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Cover photo: In April 2015, 300 WILPFers united
at the Peace Palace in The Hague, the Netherlands,
where WILPF was founded on the 28 April 1915.
Photographed by Mir Grëback von Melen, this photo
from our Conference looked to emulate the 1915
iconic photo of women peace activists gathered on
the stairs leading into the palace.

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Foreword

To say that 2015 was a seminal year for WILPF would be an understatement! We, the oldest peace organisation in the world, celebrated 100 years of working to stop war. This is an achievement which honours our foremothers for the intelligence, passion, and commitment that WILPFers and our community have brought to addressing the root causes of conflict, uniting the anti-war movement, and supporting the multilateral system to use law and diplomacy to address conflict.

We brought over 1,000 peacemakers to The Hague to celebrate our longevity, our work and its evolution over that century. Using our Manifesto adopted by Congress before the celebrations, we discussed and addressed the major current issues that are preventing peace, and how we can organise intelligently to overcome them. It was one of the most important events I have been to in my personal and professional life.

We are not naïve. 100 years of activism brings with it experience and practical understanding of the issues and challenges that bringing peace involves. In 2015, we have continued to use the multilateral system, pushing our analysis into areas where it has not been discussed before. For instance, the arms trade into the Treaty Bodies; the Women Peace and Security agenda into the Human Rights Council; political engagement to prepare for a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons, and so on.

This annual report shows how we have progressed on our integrated approach. Of greatest importance is how we have brought women into the system – bringing the voices of people, in particular those experiencing conflict and its aftermath, into the different fora of the multilateral system. It is vital to do so, to show that the consequences of policies – on the economy, on arms, on trade, on development and the environment, on human rights, at international and national levels – are exposed and responded to.

At our 100th we identified obstacles but also solutions. Movement building, and solidarity on the issues of addressing militarisation, human rights and gender equality, are at the core of our ability to bring peace.

In 2015 there are immediate critical concerns: ongoing conflicts, the consequent refugee crises, and the misnamed ‘economic migrant’ crisis and the fears it is stoking in Europe and beyond. These issues are highly gendered, highly racialised, and promote the rise of extremist responses.

2015 showed that WILPF is needed more than ever, and yet we, as others, struggle for the resources to be able to do our invaluable work. The money channelled to one fighter jet is more than is given to the women’s movement worldwide! It shows just how badly understood real security is!

In 2015 we progressed our analysis, our ability to influence, and our impact more broadly. We are growing in Sections and supporters. We are the majority who want peace, and there will be a time when we will achieve it.

Madeleine Rees
WILPF Secretary General
Who we are

The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is an international non-governmental membership-based organisation (NGO) with National Sections on every continent, and with two international offices in Geneva and New York, which focus on the work of the United Nations (UN).

Since our establishment in 1915, WILPF has brought together women from around the world who are united in working for peace through non-violent means, and promoting political, economic and social justice for all. Our approach is always nonviolent, and we use existing international, legal and political frameworks to work towards fundamental change in the way states conceptualise and address issues of gender, militarism, peace and security.

We are very proud to be one of the first organisations to gain consultative status (category B) with the United Nations, and the only women’s anti-war organisation so recognised.

Our history

Our story started in 1915 when, invited by the leader of the Dutch Association for Women’s Suffrage, Aletta Jacobs, 1,136 women from nations on both sides of World War I gathered in The Hague, the Netherlands, to discuss how to stop the conflict. Instead of arguing about who was responsible, their meeting aimed to find a mechanism of mediation that could end the conflict. In terms of the longer-term vision formed during the meeting, the women were determined to identify the causes of war, address these and work towards eradicating war and conflict.

Many of the participants had been active in the prewar suffrage movement and so saw the need for women to participate fully and equally in every aspect of social, economic and political life as an inevitable requirement if peace should prevail.

The conference resulted in the foundation of WILPF.

With its roots in the suffrage movement, WILPF is convinced that the achievement of peace, and hereunder the achievement of equality and justice for all people, goes hand in hand with the full inclusion and representation of women. Women make up half of the population, and so are heavily affected by, and have a crucial role to play in the (re)building of inclusive, safe and prospering societies.

Much the same as in 1915, the organisation’s activities are still centred around:

- Bringing together women to work for peace in times of armed conflict;
- Bringing together women to identify and address the root causes of war;
- Bringing together women to reform and strengthen the multilateral system (i.e. the UN); and
- Bringing together women to stop war and conflict.
Organisational structure

WILPF is a membership organisation with National Sections in 33 countries and international members and partners all over the globe.

The National Sections carry out the international programme in their national context and contribute to the work of the International Secretariat.

Most Sections are run on a voluntary basis and only a few Sections have a secretariat with paid staff.

The International Secretariat, based in Geneva with an office in New York, is the glue holding the membership together. It runs four integrated political programmes on human rights, disarmament, crisis response, and women, peace and security. The programmes’ most important tasks are bringing WILPF’s holistic root causes analysis to the multilateral fora, and amplifying independent voices on conflict and peacemaking by connecting local, grassroot experience with the international diplomatic arena.
What makes us unique

WILPF’s local-global-local approach is indispensable. While the input from the National Sections and partners makes the international work diverse, accurate and accountable, input from the four international political programmes makes it possible for the Sections and partner organisations to hold their governments accountable for international policies and commitments.

WILPF’s strength lies in our linking international, national and local efforts to reach our goal.

To ensure real and lasting peace and freedom, it is fundamental to look at the realities on the ground and in communities to learn what is needed to achieve this.

WILPF’s National Sections and Partners operate in many different environments. The work differs from Section to Section and from Partner to Partner, depending on the pressing issues in each country.

