the Government includes and listens to the voices of the women who are directly and disproportionately impacted by these decisions.

Millions of people face a bleak future, including death in floods and wildfires, while our government is burning up its resources in bombing Yemen and in fuelling the conflict in Ukraine with shipments of arms, as though they had been elected to escalate suffering and environmental catastrophe while the planet hurtles to destruction.

.../...

Please inform us what resources HM Government allocates to:

- achieving the vital and necessary peaceful settlement of international disputes
- development of negotiation and conciliation training and de-escalation work
- peace-building procedures and research
- actions to apply international humanitarian law

The physical, social and political damage and costs inflicted by bombs and bullets, and war and weapons, are incalculable, inflicted by an ever-increasing and astronomical UK military budget. Yet, in stark contrast, it is clear that government commitment and value given to peaceful processes and actions is virtually non-existent. Capitalist profits and profiteering are fuelling the UK war industry and the UK war machine, and WILPF condemns this unequivocally.

Yours in peace

Paula Shaw
National Secretary
for WILPF UK Executive Committee

The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak MP
Prime Minister
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
London SW1A 2AS



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Paula Shaw
National Secretary
for WILPF UK Executive Committee

The Rt Hon Lord Cameron
Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs
Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
King Charles Street
London SW1A 2AH



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Challenge militarism: invest in peace

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The Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP
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Ministry of Defence
Whitehall
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