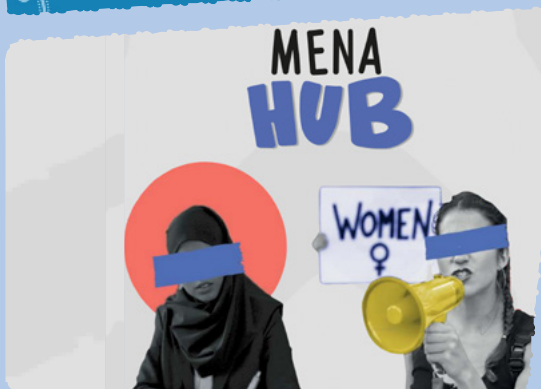


THE ESSENTIALS



# Stories of Feminist Peace

WILPF ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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March 2023

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The Essentials.

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## OPENING MESSAGE

# A Year of Determination, Courage, and Solidarity

As we think back on the events of 2022 — a new war, persisting conflicts, climate disasters, an ongoing pandemic — it's easy to feel that we've made no progress toward realising a future of feminist peace. In fact, it's easy to feel that we're only going backwards — reversing course into a more violent, volatile world.

### How can we not feel this way?

Human rights violations are rampant in the face of conflict. Climate change and militarism are intersecting to create a more insecure, unstable future. Gender-based violence is skyrocketing. The risk of another pandemic in our lifetimes is all too real. There is a lot to worry about. But there is also so much worth fighting for, and so much hope.

Not only hope, but a growing movement of people who care, and who are working every day for a better world. This is why WILPF will never give up: because we know a future of feminist peace is within reach. Because we are working, every day, for a better world. It's also why we believe, despite it all, that progress is not only being made — it's accelerating.

Despite the challenges that 2022 brought to the world, here at WILPF, it was a year that saw our movement for feminist peace grow and deepen like never before.

We welcomed 10 new Sections into our global community — nearly all from across the African continent. We deepened our advocacy efforts for a disarmed future, for a liveable future, and for a future where all people thrive in justice and equality.

We got creative.

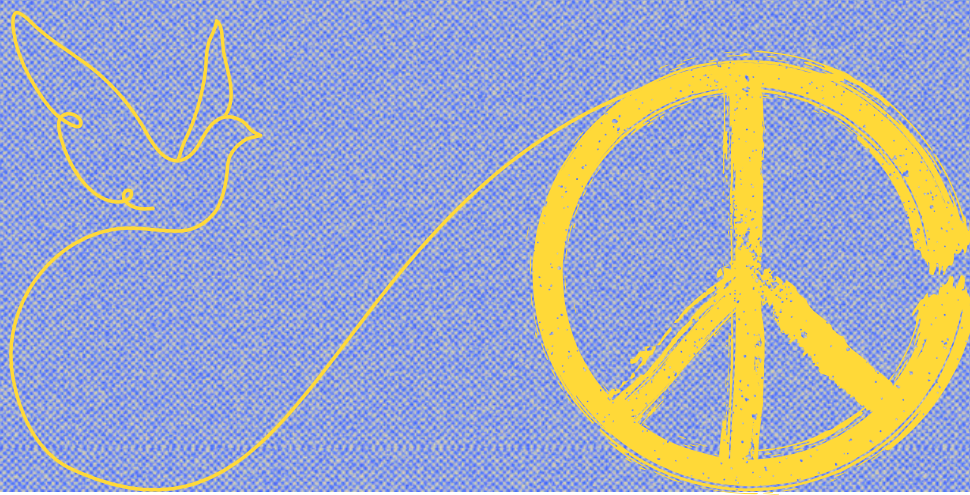
More than ever before, we shared knowledge and analysis through podcasts, videos, documentaries, and even a photo competition to reach ever-growing audiences.

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**“There is also so much worth fighting for, and so much hope. Not only hope, but a growing movement of people who care, and who are working every day for a better world.”**

— Madeleine Rees, WILPF Secretary General

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At our 33rd International Congress, members from all over the world connected across borders and recommitted to our renewed vision: of **a world where the planet and all of its inhabitants flourish in harmony.**

A world where peace is not only possible, but a daily reality — for everyone. It was a year that reaffirmed WILPF's crucial role as the world's largest and oldest movement for feminist peace — a global community that spans countries, continents, and generations, whose collective work is driving constant unrelenting progress. it's all showcased here, in Stories of Feminist Peace 2022.