WILPF is a membership organisation with National Sections all over the globe. In countries without National Sections, WILPF works with Partner Organisations to ensure local grassroots voices are heard.
Celebrating 100 YEARS of peace activism

From 22-24 April 2015, WILPF held its Centennial Congress at the legendary Peace Palace in The Hague, the Netherlands, which is where WILPF was founded on 28 April 1915.

280 WILPFers from all over the world convened during these days to set the future agenda for the organisation. On the first day of Congress, they welcomed three new Sections, on the second day they adopted the renewed WILPF manifesto, and on the third day they voted on the budget, elected a new Executive Committee and adopted the International Programme 2015-2018 and 11 resolutions.

Expanding the family

On the 22 April, WILPF gained three new Sections: Cameroon, Ghana and Israel. “We are glad to be back,” said Alyah Strauss from Israel when the group was accepted. WILPF Israel used to be part of WILPF, so the Section was in fact recreated.

WILPF Ghana was represented by its President Ayo Ayoola Amale. “The absence of war does not mean there is peace,” said Ayo Ayoola Amale as she took the stage to present the work of the group, formed in 2011, and added: “We need to keep Ghana as peaceful as it is and set an example for other African countries.”

Sylvie Ndongmo, President of WILPF Cameroon Group, addressed Congress on how she and her fellow Section members had recognised the importance of questioning military spending and protecting human rights, especially in the light of the growing crisis in Cameroon. “We don’t need war to start working for peace. That is why it is so important for us to join this movement,” she said.

All National Groups were adopted and are now recognised as WILPF Sections. Two new National Groups – WILPF Uganda Group and WILPF Nicaragua Group – were accepted as WILPF Groups. These two groups will now start working in the spirit of WILPF and hopefully become fully members at the Congress in 2018.

Representatives from each National Group were present in The Hague to explain to Congress why they wanted to become a WILPF Section.
Adopting a new manifesto

On 23 April, the WILPF 2015 Manifesto was adopted by an overwhelming majority at Congress. The adoption of the WILPF 2015 Manifesto was the culmination of a passionate and enriching discussion among the participants at the Congress. Arriving 20 years after the Beijing Conference, 15 years after the UN Security Council resolution 1325, 15 years after the Millennium Development Goals and 70 years after the foundation of the UN, the manifesto comes at the right moment. The manifesto can be downloaded on wilpf.org.

New Executive Committee

Late evening on 24 April, Congress chose a new Executive Committee to be at the forefront of WILPF for the 2015-2018 period. Though only six candidates had to be elected to form the Executive Committee, even more had been nominated to the committee. Kozue Akibayashi from WILPF Japan was elected as new International President. Joy Onyesoh (WILPF Nigeria), Margrethe Tingstad (WILPF Norway), Catia Confortini (WILPF US), and Sameena Nazir (WILPF Pakistan) were elected as Vice Presidents, and Kerry McGovern (WILPF Australia) as Treasurer.

“I always wanted to be a peace activist, and a feminist, since I was 10 years old. I started to work with WILPF because of its perception on root causes of war. There are not many organisations that do that. But that is what WILPF started articulating, the connection between gender discrimination and war. No one else has done it and there are still only a few who promote that issue,” said Kozue Akibayashi just after the election.

On 24 April, a new Executive Committee was chosen. The committee’s role is to overview the implementation of the International Programme 2015-2018.

Photo: Li Grebäck
Congress Resolutions
Since 1915, WILPF members have been sending out Congress Resolutions after each congress. These resolutions show where WILPF stands on political issues and provide political analysis. Since they represent a decision taken by the assembly of members, all bodies within WILPF have to follow the actions required by the resolutions and act according to the political analysis and principles therein. In 2015, 11 Congress Resolutions were adopted.

11 Congress Resolutions
- Resolution on the human right to health and safe food
- Resolution on girl soldiers
- Resolution on protecting democracy and the public interest from secret trade agreements
- Resolution on Yemen
- Resolution on Russia and Ukraine
- Resolution on weapons of mass destruction free zone in the Middle East
- Resolution on the constitution of Nepal
- Resolution on seeking asylum is a human right
- Resolution on Sudan
- Resolution on climate change, environmental justice and peace
- Resolution on recognising nuclear tests in Polynesia as crimes against humanity
Following the Centennial Congress, WILPF hosted a three-day Peace Conference in The Hague with more than 1,000 peacemakers – women, men and genderqueer – from over 80 countries, acknowledging our diversity and celebrating our unity.

Reclaiming the peace agenda
The Conference ‘Women’s Power to Stop War’ included five plenary sessions, 48 breakout sessions, a public manifestation against military spending, a marketplace, an anniversary festival, as well as a number of exhibitions, demonstrating the history, present, and future of WILPF.

Together the participants explored and challenged the root causes of conflict and gendered power in the world, including patriarchy, capitalism, racism, and militarism. Secondly they focused on strengthening a social movement for peace through concrete commitments for action. The Conference Summary, which can be found on wilpf.org, captures the discussions.

Uniting the women’s peace movement
The political summit was recognised as a success. It has impacted all of WILPF’s activities throughout the year. New partners and allies were found and participants left the summit focusing on potential collective actions for impact.

Building and strengthening the women’s peace movement will remain a core priority for WILPF for the years ahead.
Meet some of the participants

Jody Williams, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate

How do you think the 100th Anniversary Conference went?
The WILPF 100th anniversary was an exciting, energising experience. What an incredible way to celebrate 100 years of feminist peacemaking to be together in a room full of women peacemakers from every corner of the world. I am proud Nobel Women’s Initiative was able to bring a delegation of women, as so many others did, to celebrate this momentous occasion. The Anniversary was a clear indication for all of us that the women’s peace movement is strong and very much alive.

