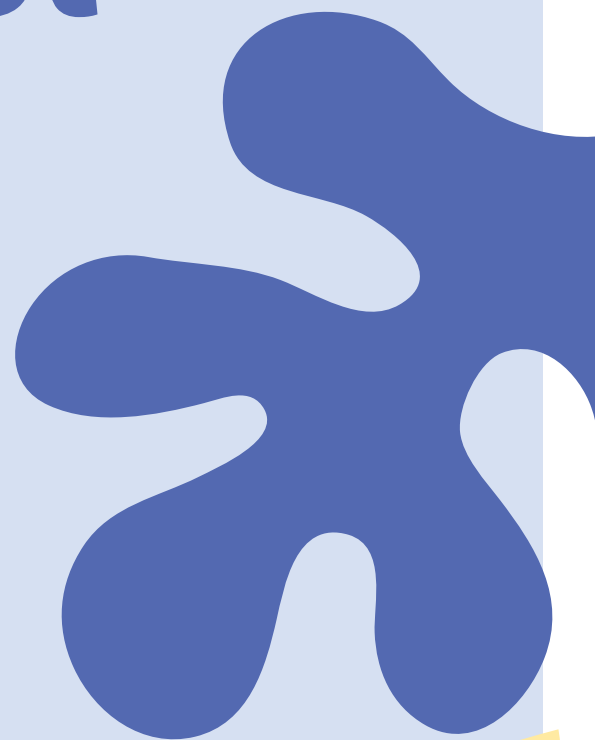




# Stories of Feminist Peace

WILPF ANNUAL  
REPORT 2023





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# About WILPF



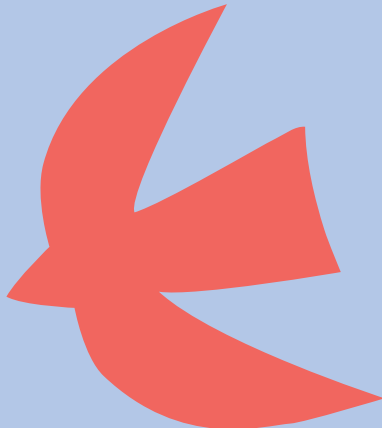
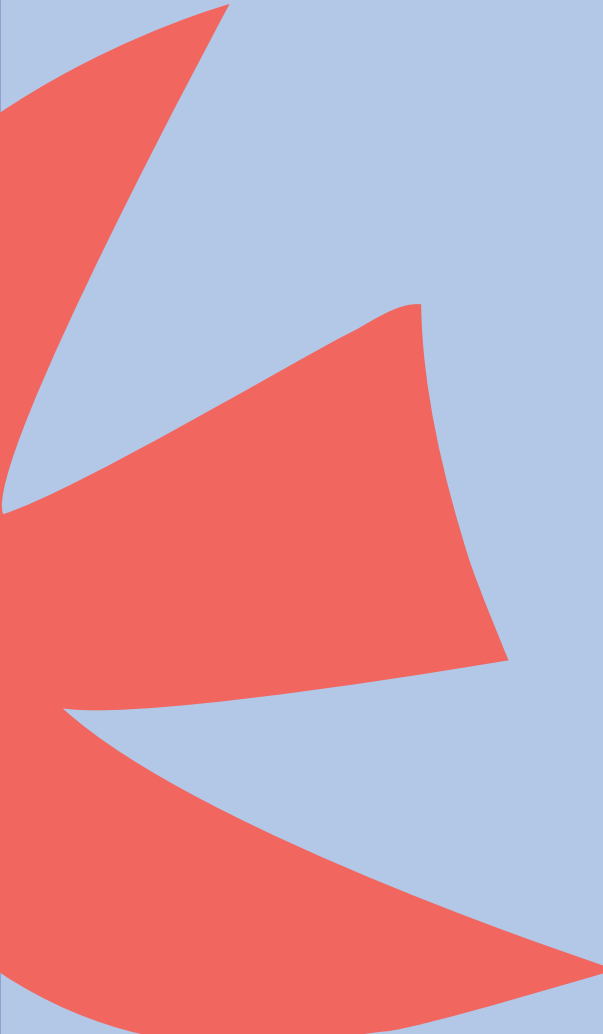
Founded in 1915, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is a membership-based feminist peacebuilding organisation with presence and impact around the world.