We hope this year's Stories of Feminist Peace will give you hope that change is possible. And we hope you'll join us!

WILPF has Sections and Groups all over the world. If you share our commitment to building a future of feminist peace, **please connect with us** to find out how you can be part of the movement.

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

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



# Nine Days for a Future of Feminist Peace



From 16 to 24 July 2022, WILPF members from all over the world united virtually International Congress.

Over nine incredible days hosted by WILPF Australia, more than 400 feminist peace activists connected with one another across borders and time zones, engaged in meaningful discussions about our work and movement, and reaffirmed the values we all share.

Together, we set WILPF on the path to a future of extraordinary growth and impact. We officially adopted **WILPF's new International Programme for 2022–2025**, welcomed a **new International President and International Board members**, brought **10 new Sections** into the fold, eight of which are from across the African continent, and so much more.

We also celebrated the incredible leadership of the **Young WILPF Network** as they engaged in creative ways with International Congress and stepped forward with a bold and necessary vision to advance equity and inclusion across the movement.

**Read a full recap of the 33rd International Congress** and view our wrap-up **video** for a glimpse at what we got up to!

## Highlights of WILPF's newly adopted International Programme 2022–2025

Our new International Programme for 2022–2025, adopted at the 33rd International Congress, is now guiding the work, values, and actions of the entire WILPF movement.

It unites our diverse, global members and staff in a shared vision and renewed goals, rooted in our current context and developed through a deeply participatory process.



# Key highlights of the new International Programme include:



A renewed and rearticulated vision.



A new feminist path to peace, which identifies our key actions and goals.



An updated set of values that reflect the movement we are today and the movement we strive to become, including the values of anti-racism and ecological sustainability.



A commitment to strengthening WILPF as an organisation and movement through a series of actions and strategies.

## Welcoming a formal commitment to anti-racism

Emerging from International Congress, the WILPF community identified an opportunity to formally declare our commitment to anti-racism.

To guide our efforts to take proactive steps to identify, understand, address, and eventually overcome the causes and manifestations of structural racism within our movement, we developed and published **WILPF's commitment to becoming an anti-racist movement**. We invite you to read it and join us on our journey!

**Read the Full Programme**

available in English, Spanish, and French



# Resisting the Threat of Nuclear War Through the Power of Knowledge

In 2022, Russia's invasion of Ukraine sparked new fears of nuclear war and drew attention to the urgent need to abolish nuclear weapons.

To help empower WILPF members and people around the world to call for an end to nuclear weapons, we launched **Russia, Ukraine, and Nuclear Dangers** — a new digital tool sharing accessible information about the current situation, recommended actions, frequently asked questions, and additional resources for ongoing learning.

In addition to this new tool, throughout the year WILPF's disarmament programme team, **Reaching Critical Will**, continued to raise awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons through a series of articles and ongoing monitoring and advocacy efforts.

**"In 2022, WILPF's Mobilising Men for Feminist Peace (MMFP) Programme partnered with Gender Equality Network for Small Arms Control (GENSAC) to produce a report on men, masculinities, and small arms control. Reaching Critical Will's (RCW) support helped launch the report at the UN's Eighth Biennial Meeting of States. WILPF's MMFP, with RCW, will continue to challenge the link between militarised masculinities and the arms industry for two more years with additional funding."**

— Dean Peacock, Director, Countering Militarized Masculinities, Mobilising Men for Feminist Peace (MMFP)

## READ MORE

**Russia, Ukraine, and Nuclear Dangers**

**Join WILPF's Advocacy on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons!**

**Don't Normalise Nuclear Weapons and War — Abolish Them**

**This August, WILPF Demands: No More Nuclear Weapons!**



# Advancing a Future of Feminist Peace in the Middle East and North Africa

In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, WILPF has been standing firm with women's rights organisations, feminist grassroots initiatives, and other women-led initiatives to help build a vibrant feminist movement and advance a future of peace, justice, and equality for all. This work is primarily led by the MENA team.

As a movement, our goal is to find and support localised solutions to the interconnected systems of oppression that fuel constant cycles of conflict, displacement, climate catastrophes, and other crises in the region.

Here, we invite you to explore just a few of our recent projects and initiatives to advance a future of feminist peace in the MENA region.