What was the most memorable part for you?
There are so many memorable moments. From catching up with old friends and colleagues in the hallways, to being in the presence of lifelong peacemakers like Edith Ballantyne, to making commitments together to continue our work. These are the moments I will remember.

How do you see WILPF’s next 100 years?
Hopefully in the next 100 years we will declare victory! I look forward to seeing the efforts of every woman peacemaker adding up and bringing an end to war and militarism.
Nela Porobic Isakovic, Project Coordinator of WILPF’s initiative Women Organising for Change in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Syria

Gorana Mlinarevic, Researcher on the Gender of Justice Project, Goldsmiths, University of London.

What did you do at the Conference?
We went to as many sessions as possible, listened to interesting and thought provoking discussions and panels during the plenaries, socialised and discussed the way forward for our own peace activism.

How do you think the 100th Anniversary Conference went?
The conference was a success! Participants came from various parts of the world, and they were cross generational. Despite the cultural and contextual differences, it was very clear that we all shared the same concerns regarding expedient militarisation and the spread of neoliberal agendas. The necessity of meaningful inclusion of women in all peacebuilding and peacemaking processes was apparent, as women can provide a holistic, inclusive and comprehensive approach, not only in conflict prevention and the stopping of war, but also in peacemaking, peacebuilding and the maintaining of peace. It was clear from the conference that in order to have a lasting peace the needs and interests of the ordinary people must be put before the interests of men with guns; and that a redistribution of resources, as well as of political and economic power, must take place around the world.

What was the most interesting part for you?
The most interesting part for us was the fact that we, during the conference, were able to meet and talk to women who are actors in peace movements across the world, and women who participated in transnational women’s human rights movement in the 90’s, such as Lepa Mladjenovic, Cynthia Enloe, Yanar Mohammad, Nawal Yazeji and many, many others. It was a one of a kind opportunity to meet all these women in one place.

What would you like to see happen in WILPF’s future?
We would like to see WILPF becoming a central hub for peace activism, harmonising actions across nations and borders.

Fatima Outaleb, Expert on gender issues in the MENA region and founding member of Union de l’Action Feminine (Union of Women’s Action, UAF)

What was the theme of your speech at the Conference?
I had the pleasure to speak in a workshop on women’s peace and security in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region together with other speakers from Yemen, Palestine, Libya, Egypt, and Iran. My presentation focused on the challenges facing women in Morocco in light of the current social and political context in the whole MENA region.

In the first part of my speech, I tried to bring into view how women’s groups in Morocco succeeded through lobbying and advocacy to shape the 2011 Constitution in a way that more rights were guaranteed for women and a parity and non-discrimination monitoring mechanism is to be established.

In the second part, the focus was on how Moroccan society at large has been affected by the instability of the region, and how civil society faces new challenges and new emerging issues, namely the rise of street attacks on individuals’ liberties and the increasing terrorism threats. These have become an excuse for more State security measures that are restricting the scope of work of human right groups, for more investment in military expenditure at the detriment of social and human right needs, and for more backlashes against women’s rights, women’s economic empowerment, political participation, and inclusion in peace and security policy decision making.

For you, what was the best thing to emerge from our Conference?
The best thing for me was the fact that all participants agreed that there is an urgent need to take a stand against extremism and militarisation, and to address the different manifestations of gender-based violence and discrimination.
Integrated approach

WILPF believes that compartmentalising human rights, women’s participation, disarmament, justice, and development as isolated issues is artificial and hinders advancement towards peace and justice. International forums such as the United Nations separate these issues, which fits the militaristic understanding of international security. By keeping debates segregated, they are treated in isolation and their cross-cutting features are ignored, which enables the presentation of a singular response of force and violence in many situations. From WILPF’s perspective, it makes no sense to address these issues separately in a complex and globalised world, in which alternative responses are possible and necessary.

To overcome this division, WILPF’s work is integrated on two levels:

First, our most important task is to ensure that the local grassroots experience is connected to the international diplomatic arena. We believe it is fundamental to look at the realities on the ground in communities to learn what is needed to ensure real and lasting peace and freedom. This offers unique insights about what is needed in many local and national contexts across a range of issues. It gives us the opportunity to not only connect the local experience to international discussions, but also to connect these experiences across the world.

Secondly, on the international level we link human rights, women’s participation, disarmament, justice, and development in all relevant international bodies. Ensuring sustainable peace and human security for all requires challenging the root causes of war, which means looking at the relationship between, for example, the production, trade, and use of weapons on the one hand, and violations of human rights, including women’s rights, on the other. It also means looking at the relationship between money spent on weapons and war versus that spent on development, including issues related to gender equality and women’s health and empowerment. WILPF works on each of the issues through our four programmes, which are connected to each other politically, economically, and socially. To understand, confront, challenge, and overcome the mechanisms and structural factors driving war and conflict, we must understand how to best organise ourselves for peace, justice, and freedom in a globalised world order.
Global programme

Human Rights

The Human Rights programme advocates peace for women across the world through the realisation of all human rights, both on the international and local level.

It promotes a progressive gender perspective, and looks to prevent conflict and create peace through the bridging of global and local efforts and the implementation of a holistic and transformative human rights approach. This programme also seeks social justice as a prerequisite for sustainable peace.

Women, Peace and Security

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) programme also promotes a progressive gender perspective in preventing conflict and creating peace. It bridges global and local efforts to implement a transformative WPS Agenda, and challenges the root causes of militarism and war.