Our global movement includes member Sections and Groups in over 40 countries across the Americas, Africa, Europe, Asia-Pacific, South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa.

Feminist, pacifist and antimilitarist in our values and approach, we promote and amplify the voices of women and allies who are advancing peaceful and sustainable alternatives to crises and conflicts.

As a mobiliser, convenor and thought leader, we work hand in hand with activists, networks, coalitions, platforms and civil society organisations worldwide to advance a future of peace, justice and equality for all.

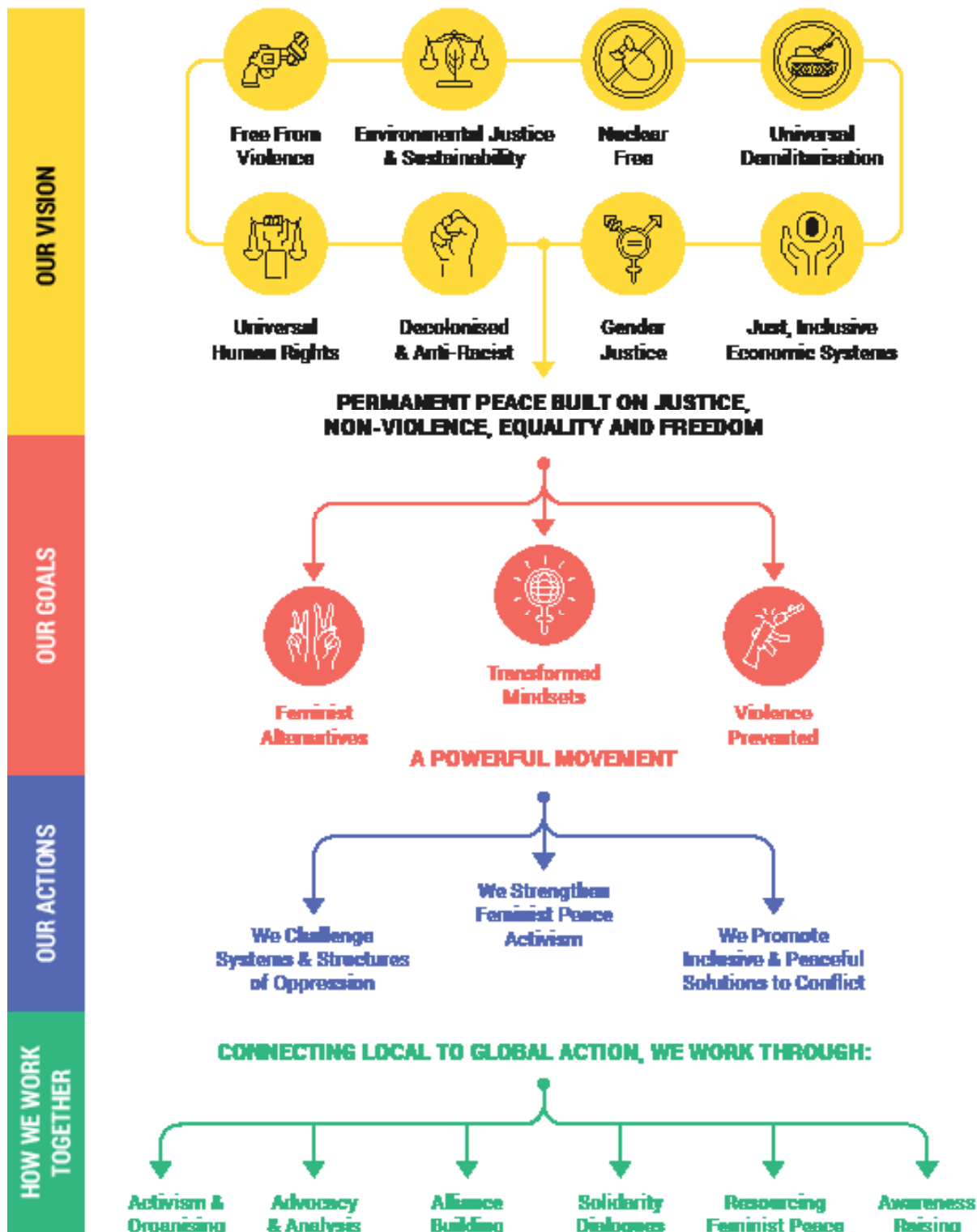
# About Stories of Feminist Peace 2023



In *Stories of Feminist Peace 2023*, we're sharing a look at how our worldwide community of feminist peace activists and allies continued working relentlessly for change and a brighter future ahead.

It was all in pursuit of our four key goals: to transform mindsets, prevent violence, replace systems of oppression with feminist alternatives and build a powerful movement.

# Our Feminist Path to Peace



# Opening Message

Dear WILPF community,

Welcome to *Stories of Feminist Peace 2023* — a glimpse into a year that tested, transformed and propelled us forward. More than a report, it's a living testament to our steadfast commitment to a world defined by peace, justice and freedom for all.

Get ready to be inspired and embark on a journey, experiencing the resounding echoes of advocacy from Palestine to Australia, delving into research illuminating global issues, feeling the pulse of our movement's growth, witnessing transformative efforts breathing life into reshaping the peace table and beholding activism sculpting a world where feminist peace flourishes.

The most beautiful thing about stories is that they can capture reality in ways that we feel as well as observe — and as we know, if you don't feel it you don't believe it.

As we wade into 2024, we need to learn from our stories. The present is, indeed, informed by the past and that means being brave enough to change, to embrace what we need to take with us and to leave behind those things which we know will undo us. We have to avoid the traps set by patriarchy, to make sure that the debates we need to have never descend into animus but understanding.

