



## **WILPF Germany condemns the attack on Iraqi territory contrary to international law**

Berlin and Munich, 01/14/2020 – WILPF Germany strongly condemns the targeted killing of the Iranian General Soleimani, the Iraqi Military Commander Abu Mahdi al Muhandis and other Iranian and Iraqi soldiers by a US military drone during an attack on Iraqi territory contrary to international law.

Since the foundation of our organization over 100 years ago, WILPF women have pointed out that the root causes of war and violence must be tackled, and sustainable peace can only be achieved through diplomacy and non-violent actions. Therefore, we urgently call for universal disarmament.

The attack by a US military drone, in which the US airbase Ramstein on German soil might have played a role, has increased the intensity of conflicts in the Middle East. It could also influence the ongoing peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan and dissolve the international consensus on peace efforts in South and Central Asia, including tensions between India, Pakistan, China and North Korea. It intensifies emotions, such as hate and the desire for revenge, in large parts of the population in the entire region, led by propaganda. The spiral of violence continues and the civilian population, in particular, suffers from the constant threat and latent danger of war.

Iraq is a loose cannon after the US, but also NATO and its allied armed forces, have been aggressively and hegemonically intervening for years in order to "secure" raw materials, to gain geostrategic advantages and to act as a global policeman. The central government in Iraq is weak and its sovereignty should be strengthened to create better living conditions for all Iraqis. The recent protests for better living conditions and more prospects in Iraq by young Iraqis from all ethnic minorities was a positive sign that is now being pushed back.

After the termination of the nuclear agreement, Iran is in a difficult international situation. Above all, the population is suffering due to food shortages and insecurity, partly triggered by sanctions. The lack of prospects for young people has resulted in protests to which the government reacted in a repressive manner. Women's protests against patriarchal structures and overall actions by a committed civil society, that is fighting against corruption and fundamentalism in the entire region – such as in Lebanon – are creating new paths towards a peaceful and democratic development, although running the risk of being nipped in the bud. The great powers increase the risk of war for the whole world!

We sharply criticize that NATO is too one-sided being a transatlantic alliance in a complex situation. The EU appeases instead of taking a clear stance. We, therefore, urge all EU policymakers to show a clear stance against illegal killings and to stop providing arms to the region



for any support for impending acts of war.

We also call on governments and institutions to do everything possible to immediately stop the spiral of military escalation and to invest even more in diplomacy and in non-violent strategies. As an international women's peace organization, we emphasize that sustainable peace is only possible with women. Especially in Iraq, Iran, in the entire MENA region, in the USA and around the world, women have a great deal of knowledge about negotiation strategies and inclusive dialogue processes. Their experiences as peace activists and human rights defenders on-site and in dealing with extremism is an undeniable and valuable competence in peace negotiations. They have to be involved in negotiations on an equal and meaningful footing in the sense of the Women-Peace-Security/WPS agenda. Committees that conduct peace negotiations have to be gendered.

### **The situation in Germany**

Together with the peace movement in Germany, we condemn the logistical cooperation between Germany and the US base in the German city Ramstein used for drone attacks and military operations, primarily in Africa and the Middle East. We are against the planned expansion of this U.S. military airport, which is the largest outside the U.S., and the planned additional funding for a military school and military hospital for more than 500 million euros nearby (SWR, Spiegel, IMI, etc.). We urge the German government to open negotiations with the United States to stop the enlargement. Ramstein should not be the hub of a future drone war!

We agree with the peace movement, the strategy of deterrence, especially threats with weapons of mass destruction, have to be stopped immediately. We appeal to all political decision-makers in Germany to quickly promote the ratification of the nuclear ban treaty!

### **Move the Money from war to Peace!**

*Heidi Meinzolt, WILPF International Board, in the name and in cooperation with the German section of WILPF.*