The programme makes implementation of the WPS Agenda more relevant and effective for women affected by conflict and violence, and promotes accountability, gender inclusive participation, local ownership, and conflict prevention through the WILPF integrated approach.
The Disarmament programme heads WILPF’s analysis and advocacy on disarmament, the reduction of global military spending and an end to militarism. This programme also fronts the investigation of gendered aspects of the impact of weapons, and of disarmament processes.

WILPF seeks to achieve disarmament, challenge militarism, and confront gender discrimination through monitoring situations and then reporting what we have learnt in international forums, such as the United Nations and other meetings of governments, as well as through research, policy analysis, advocacy, and collaboration with international civil society campaigns.

The Crisis Response programme upholds the effective participation of women in transition and peace processes. It combines four interlinked components by engaging with grassroots organisations: gender conflict assessments, movement building, strategies for advancing the women, peace and security agenda, and engaging in the multilateral fora.

This programme looks at strengthening the way women civil society organises, participates and provides critical information and influences policy on these relevant mechanisms at the national and international levels. In using the resources and skills of women civil society, it seeks to build a movement and critical mass that can respond to vital peacebuilding and conflict resolution processes taking place as they unfold.
“WILPF is a pioneer in denouncing extraterritorial responsibility for human rights violations facilitated by arms exports and corporations that are militarising the world.”

Maria Muñoz Maraver, Human Rights Director

Photo: Li Grebäck
Human Rights

2015 highlights:

- WILPF started to work on corporate accountability linking militarisation, corporate power, and women’s human rights.

- CEDAW Committee asked the Government of Spain about its arms exports and how it contributes to gender-based violence perpetrated in other countries.

- Negotiations for a treaty on Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with regards to Human Rights was finally started.

- The Human Rights Council passed a resolution on the regulation of firearms and its impact on human rights.

- The Human Rights Council addressed the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but still ignored the role of the mining industry in the conflict.

The Human Rights programme has, over 2015, brought together WILPF members from different nationalities to advocate the defense of each other’s human rights, inciting a global strategy of international solidarity. As an international league of women from around the world, WILPF is the perfect organisation to lead such a movement, focusing on human rights violations across borders.

Over 2015, our programme has denounced US, Spanish and Swedish arms exports, listing our grievances to the human rights bodies in Geneva. WILPF Spain and Sweden have also denounced the arms exports and violations perpetrated by Spanish and Swedish corporations abroad before the CEDAW Committee. Both governments were asked about their responsibility for violations committed against women and to address the human rights of women across borders for the first time. This constituted a victory for WILPF’s struggle for world social justice on this issue.

We also brought the voices of women from Nigeria, Libya, the DRC, Syria, Colombia, Cameroon, Ukraine and many other countries in conflict to the human rights bodies in Geneva. Because women affected by war all have different specific messages and concerns to bring forward, it is particularly important to bring their voices directly to the bodies in Geneva. The women from these conflict countries were given the opportunity to demand all international actors to uphold their responsibilities.

In legal terms, we focused on demanding the recognition of States’ “extraterritorial obligations”. Examples of such obligations include stopping the exports of weapons to countries where they might be used for human rights violations and ending the impunity of Corporations towards human rights violations when they are committed outside their home country.

Finally, the negotiations towards an international treaty on “Transnational Corporations and Other Businesses Enterprises with regards to Human Rights” started and WILPF was part of this process. As WILPF is a member of the Treaty Alliance calling on a treaty to protect human rights, our programme was present at the first round of negotiations, bringing an antimilitarism message. This treaty could bring access to justice for victims of human rights violations perpetrated by corporations, regardless of where they are based, and so will be an important part of our advocacy for the next few years. Our aim is to continue monitoring this process and to stay alert for any future treaties that ensure that the rights of women are protected.
"The negative impacts on our society of patriarchy and inequality is perhaps nowhere more pervasive and pernicious than in the field of weapons, war, and militarism."

Ray Acheson,
Disarmament Director
Disarmament

2015 highlights:

Austria initiated a process towards an international commitment to end the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

By the end of 2015, over 120 states had endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge, a commitment to stigmatise, prohibit, and eliminate nuclear weapons.

A treaty banning nuclear weapons became the cornerstone of discussions on nuclear weapons at international forums in 2015.

Governments met twice to discuss lethal autonomous weapon systems in 2015, during discussions which it became clear that the majority of states believe that the use of a weapon requires meaningful human control. WILPF is urging states to negotiate a prohibition on these weapons.

Amidst ongoing death and destruction from the use, trade, and production of weapons, the Disarmament programme saw progressive developments on several of its political objectives related to disarmament and arms control in 2015. Part of our success lies in our integrated approach to various strands of our work on disarmament, as well as our work on human rights, gender equality, and international peace and justice.

The initiation by Austria of a process towards an international commitment to end the use of explosive weapons in populated areas is a great step toward reducing human suffering. The International Network on Explosive Weapons, of which WILPF is a steering group member, has consistently called on all states to commit to end this practice. At WILPF, we also believe that states need to prevent those that use explosive weapons in populated areas from acquiring arms. In this regard, we published Trading arms, bombing towns: the lethal connection between the international arms trade and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

While the use of explosive weapons results in death and destruction worldwide, the threat of nuclear weapons still hangs over us all. By the end of 2015, over 120 states had endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge, a commitment to stigmatise, prohibit, and eliminate nuclear weapons. This provides WILPF and other civil society groups the opportunity to continue promoting a treaty to ban nuclear weapons as the next logical step for nuclear disarmament. As a steering group member of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, WILPF will continue advocating for peace and justice through a ban on nuclear weapons. In 2015, we published an overview on the legal gaps associated with nuclear weapons in Filling the legal gap: the prohibition of nuclear weapons; we also published studies on nuclear weapon modernisation with Assuring destruction forever: 2015 edition and published the final edition of the NPT Action Plan Monitoring Report.