So much has been learned over the course of WILPF's 108 years and so much is still to come. We should be bold in thinking and acting differently, so that the past we create becomes the future that we want.

As you uncover the heart of our ongoing narrative, an open invitation awaits you. In every effort, a resounding call beckons, urging you to stand with us. Whether you've journeyed with us every step of the way or are contemplating your inaugural involvement, know that we welcome and appreciate everyone eager to be part of this transformative adventure.

Let's weave the chapters of change together.

We need you — but more importantly, the world needs you.

Thanks for reading, watching, listening and discovering. However you're involved with WILPF, thank you for being by our side on this journey. We couldn't do it without you.

**Sylvie Jacqueline Ndongmo**

**President, WILPF International Board**

**Madeleine Rees**

**WILPF Secretary-General**

# 01

## TRANSFORMING MINDSETS



*From linking climate change with disarmament at COP28 to producing bold new research on masculinities and delivering feminist analysis of Ukraine's post-conflict recovery and raising awareness of how witchcraft impacts the human rights of women in Ghana, we worked to shift dominant attitudes and beliefs toward mindsets that champion true peace and security.*



## Linking Militarism and the Climate Crisis at COP28

Taking place from 30 November to 12 December in Dubai, COP28 presented a crucial entry point for drawing attention to the relationship between militarism, the climate crisis and gender issues, with a particular focus on the MENA region. A WILPF delegation of five feminist peace activists – including three from the MENA region – was there to advance key advocacy goals focused on the critical role of demilitarisation in addressing the climate crisis.

We went to highlight how demilitarisation can address the climate crisis.