## **Side by side on the journey to feminist peace in Syria**

Within the challenging context of the MENA region — political instability, cross-border insecurities, and failure of the rule of law — women activists are encountering multifaceted barriers to meaningful participation in conflict prevention, resolution, and post-conflict transition.

These barriers include insufficient and inconsistent funding policies common to donor-led funding practices, which have forced many not-for-profit and civil society organisations with feminist agendas to neglect their long-term feminist goals in favour of short-term projects that align with donor priorities.

Seeking to find an alternative to these traditional and ineffective top-down approaches, several years ago WILPF developed the **Holistic Feminist Resourcing Approach**. Through a combination of flexible funding, tailored technical support, and a range of networking and coordination opportunities, the approach aims to support organisations with feminist values and agendas to work towards their visions, while acknowledging their complex realities and diverse needs.



In 2022, we published an **engaging and in-depth look** at how the Holistic Feminist Resourcing Approach was applied to the Feminist Movement for Change in Syria project, launched in 2018. By sharing insights, feedback, and learnings from the project, we hope to demonstrate how creative, flexible approaches to funding and support can foster long-term feminist peace.



*In 2022, 100% of partners participating in the Feminist Movement for Change in Syria project reported increased capacity to participate in peace and justice processes due to the technical and financial support they received.*

#### **Access the Publication**

Side by Side on the Journey to Feminist Peace



## **Breaking down barriers to feminist knowledge in Arabic**

When WILPF partners in the MENA region expressed a need for a platform of feminist knowledge in Arabic, we got right to work.

In 2022, we officially launched the **MENA Hub** — a new online platform sharing accessible, contextualised feminist resources rooted in the unique dynamics and challenges of the region.

Available in both Arabic and English, all resources on the MENA Hub have been developed by WILPF's MENA Team and different programmes, our partners in the MENA region, or through collaborative efforts with feminist activists in the region and the global diaspora.

Check out the MENA Hub in **English** and **Arabic**.

## **Hear directly from feminist activists in the MENA region**

#### **Listen to**

Political is Personal



**“We’re proud to have worked with our MENA program sisters to amplify feminist perspectives in critical spaces. The MENA Hub provides valuable Arabic resources for advancing the WPS agenda, supporting feminist activists and women peacebuilders in their work for peace and human rights.”**

— Genevieve Riccoboni,  
Women, Peace and Security  
Programme Associate

Learn more about WILPF’s wide-reaching work in the MENA region by exploring our **MENA Hub**.

# Action and Advocacy for a Livable Future



“The Environment Working Group (EWG) advances our climate and environmental justice thinking at WILPF. Their campaigns from Stockholm+50 to COP27 inspire women’s leadership in sustainable peace work. Interactive content and events on environment, gender, and militarism attract potential members and networks. The EWG plays a crucial role in growing our global movement, a key focus of our work in the Membership team.”

— Elena Cason, Membership Coordinator

## In 2022, we took bold action for the future of the planet

At the United Nations’ Stockholm+50 conference, WILPF’s International Secretariat and WILPF Sweden **hosted a panel discussion** about the impacts of militarism and military activity on the environment. Members from across the WILPF movement also participated in protests, exhibitions, and many other activities drawing attention to the urgent need for action.

At COP27, **our delegation of 10 feminist peace activists** from around the world came together in Sharm El-Sheikh to advocate for climate action rooted in demilitarisation and gender justice.

We **endorsed the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty**, joining hundreds of thousands of individuals, organisations, scientists, cities, and governments in a global call for a treaty to ensure a quick and effective shift away from the use of fossil fuels. And during Environment Month, we launched a **brand-new webpage** devoted to our work on the environment — including information about our approach to environmental justice and ways to get involved.

Recognising that peace is not possible without environmental justice, we also embedded our commitment to feminist climate action and environmental **advocacy directly into our new International Programme 2022–2025** — a bold step that will guide our ongoing efforts to take action for a more liveable future in everything we do.

## Linking climate justice and demilitarisation

### Watch Our Video

Learn more about WILPF’s efforts to link climate justice with demilitarisation.



# Mobilising men for feminist peace



In our quest to mobilise men for feminist peace, 2022 brought the stories and voices of male allies to the eyes, ears, and hearts of people around the world.



## WATCH

**Power On Patrol**: A new documentary on the making and unmaking of militarised masculinities.



## SEE

**A photographic exploration** of the relationship between masculinities, conflict and peace, violence and care.



## DISCOVER

A wealth of **new research, reviews, and analysis** that seeks to strengthen our understanding of militarised masculinities and strategies to mobilise men for feminist peace.