While old technologies of violence linger, new technologies are being developed. Governments met twice to discuss lethal autonomous weapon systems in 2015. It has become clear that the majority of states believe that the use of any weapon requires meaningful human control and reject the idea that matters of life and death should be delegated to machines. As a steering group member of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, WILPF is advocating for the prohibition of autonomous weapons before it is too late.

Throughout all of WILPF’s efforts on all disarmament and arms control, we continue to bring a gender perspective to our work. In 2015, we published Women, weapons, and war: a gendered critique of multilateral instruments, which examines synergies – and contradictions – related to gender and women in a number of multilateral resolutions, treaties, and commitments on conventional weapons and women’s rights and participation. We are also engaged with preventing gender-based violence by addressing arms transfers and the proliferation and use of weapons. In 2015, we worked to provide information to diplomats, export officials, and civil society groups on how best to implement the provision of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on preventing gender-based violence, in particular through our report Gender-based violence and the Arms Trade Treaty, and by bringing activists to the first ATT Conference of States Parties to raise this issue with diplomats.
Women, peace and security

2015 highlights:

WILPF worked with the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security to develop a Civil Society Roadmap. We also developed a database focusing on commitments on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) made at the 2015 High Level Review of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325);

These processes resulted in the integration of key policy recommendations, such as support for the resolution on WPS, UNSCR 2242.

WILPF facilitated local-to-global dialogue to assist local change in countries including Cameroon, Colombia, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syria, and Yemen.

WILPF also created a Security Council Scorecard to assist advocacy work aimed at holding strengthened civil society engagement, in the eight governments accountable to implementing a holistic understanding of the WPS Agenda.

WILPF facilitated three consultations on the UNSCR 1325 Global Study, including one at WILPF’s Peace Summit in The Hague.

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) programme has in 2015 continued to focus on challenging the root causes of militarism and war by making the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda more relevant and effective for women affected by conflict and violence.

Our goal has been to amplify the voices of grassroots women peace activists and human rights defenders, strengthen accountability on a holistic and transformative WPS agenda, and mobilise attention to demilitarisation and disarmament as key gap areas for conflict prevention and peace.

Over 2015, the programme advocated, monitored, and reported on the WPS Agenda at the Security Council, UN, and among Member States. Preparing and following up on the October 2015 fifteenth anniversary Global Study on UNSCR 1325 and the WPS Agenda at the UN Security Council was a main area of focus.

Our work has benefited international civil society worldwide, but also particularly women affected by conflict, government delegations, UN staff, and NGOs around the world. We know our resources are used and respected widely: our monitoring materials and resources include over 21,000 resources and initiatives and get a quarter of a million hits annually from over 200 different countries/territories, over half of which are in the Global South, near or in a conflict-affected area.

Because our work is unique and respected, we have been able to build momentum around a holistic, human rights-based approach to security, based on demilitarisation, disarmament, and women’s human rights that strengthens accountability on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. The local to global work we facilitate, such as in connecting WILPF’s 100th conference with the UNSCR 1325 Global Study, demonstrates WILPF’s integrated approach in action.

“In sisterhood and solidarity, we are powerful. Only together can we create gender justice and sustainable peace.”

Abigail Ruane, Women, Peace and Security Director
“Women civil society mobilisation is essential to enable participation in all range of economic, social and political development and challenge the ongoing consequences of militarism, discrimination and exclusion.”

Barbro Svedberg, Crisis Response Director
Crisis response

2015 highlights:

In 2015, WILPF mobilised and brought together more than 80 diverse women and civil society activists from Iraq and Syria on different occasions to share, analyse and provide strategies for addressing the root causes of conflict and women’s rights, including gender-based violence.

In Ukraine, WILPF has worked in 2015 with women’s organisations to engage in a gender conflict assessment and a women, peace and security strategy. The result is mobilisation of women’s groups and human rights activists, in an area where there has been very little engagement and participation of women.

In Syria, WILPF has supported a large number of women civil society organisations and activists to organise, produce, analyse and engage directly to influence decision-makers at the international level, including events at the Human Rights Council in March and June, the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly and the EU institutions in Brussels.

In early 2015, WILPF developed its Crisis Response programme, building on the experience of WILPF’s work in the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region, Ukraine, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH).

Throughout 2015, the programme has looked to support the way women in civil society organise, participate in, provide information about, and influence policy for relevant mechanism at the national and international levels. There has been an increased focus on addressing conflict countries, in particular Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Ukraine, but also countries in postwar transition such as BiH.

The Crisis Response programme has engaged in gender conflict assessments in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, and Palestine, including preparation for submissions to treaty bodies. The programme has supported dialogue and movement towards the building of women civil society at the national level, in particular through a series of workshops and events in cooperation with the project ‘Strategies for Change in Syria and Iraq,’ and a series of consultations and workshops with diverse groups of women organisations in Ukraine, entitled ‘Women Leaders Building Peace in Frontline Communities.’

The programme has also further engaged in the development/ implementation of specific Women, Peace and Security strategies – with particular emphasis on women’s participation – through supporting and facilitating capacity building for Syrian and Bosnian women’s organisations.

Finally, the programme has strengthened the engagement and exchange of knowledge between international actors and local civil society in conflict and post-conflict contexts, by providing recommendations and submissions, and arranging advocacy events at the international level.