Through participation in various events, actions and opportunities over the course of COP28, the delegation was successful in centring and amplifying the importance of demilitarisation for climate justice within COP28, forging new alliances and partnerships with like-minded activists from around the world and securing major media coverage. **[Read more about our key advocacy achievements and highlights.](#)**

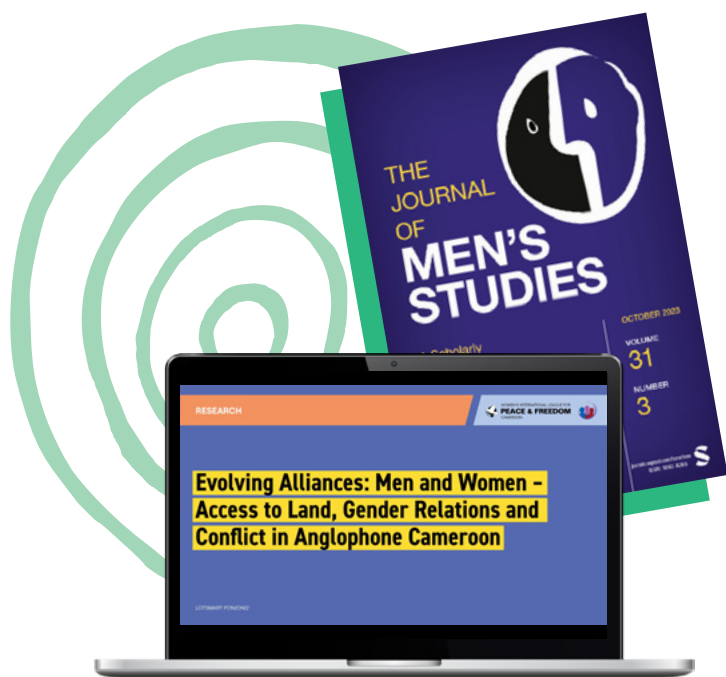
## Producing Bold New Research to Mobilise Men for Feminist Peace

Recognising that men are ultimately an integral part of the road to feminist peace, but that militarised masculinities pose a major threat to peace and security for people and the planet, we continued pursuing bold new research to better understand the gendered dimensions of conflict, violence and movement building. In 2023, we disseminated two new key publications: **Men, Masculinities and the Prospects of Feminist Peace in Cameroon** and **Beyond Stereotypes: Afghan Men as Allies for Gender Equality and Feminist Peace**. Both publications explore the relationship between men and the feminist peace movement in areas impacted by conflict and offer recommendations for mobilising men in support of peaceful solutions to violence.



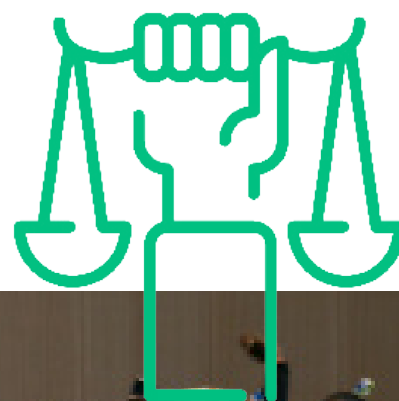
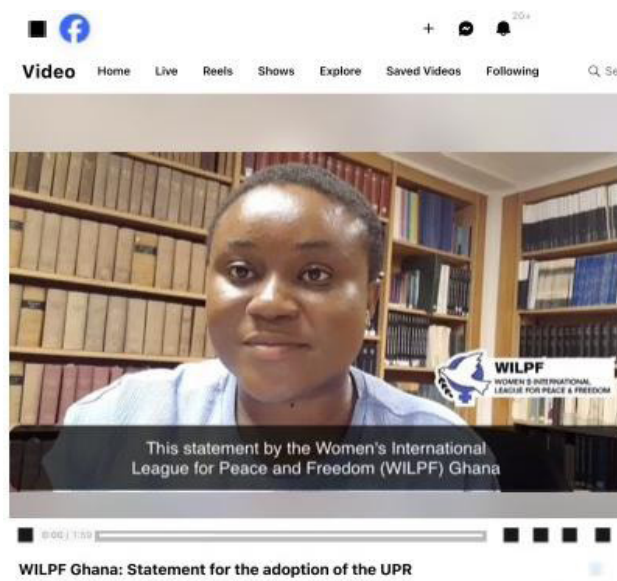
## Reaching New Spaces With Analysis of Ukraine's Post Conflict Reconstruction and Recovery