# Demanding Justice for Ukraine

Since the conflict in Ukraine erupted in 2014, WILPF has worked closely with Ukrainian women activists and networks to call attention to the obstacles they face and elevate their voices, experiences, and demands for change. This work has been directly supported by WILPF staff members and volunteers embedded in Ukraine, as well as staff and volunteers working with Sections in surrounding countries and around the world.

With this strong foundation of activism and advocacy for peace in Ukraine already in place, we were able to quickly mobilise when Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Since that time, we have worked relentlessly to demand de-escalation of the conflict and people-centred solutions for peace.

**“As an organisation dedicated to peace, demanding that disputes be regulated by law, not the insanity of who can kill and destroy the most, we, the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom and many allies, set out below steps that should be taken immediately by the member states of the Security Council to satisfy their legal obligations pursuant to the UN Charter.”**

– From [our open letter to the United Nations Security Council](#),  
14 April 2022

[Read our open letters, statements, submissions and stories demanding justice for Ukraine.](#)



# Keeping the World's Attention on Afghanistan

As the world turned its attention to the war in Ukraine, we never stopped advocating for the people of Afghanistan.

On the heels of the Taliban's brutal takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, the country continued to descend into a historic humanitarian crisis in 2022. We implored the international community not to look away even as new crises unfolded elsewhere.

From submissions to the UN Human Rights Council to calls for action shared loud and clear with our global audience, we urged the immediate flow of humanitarian aid to the people of Afghanistan and demanded that the voices of Afghan women and girls — those most impacted by the crisis — be at the front and centre of humanitarian missions, negotiations, and peace talks.

To advance these efforts in 2023 and beyond, we convened over 32 Afghan activists and lay the foundations for the Umbrella of Afghan Women Leaders - an initiative dedicated to coordinating women's networks and coalitions inside Afghanistan and around the world. The Umbrella initiative was launched in 2023.

We also continued to work side-by-side with the staff, volunteers, and members of WILPF Afghanistan as the Section worked to address the critical needs of Afghan women and girls from exile.

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**“In the long-term,  
I’m definitely hopeful.  
Afghanistan is our country,  
our responsibility, and we  
have to ensure Afghanistan  
can stand on its feet again.”**

---

— Jamila Afghani,  
President of WILPF Afghanistan and Vice  
President of WILPF





## Celebrating WILPF's Vice President Jamila Afghani, Winner of the 2022 Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity

In October, we were proud to celebrate the tireless efforts and impact of one of our own when Jamila Afghani, President of WILPF Afghanistan and Vice President of WILPF, was **named the 2022 winner** of the Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity.

Jamila, who was **forced to flee Afghanistan** during the Taliban takeover and recently settled in Canada, received the honour in recognition of her work with WILPF in Afghanistan and the Noor Educational and Capacity Development Organization (NECDO).

**Read our interview with Jamila Afghani** to learn more about her work on behalf of the people of Afghanistan and why she's optimistic about the future.

**Visit our dedicated page on Afghanistan** to access all recent stories, statements, submissions, policy briefs, and open letters.



# Global Engagement, National Impact

How can we harness the tremendous knowledge, experiences, and expertise of WILPF's global community to advocate for a holistic, feminist, and antimilitarist implementation of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda at the national level, including through National Action Plans (NAPs)?

Seeking to answer this question, in September 2022 WILPF's **WPS Programme** (also known as PeaceWomen) facilitated a series of virtual roundtables that created spaces for WILPF members, partners, and staff to share direct experiences and knowledge on the topic of NAPs and WPS.

Grounded in the priorities of the new International Programme, each session encouraged participants to explore a series of questions about Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) role in NAPs, the content of NAPs and our shared goals in advocating for them, and implementation and financing.

The findings emerging from these sessions will serve as the groundwork for ongoing advocacy efforts that link local knowledge produced by Sections and partners to global impact — amplified by the PeaceWomen team's role as a connector and facilitator.



# A Snapshot of Key Findings

The lack of effective, meaningful, substantive inclusion of civil society is a major factor that CSOs believe has hindered progress towards implementation of NAPs. It is also a direct contradiction to the participation pillar of the WPS agenda itself.

There is a misconception that NAPs are primarily useful for countries that are experiencing armed conflict, and are not necessarily needed during “peacetime.”