During 2015, the programme’s main contributions have facilitated dialogue and created space for women civil society and human rights defenders to work on comprehensive strategies for access and inclusion. The programme has contributed to the development of an understanding of decision makers, such as member states and UN agencies, of how the continuation and escalation of violence against women has an impact on social, economic and political development, and is, therefore, also a determining factor for women’s participation in peace and transition processes.
October 2015 marked the 15th anniversary of the ground-breaking UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, the first resolution to link women’s experiences of conflict to international peace and security.

As a result of WILPF’s advocacy, the Global Study included key recommendations around reducing militarisation, strengthening women-led civil society, and strengthening accountability for holistic implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.
The Global Study on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 was launched on 14 October 2015 and the entire month of October was allocated to Women, Peace and Security (WPS) activities. WILPF’s Women, Peace and Security programme, based in New York, was in charge of these activities, but our engagement in the Global Study started long time before October 2015.

**WILPF as a key player**

In 2014, WILPF’s Secretary General, Madeleine Rees, was invited to join the High Level Advisory Group for the Global Study, and in May 2015 WILPF published the report *Through the Lens of Civil Society: Summary Report on the Public Submissions to the Global Study on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*. The report provided nine strategic recommendations for CSOs, Member States, and UN Agencies on the effective implementation of the WPS Agenda. In addition, WILPF made an advocacy toolkit, a comprehensive social media packet, and launched its new initiative: the UN Security Council Scorecard.

**Outreach and advocacy in October 2015**

WILPF’s key message stated that an approach to human security through sustainable peace must challenge the root causes of violence and war. This means dismantling structures of gendered power, and building inclusive societies founded on the pillars of gender equality, equal participation, and socio-economic justice.

Three WILPF delegations joined the activities in New York in October, including 20 women peace leaders from 11 countries: Cameroon, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Japan, Lebanon, Nigeria, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Together with WILPF’s Secretary General and the High Level Advisory Group on the Global Study, these delegations took part in a number of strategic conversations on mobilising the feminist peace movement, including across other movements.

WILPF also worked with the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security to advocate for strengthened attention to conflict prevention, and the implementation of commitments. The working group released its 2015 Civil Society Women, Peace and Security Roadmap. In support of this roadmap, WILPF launched the publication *The Pieces of Peace: Realizing Peace through Gendered Conflict Prevention*, which outlines eight interlinked components critical for effective gendered conflict prevention.
## Activism, advocacy and outreach through 2015

### January 2015

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| 26–29 January | Strategies for Change I  
WILPF and MADRE bring 40 women’s rights activists from Syria and Iraq together in Istanbul to share their experiences and identify strategies for defending women’s rights in conflict and responding to human rights violations, including sexual violence. |
| 17–18 February | Libya’s Transition: Scenario Analysis and Crisis Response Strategy,  
Towards Stabilisation  
Funded by WILPF’s Crisis Response project ‘MENA Agenda 1325’, WILPF’s partner organisation Libyan Women’s Platform for Peace organise a workshop in Cairo, Egypt, gathering activists, diplomats, professors and other Libyan stakeholders. The workshop aims at putting in place a short-term crisis response strategy amidst the current political and security turmoil in Libya. |

### February 2015

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| 6–7 February | Workshop/ Reflection on “Parallel Reports”  
WILPF facilitates preparatory workshops with its national partner in Morocco (Union de L’Action Feminino) on Women Peace and Security and General Recommendation 30 for representatives both from Civil Society Organisations, high level political representatives and academics. |
| 9–10 February | Workshop with activists from Northern Ireland  
The WILPF initiative, ‘Women Organising for Change in Syria and Bosnia’ organises a workshop in Sarajevo discussing peacebuilding and activism in Northern Ireland. The participants come from different parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and include representatives of formal organisations, informal initiatives, political parties, and individual activists. |

### March 2015

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| 2–27 March | Human Rights Council 28th Session  
During the HRC session, WILPF advocates for the Right to Peace and for a UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Climate Change to assess its impact on the full enjoyment of human rights. WILPF also holds a side event on civil society activism in Syria bringing together Syrian researchers and activists. |
| 6 March    | Women Confronting ISIS symposium  
WILPF gathers women peace leaders from Iraq, Syria, and other countries to an all-day symposium. The leaders map the relationship between gender-based abuses under ISIS/DAESH and state sanctioned discrimination and violence against women in Iraq and Syria. |
| 9–20 March | 59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW59)  
CSW59 focuses on the progress of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and WILPF delegates and staff from Australia, Denmark, Japan, Norway, Palestine, Syria, the United Kingdom, and the United States converge in New York to collectively advocate for a transformative and sustainable post-2015 development agenda. WILPF (co/)sponsors 14 events during CSW. Moreover, WILPF hosts and supports a delegation from Libya, Palestine and Syria to attend several open and closed events. In addition, specific advocacy meetings on the situation in Yemen and Libya are held in connection to the CSW session. |
| 10 March   | WILPF leaves the Conference on Disarmament  
After covering the work of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) for decades, WILPF decides it is time to focus its energy on more promising fora and initiatives. In a powerful statement to the CD, WILPF notes that the CD is a body operating in a vacuum, disconnected from the outside world. WILPF states the CD has lost perspective of the bigger picture of human suffering and global injustice, and that maintaining the structures that reinforce deadlock has become more important than fulfilling the objective for which it was created – negotiating disarmament treaties. |
### April 2015

**22-25 April:**
Centennial Congress  
Almost 300 members of WILPF gather in The Hague, the Netherlands, where WILPF was founded exactly 100 years ago. A new ExCom is elected, the WILPF manifesto is released, and 11 congress resolutions are adopted. Read more on page 11.

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**27-29 April:**
WILPF Peace Conference: Women’s Power to Stop War  
WILPF gathers more than 1,000 peacemakers – women, men and genderqueer – from over 60 countries in The Hague, the Netherlands, to reorganise and reenergise a social movement for equitable peace and freedom. Read more on page 15.