Our **analysis of Ukraine's post-conflict reconstruction initiatives** through the lens of feminist political economy, published in February 2023, drew global attention and enabled WILPF to reach new spaces. For example, we were invited to speak about the analysis at the People's Peace Festival in Malmö, Sweden and part of the analysis was published in Aftonbladet, one of the largest daily newspapers in the Nordic countries. The analysis also received widespread international attention in news outlets and activist platforms.



## WILPF Ghana Explored the Impact of Witchcraft on Women's Human Rights

We explored the impact of witchcraft on the human rights of women in northern Ghana. Carried out in collaboration with other national organisations, the project sought to raise awareness of witchcraft on the human rights of widows and other women in vulnerable situations in remote areas of northern Ghana as well as engage community members in human rights education activities. This project is connected with WILPF Ghana's ongoing local and national advocacy efforts on this critical topic.





# 02

## PREVENTING VIOLENCE



*We took action at the local, national and global levels to prevent violence and advance a future of feminist peace. This included coordinating multi-layered responses to new emergencies in the Middle East, demanding an end to nuclearism in Australia and Russia and ensuring the world's attention remained on the need to end the ongoing violence in Ukraine and Afghanistan.*

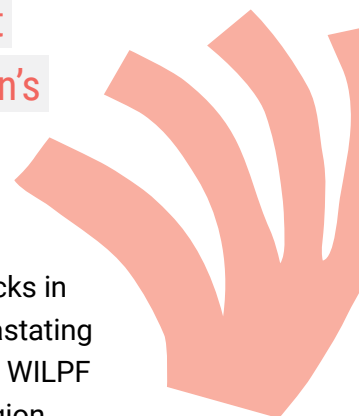
## Emergency Response in the Middle East

In 2023, two new major events rocked the Middle East: the devastating earthquake that struck Syria and Turkey in February, and the launch of Israel's new war against Palestine. While continuing to address ongoing crises in the region, we took immediate action to provide solidarity funding assistance and support to 22 grassroots women's organisations in Syria and Turkey to help them sustain their roles as first responders, safeguard their communities and prevent organisational and individual collapse.



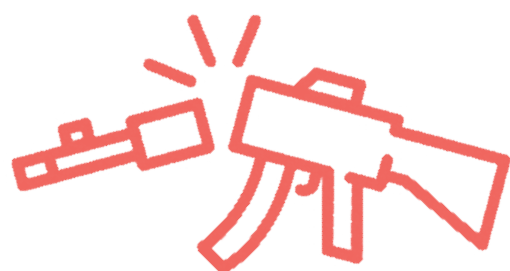
We took immediate action to provide solidarity funding assistance and support to 22 grassroots women's organisations in Syria and Turkey.

In response to the Hamas attacks in Israel and the consequent devastating and ongoing slaughter in Gaza, WILPF members across the MENA region and beyond worked tirelessly to issue statements, demand a ceasefire, organise demonstrations and help families directly impacted. This included launching a **feminist week of action against genocide in Gaza** in November, bringing together feminist peace activists from all over the world to raise our collective voice against violence. Advocacy with States was undertaken to assert legal obligations and other priorities to ensure the prevention of genocide and reassert the obligations flowing from the UNSC Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.



## Organising Against Nuclearism in Australia

In support of WILPF Australia's advocacy focus on disarmament and demilitarisation, we worked closely with antinuclear and other activists and organisers in Australia on these critical issues in 2023. We partnered with Wollongong Against War and Nukes to mobilise local communities against the proposed construction of a military base for nuclear-powered submarines, supported ICAN Australia's efforts against the Australia-United Kingdom-United States (AUKUS) military alliance, met with members of WILPF Australia to discuss ongoing work against weapons and war and much more.