There are persistently colonial ways of thinking about WPS, including a focus on development and “helping” women abroad with no internal reflection on their domestic situation.

Lack of knowledge about the WPS agenda limits participation from broad civil society; it even hinders government actors from understanding how to develop and implement a comprehensive NAP.

Some NAPs suffer from a lack of qualitative metrics, and focus on quantifying things in ways that don't reflect women's experiences and lives. Many lack sufficient financing or staffing for implementation.

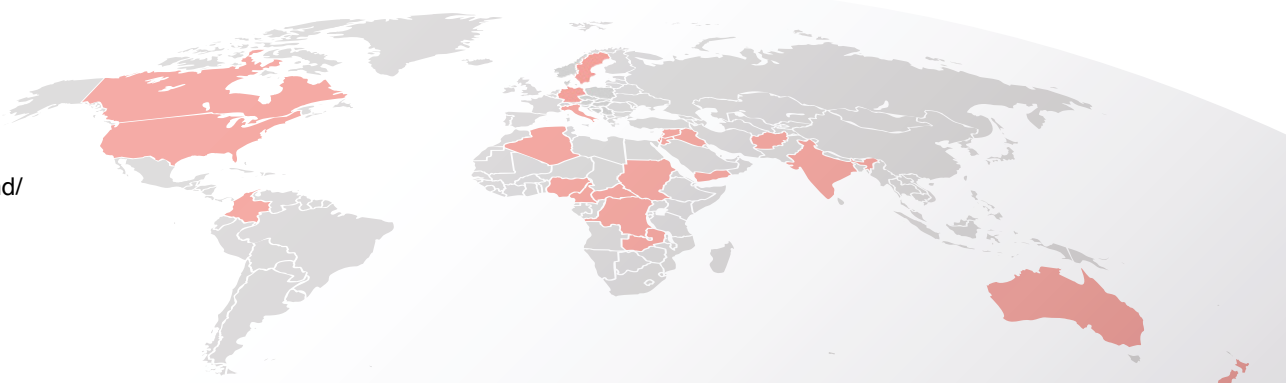
Civil society can face barriers to engaging in discussions around “security” because security is seen as an area for government actors only, due to its military connotations.



Afghanistan  
Australia  
Cameroon  
Canada  
Central African  
Republic  
Colombia  
Denmark  
Democratic Republic  
of the Congo  
Ghana  
Guinea  
India  
Iraq  
Kenya  
Lebanon  
Libya  
New Zealand/  
Aotearoa

Nigeria  
Palestine  
Senegal  
Spain  
Sri Lanka  
Sweden  
Syria  
Togo  
United States  
Zimbabwe

## The roundtables welcomed participants from 26 countries around the world!



# Put Down Your Weapons



“WILPF has shown numerous times how the “regulated” or “legal” arms trade with end users that include armies, police, and state security services is connected to a high risk of human rights violations. Arms transfers and small arms availability is also linked to violent masculinities and the heightened levels of militarisation within communities. This means that arms are correlated with an increase in gendered inequality and a generalised culture of violence, often with specific gendered impacts. Violence against women and girls increases along with militarisation, often as a result of exacerbating hegemonic masculinities.”

— From WILPF’s [submission](#) to the Human Rights Committee’s pre-session on Egypt, February 2022.

At WILPF, advocating for disarmament and demilitarisation is central to our efforts to build a future of feminist peace. When weapons exist and proliferate in the name of security, insecurity persists and human rights become increasingly at risk — particularly those of women and other marginalised populations.

In 2022, WILPF’s Human Rights Programme team engaged in intensive advocacy efforts to draw attention to the human rights impacts of small arms and light weapons as well as the [Arms Trade Treaty](#).





Some of the key outcomes of these efforts include:

The report of the **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – OHCHR** to the 51st regular session of the Human Rights Council reflected several of the issues raised in a submission from WILPF, including references to the human rights responsibilities of the arms industry.

**The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW** asked France to report on “measures taken to assess the risk of violation of human rights, including the right to freedom of expression, opinion and association,” among other requests.

**The Human Rights Committee** requested that Egypt provide information on several issues raised in a submission from WILPF, including a question on “allegations of the unnecessary and excessive use of lethal force against, and mass arrests, censorship and random security checks of, peaceful protesters.”

**The UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights** developed written guidance for States and businesses on the human rights responsibilities of the arms industry.