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**27 April-25 May:**
Review conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty  
WILPF monitors and analyses the entire Review Conference. The Disarmament programme produces a daily newsletter with information, analysis, and advocacy, and provides an archive of statements and official letters that are not available publicly anywhere else.

### May 2015

**24 May:**
President Kozue Akibayashi crosses the Demilitarised Zone  
Together with 30 feminist peace activists including journalist and political activist Gloria Steinem, Nobel Peace Laureate Mairead Maguire and Nobel Peace Laureate Leymah Gbowee, WILPF International President Kozue Akibayashi crosses the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ), which serves as a buffer between North Korea and South Korea to make a powerful call for peace in the Korean Peninsula.

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**30 May:**
Centenary Celebrations of WILPF Australia  
Secretary General Madeleine Rees participates in WILPF Australia’s celebrations, taking place in Australia’s capital Canberra. The celebrations include a public conference, centenary Australian Peacewomen celebration, an historical exhibition, and the Section’s triennial conference.

### June 2015

**1-5 June:**
Meeting of government experts on small arms and light weapons  
WILPF monitors and gives analysis on this second meeting of experts related to combating the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons. The meeting focuses on preventing trafficking of new technologies such as 3D-printed guns or polymer weapons.

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**14 June:**
Advocacy trip to EU Institutions  
Advocacy trip to Brussels for a delegation of eight leading women Syrian civil society activists. High-level meetings and recommendations to the EU, in collaboration with Kvinna till Kvinna.

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**15-20 June:**
Consultations with women Palestinian organisations in Ramallah  
WILPF engages in a consultative process and assessment with Palestinian women organisations to investigate the possibilities of WILPF’s engagement in Palestine, and on how to mobilise Palestinian women organisations around the WPS Agenda and the upcoming report to CEDAW. Following this consultative process, a joint statement with Palestinian women organisations is developed and delivered at the 29th session of the Human Rights Council.

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**19 June - December:**
Series of workshops “Towards a gender-sensitive reparations programme for Bosnia and Herzegovina” starts  
During the summer and fall of 2015, the WILPF initiative, “Women Organising for Change in Syria and Bosnia” organises five workshops during which framework for gender-sensitive reparations programme for civilian victims of war for Bosnia and Herzegovina is developed. The document defines the basic elements of harms committed during the war, the beneficiaries of such a programme, and possible reparations measures.
**July 2015**

6-10 July: Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group on Transnational Corporations and other Business Enterprises with regards to human rights

As part of the Treaty Alliance, WILPF points at human rights violations of corporations as a root cause of war.

8 July: CEDAW review of Spain

WILPF Spain and WILPF International Secretariat submits a report on the extraterritorial obligations of Spain: arms exports and Spanish corporations operating abroad. Read the report on wilpf.org.

21 July: Women Peace and Security Lecture Series: The World Humanitarian Summit – A historic opportunity for the WPS Agenda

WILPF hosts a discussion on how to strengthen synergies between the WPS agenda and humanitarian action.

22 July: Women Peace and Security Lecture Series: South Asia’s Ongoing Conflicts and Women Peace Efforts in the Region

WILPF hosts a film screening on South Asia’s ongoing conflicts and women’s peace efforts in the region. Activists from the Manipur Women Gun Survivors Network in Northeast India share their experiences in addressing the rising militarisation and the increase in violence against women, including sexual violence.

23 July: Women Peace and Security Lecture Series: Walking the Line: Women Cross DeMilitarised Zone (DMZ) for Peace

WILPF hosts a discussion with women participants who were part of the historic crossing of the demilitarised zone on how to build political will to end the Korean War.

**August 2015**

1 for 7 Billion

WILPF joins the campaign 1 for 7 Billion to call for a transparent process in electing the new UN Secretary General.

24-27 August: First conference of states parties of the Arms Trade Treaty

WILPF monitors the conference. While most of the decisions are infrastructural and procedural, they do have implications for how effectively the Treaty might be implemented moving forward. WILPF notes that on the question of transparency, unfortunately states parties fail to meet real life needs, only taking note of inadequate provisional templates.

28-30 August: International Youth Summit for nuclear abolition in Hiroshima

As part of a steering committee composed of youth representatives from six NGOs, WILPF gathers 30 youth leaders from 23 different countries for the International Youth Summit for Nuclear Abolition.

**September 2015**

26-30 September: Advocacy delegation from Syrian Women’s Initiative for Peace and Democracy in the context of UN General Assembly, New York

Supported by UN Women, WILPF facilitates a high-level advocacy delegation from the Syrian Women’s Initiative for Peace and Democracy in the context of the 70th session of the UN General Assembly. As part of the approach to strengthen the engagement and knowledge between international actors and local civil society, the aim of this high-level advocacy trip is to build on previous policy dialogues with the Special Envoy for Syria, key member states and other international actors, and to provide change from women in the civil society on ending the crisis in Syria. Further, WILPF also monitors the General Debate on gender and militarism issues.

14 September - 2 October: Human Rights Council 30th Session

During this session, among other initiatives, WILPF International supports WILPF DRC to amplify its advocacy on the role of extractive industries in the conflict in DRC and adequate treatment of survivors of sexual violence.
November 2015:
Balkan delegation with Nobel Women’s Initiative
Secretary General Madeleine Rees and Crisis Response programme staff participate in a fact finding mission delegation to Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia, organised by the Nobel Women’s Initiative. The aim is to see first hand what travelling the Balkans’ route to Western Europe is really like for those fleeing conflict.