## Responding to Russia's Nuclear Threats

In response to Russia's threats to use nuclear weapons in the wake of its invasion of Ukraine, we produced a series of **blogs** highlighting the grave risks of nuclear weapons and a **comprehensive toolkit** to empower activists to condemn nuclear threats, stigmatise nuclear weapons and promote the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. These resources are equipping WILPF members and allies with the information, language and tools they need to engage in meaningful and impactful action against the use of nuclear weapons.

As part of our efforts to raise awareness of Russia's nuclear threats and the human rights impacts of its nuclear weapons testing and production, we worked with the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and the World Council of Churches on a **joint submission** to the Universal Periodic Review about Russia's nuclear weapon activities and policies. We described violations linked to Russia's threats of using nuclear weapons and its failure to negotiate to achieve nuclear disarmament, presented concerns regarding Russia's nuclear weapons modernisation and spending.



## Keeping Afghanistan, Ukraine and Iran in the Spotlight

As the world and the media moved on to new crises, we remained steadfast in our commitment to keeping Afghanistan and Ukraine in the international spotlight. Working closely with our partners in and around Afghanistan, we advocated with the Human Rights Council for a stronger and more nuanced international response and continued to provide on-the-ground support to women's rights organisations and activists. WILPF has been at the forefront of the advocacy on gender apartheid in the contexts of both Afghanistan and Iran and has worked with multiple actors to try to ensure coherence of approaches and strategies.

## WILPF has been at the forefront of the advocacy on gender apartheid in the contexts of both Afghanistan and Iran.

We also continued to draw global attention to the ongoing war in Ukraine, sharing information, knowledge and research and supporting our partners' relief efforts. Technical and programmatic support was provided throughout 2023 to the Center for Social and Labor Research, an independent nonprofit based in Ukraine.



In the wake of the Iranian regime's ongoing violent repression of protests in Iran following the death of Mahsa Jina Amini on 16 September 2022 while in the custody of Iran's Morality Police for non-compliance with the compulsory Hijab law, we have continued to stand in solidarity with Iranian feminists and put pressure on the international community to take a stand for the human rights of women in Iran. In 2023, this work included the **publication of a joint letter** signed by 39 women's and human rights organisations calling on EU countries to summon Iranian ambassadors in unison to demand an end to violence and oppression of Iranian women.

# 03

## FEMINIST ALTERNATIVES



*We championed feminist alternatives that prioritise the well-being of people and the planet, putting forward recommendations for an inclusive peace table, calling for gender-sensitive approaches to conflict response in Syria and doubling down on our demands for disarmament.*



## Calling for Disarmament Through the Lens of Human Rights

We continued to use human rights advocacy to promote disarmament and challenge war profiteering, with a focus on holding the arms industry accountable for their human rights abuses. Key examples of this work include a **February 2023 submission** to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights highlighting the irresponsibility of the business sector in fueling firearms-related violence and an **oral statement** delivered on behalf of WILPF to the Human Rights Commission on the adoption of the Universal Periodic Review of France, highlighting the disproportionate use of force and discriminatory practices by the police.



## Supporting WILPF Colombia's Calls for a Feminist "Total Peace"

In February 2023, we hosted a delegation from WILPF/LIMPAL Colombia to the United Nations headquarters in New York City to take forward the need for a feminist approach to the government's newly announced "Total Peace" policy, and why a participatory process for Colombia's National Action Plan is essential for implementing the peace accord. This work helped increase the visibility of LIMPAL Colombia in New York, and provided the basis for further engagement with member state missions on these key issues.