## To Achieve Peace, We Must Disarm.

“By combining our expertise in human rights and disarmament, we bridged different perspectives and learned from each other. Our collaborative work in the Human Rights Council (HRC) resolutions enabled disarmament organizations to engage in HRC initiatives, bridging the gap between the two communities for a more holistic approach to disarmament.”

---

— Laura Varella, Reaching Critical Will  
Programme Associate



# Think & Resist



**THINK &  
RESIST**

Think & Resist: Conversations about Feminism and Peace is a podcast series that explores how feminism can redefine security. Each episode features representatives from WILPF's Women, Peace & Security and Disarmament teams moderating discussions with experts about different themes in international peace and security from a feminist lens. The conversations explore relevant policymaking and practice, identify opportunities and gaps, and recommend ways to advance change.

This podcast seeks to expand awareness and deepen understanding of how global security challenges and gender inequalities intersect, with a focus on the overlap between the WPS agenda and disarmament work. If you would like to learn more about each topic discussed, related content will be provided for you to explore the issues further.

Our remarkable guests include Cynthia Enloe, Sylvie Ndongmo, Maritza Chan, Aicha Madi, Shobha Shrestha, Anthony Keedi, Jennifer Rodriguez Bruno, Verónica Ferrari, Tara Hairston, Anne-Marie Buzatu, Lucina DiMeco, Doug Weir, Lina Hjärtström, Deanne Uyangoda, Inna Michaeli and Samira Hamidi. Each guest brings their own experiences and perspectives as feminist experts, researchers, activists, and scholars.

**Listen to their insights** on themes including disarmament, militarised masculinities, the gendered impacts of the arms trade, digital violence against women, and conflict prevention amidst the climate emergency.

# The Peace That Is Not

The end of 2020 for Bosnia and Herzegovina marked 25 years since the signing of the General Framework Agreement for Peace, colloquially known as the **Dayton Peace Agreement**. For Bosnia and Herzegovina this marked the start of a contradictory peacebuilding process. These contradictions both maintain peace and keep the country in a perpetual state of conflict. 25+ years since the end of the war is an appropriate time to reflect, examine, and analyse the successes and failures of the peacebuilding process, framed by the solutions set out in the peace agreement.

Peace neither starts nor ends with the act of the signing of a peace agreement. Building peace should be an inclusive and reflective process grounded in the lived experiences of those affected. However, in Bosnia and Herzegovina the peace process has had none of this. Bosnians and Herzegovinians have been suffering the consequences of an imposed and flawed peace agreement for more than 25 years, burdening their political, economic, and social relations. Without a shift in narrative and approaches to peacebuilding, the war will continue to shape their lives for many more years to come.

We told this story of a country 25 years into its peacebuilding efforts that went beyond mainstream narratives and understanding of the peace agreement and its consequences.

The essays told by two local feminists analyse the impact the Dayton Peace Agreement has had on people's lives, written from the perspective of those whose bodies have been exposed to its workings. While the Dayton Peace Agreement can be looked at from several different perspectives, this series of nine **essays** will highlight five themes and their gendered nature: historic and geopolitical context of the politics of peace negotiations and peacebuilding; (de) militarisation of war and peace; ethno-nationalism and division of the territory and power; international civilian administration and its neocolonial character; and neoliberal influence on peacebuilding and dealing with the past.

Through these themes, the authors reflect on how the war and the peace have been interpreted, applied, projected, and reproduced within the Bosnian and Herzegovinian society and how a process of peacebuilding, firmly grounded in neoliberal ideology, has generated results contrary to the very essence of peace. Bringing in a feminist counter-narrative to a neocolonial, patriarchal, and militant framework these essays offer a perspective on how to start repairing the social fabric torn apart by the war and its consequences.

[Visit our dedicated page for Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)



# Powering the Movement

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 17 dedicated donors— including three who joined us in 2021. Together, we are building a brighter, bolder future for everyone.

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

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

[www.wilpf.org/financials/](https://www.wilpf.org/financials/)





The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is a worldwide nongovernmental organisation with national Sections covering every continent, an international Secretariat based in Geneva, and an office in New York.

Since our establishment, we have brought together women from around the world who are united in working for peace. Our approach is always non-violent, and we use existing international legal and political frameworks to achieve fundamental change in the way states conceptualise and address issues of gender, militarism, peace and security.



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