## Elevating the Voices of Women on Redesigning the Peace Table

In 2023, we brought feminist peace activists from Syria, Libya and Nigeria together to better understand who is missing from the peace table, the limitations faced by women when it comes to participating and how the peace table can be reimagined through a feminist lens. The conversation focused on the continued failure of governments and the international community to include women in peace processes, the challenges of tokenism, women's distrust and disgust in politics and the impacts of funding restrictions that prevent women from engaging in politics. **Read about the outcomes** from these conversations and listen to a **special podcast episode** on the topic from our podcast *Political Is Personal*.



## Putting a Spotlight on the Gendered Impacts of the Syrian Conflict

After repeated efforts by WILPF and Syrian partner organisations to highlight the gender impacts of the conflict in Syria through policy briefs, private briefings with heads of states, submissions to the Universal Periodic Review and other UN human rights mechanisms, the Commission of Inquiry (CoI) on Syria finally released a policy brief entirely focused on addressing those impacts.

A **recent report** released by the CoI echoes several of the recommendations and analysis highlighted and emphasised by WILPF, such as on the weaponisation of sexual violence in the conflict, the gendered impacts of enforced disappearances and extrajudicial killings and the need for a gender-sensitive approach in tackling those issues, as well as a deeper look into the pre-existing conditions that allowed for those impacts.



# 04

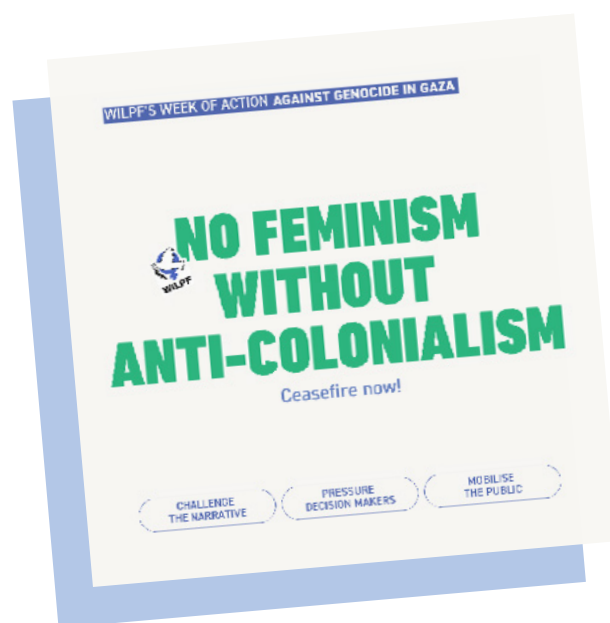
## BUILDING A POWERFUL MOVEMENT



*Through global awareness campaigns, bringing together activists and allies from around the world, mobilising young people and caring for one another, we connected people from across the WILPF movement and beyond to strengthen and uplift our collective commitment to change.*

## Global Campaigns Raised Awareness of Key Issues and Engaged Members Across the Globe

Spread the word! To rally people around the world to call for a **ceasefire in Gaza** and an end to **gender-based violence**, we mounted major public awareness and action campaigns. These campaigns significantly strengthened our collective voice for peace. We engaged in action and advocacy at the 78th session of the UN General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security to call on member states to prevent and end the attempted genocide of Palestinians by Israel.







For **International Day of Peace**, we launched a week-long campaign in a collective effort to promote peace. The response was significant. In Cameroon, WILPF members **marched** for peace and also spread peace education in a **school** in the Western region of the country. In the UK, members **rallied** gainst DSEI, one of the world's biggest arms fairs in London. In Guinea, members **shared** their demands for peace and worked with **children** on peace advocacy, while **WILPF España** and WILPF Australia joined the campaign on social media. We closed off our campaign with a **video** from a young WILPFer from Cameroon discussing their work against gender-based-violence.







On **World Environment Day**, we launched a campaign that highlighted the nexus between militarism and the environment, with **articles** and **infographics** that resonated well with many people across our movement. We participated in the #BeatPlasticPollution campaign which marked a commitment to urgent environmental action. Emphasising intersectionality, we highlighted the disproportionate impact on marginalised communities, focusing on women's health, safety and intergenerational responsibility. We also produced resources such as a **Q&A with Edwick Madzimore** President of WILPF Zimbabwe, on her insights on conflict and ecological crises in Africa, and a **"Political is Personal" podcast** on women, climate change and conflicts.



On **International Youth Day**, we raised awareness and recognition of the significant contributions young people are making to peacebuilding, feminist activism and the development of essential green skills. A collaborative effort between the Young WILPF Network, the Environment Working Group and WILPF International Secretariat, the campaign highlighted initiatives and achievements of the younger generation in fostering global solidarity and empowerment.

As part of our continued efforts to elevate and centre youth voices, the Young WILPF Network - a growing community of 65 feminist peace activists under the age of 35 who are dedicated to advancing peace- was revived. This network plays a pivotal role in amplifying the voice of young people to take an active role in advocating for peace and equality, and will help ensure the continuity and sustainability of WILPF's movement and efforts.



Young WILPF plays a key role in amplifying the voices of young people advocating for peace and equality.





## Bringing Mental Health and Care to Our Feminist work

As people around the world continued to grapple with the news of crisis after crisis, we stepped forward to share mental health resources and remind our members, partners and followers that prioritising mental health is not a weakness – it’s a necessity. In the video **Mental Health: A Feminist Peace Priority**, activists from Colombia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Syria and Palestine speak about the importance of mental health in feminist peace work. And in our new guide on **fostering mental well-being and collective care in the workplace**, we offer civil society organisations a framework for tackling workplace mental well-being through a feminist lens.





## Bringing Feminist Peace Activists Together at CSW67

As part of our work to strengthen feminist activism, WILPF brought a significant presence to the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which took place in New York City from 6–17 March 2023. With a goal to mobilise around the rights and freedoms of women and girls, elevate the voices of women working for change and call for concrete solutions, we engaged in and led a wide variety of events, initiatives and opportunities that aimed to strengthen women’s participation in agendas ranging from gender equality to human rights, development to peace.



Highlights of our engagement included bringing a delegation of eight Ukrainian women to meet with WILPF members, member states and UN officials to discuss how the ongoing war is impacting them and their communities, bringing feminist peace activists from Syria, Libya and Nigeria together for a roundtable discussion about redesigning the peace table; and screening the documentary **Power on Patrol: The Making and Unmaking of Militarised Masculinities in Afghanistan**, which sparked a thoughtful conversation about the role of male allies in conflict contexts.

## Convening Like-Minded Organisations to Mobilise Men for Feminist Peace

In June 2023, WILPF and PAX – the largest peace organisation in the Netherlands – co-convened an in-person meeting in Tbilisi, Georgia on topic of countering militarised masculinities and mobilising men for feminist peace. Bringing together nearly 30 individuals representing 20 organisations from Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the Americas, the meeting aimed to build connection and community, review new and emerging research on militarised masculinities, explore the creation of a consistent community of practice and generate a preliminary roadmap for next steps. [Read a report on the outcomes of the meeting.](#)



# 05

## FINANCIALS & DONORS



## Powering the Movement

In 2023, WILPF's global community of donors, government partners and private supporters stepped forward with generosity, compassion and determination to advance a future of feminist peace, justice and equality for all.

We extend our deepest gratitude to each of our dedicated donors.

Together, we are building a brighter,  
bolder future for everyone.

Please visit us at [wilpf.org/financials](https://wilpf.org/financials) to view a full list of donors and supporters. Our audited financial statements are available upon request.





2023 was a year that challenged us, changed us and grew our movement as we engaged feminist peace activists worldwide with our work for a future of peace. And in the year that lies ahead, our momentum will only continue to accelerate.

None of this work would be possible without the extraordinary global community of women, allies and changemakers who make up the WILPF movement.

No matter how you are involved with WILPF, thank you. Together, we will continue to make progress toward our ultimate goal: a future of peace and freedom for all.



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