November 2015:
WILPF Cameroon Conference on Women, Peace and Security
WILPF Cameroon hosts a Regional Conference to further develop the joint activities with African Sections.

12-13 November 2015:
Meeting of the High Contracting Parties of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
WILPF, as a member of the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots, participates in this meeting, encouraging states to support a ban on autonomous weapons.

25 November - 10 December:
16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence
WILPF supports the campaign with both international and local activities. On the international level, we focus on how violent conflict can destroy educational opportunities for girls in particular.

29 November:
International Women Human Rights Defenders’ Day
The day celebrates women’s activism in defending human rights around the world. WILPF supports the day by publishing the article ‘A day to defend women human rights activists’.

30 November - 12 December:
COP21 in Paris
WILPF members unite in Paris to advocate during the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21). The working group hosts two workshops and has an information booth at the Global Village of Alternatives.
Snippets from WILPF around the world

WILPF Albania

Albania is in the process of reforming its justice and anticorruption systems, as well as continuing to tackle economic issues. During 2015, WILPF Albania has advocated making the role of women in Albania more significant. In particular the Section has worked with Women, Peace and Security, Human Rights, and Gender Equality issues, and has carried out a “Women’s Power to Stop War” project in schools, mass media outlets and academic institutions across the country, from big cities like Tirana, Elbasani, Korça, and Shkodra to rural areas.

WILPF Albania has also worked closely with youth movements, women’s groups and antifascist veterans. The aim has been to promote democratic values and peaceful coexistence between different communities in Albania and the whole of the Balkans.

WILPF Aotearoa/ New Zealand

WILPF Aotearoa/ New Zealand has been involved in various activities and projects throughout 2015. Seven members of the Aotearoa/ New Zealand Section participated in the Centenary Congress in The Hague in April. The Section is part of a group monitoring the New Zealand government’s National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

WILPF Aotearoa commemorated the 70th anniversary of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, took part in vigils on the WWI anniversary focusing on the need to learn other ways of dealing with conflict, continued work on supporting indigenous rights, maintained close working relations with WILPF Australia, and published an article on WILPF Aotearoa in the New Zealand Women’s Studies Journal.

WILPF Cameroon

In 2015, WILPF Cameroon continued its advocacy work on informing and raising awareness on the UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan by targeting a number of administrative authorities, UN Women, diplomatic representations, civil society organisations, media outlets, and other stakeholders.

Since June 2015, the Section has worked on raising awareness of the ATT and UNPoA in order to boost the ATT ratification process in Cameroon.

Some of WILPF Cameroon’s outreach activities also targeted refugees in the Eastern part of Cameroon, with the aim of promoting peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities. The Section also worked on lobbying electronic and print media owners in order to gain their support in informing and raising awareness on the importance of UNSCR 1325.

On 27-28 November 2015 in Yaoundé, WILPF Cameroon hosted WILPF Africa’s Regional Conference on women’s participation in conflict prevention and management. The conference was organised with the support of WILPF Sweden and Folke Bernadotte Academy.
WILPF Canada

The Vancouver Branch continued to invite speakers to its monthly meetings. Academics and activists spoke on topics such as ‘What Jane Addams Taught Me,’ ‘Gendered Violence in the Philippines,’ and ‘The History of ‘Take Back the Night’.

In January WILPF Canada issued a press release, ‘100 Years Later: Women Warn of Treacherous State of Global Relations,’ to publicise the Centennial Congress in The Hague, which five members from both branches attended.

In addition to its annual August 6th Lantern Ceremony to remember Hiroshima and to affirm commitment to nuclear disarmament, the Nanaimo Branch wrote to the Canadian Prime Minister urging action on the Syrian refugee problem and to the National Energy Board outlining concerns about a proposed pipeline expansion project.

WILPF Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

In 2015, WILPF DRC focused on preparing activities for the 100th Anniversary of WILPF. 12 members from the Section travelled to The Hague where they attended the Centennial Congress and the Women’s Power to Stop War Conference.

On the 15th Anniversary of the UNSCR 1325, WILPF DRC took the opportunity to popularise, through key actors, the grassroots community, civil society organisations and the mass media, peace, security, the prevention of conflicts and gender-based violence. Several workshops were held to optimise the influence of women’s organisations and to encourage others to follow the Equality Law in DRC. WILPF DRC also worked on campaigns concerning small arms and light weapons, lobbying various institutions to sign and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty.

In the future the Section plans to expand its membership, to continue to disseminate information on UNSCR 1325 and other resolutions related to Women Peace and Security, and to continue advocating the revising of our National Action Plan.

WILPF Finland

In 2015, WILPF Finland focused on implementing the UNSCR 1325 and cooperating with immigrant women. They had two major projects: Haweenka, through which they organised education for women in Somalia, with the goal to train local female leaders in villages, and Together Ahead, which was a social integration project with Iranian and Afghan immigrant women participants. The Section also continued to campaign against xenophobia and NATO membership.

Regular cooperation with the other Nordic Sections continued in 2015. A delegation of 12 women from the Finnish Section participated in WILPF’s Centennial Conference in The Hague. They were involved in the opening of the conference as well as attending several different sessions and receptions. At the marketplace they shared a desk with Sections from other Nordic countries.
WILPF Germany

In 2015, WILPF Germany’s work focused on WILPF’s history and past challenges for peace. The Section organised a series of sessions about women peace activists and published a history book (“Frauen. Freiheit. Frieden” – can be ordered by the German Section). WILPF Germany celebrated WILPF’s 100th anniversary with a ceremony in Munich town hall and a symposium on disarmament/ nuclear issues, economic justice/ conflict prevention and human trafficking.

In cooperation with the Geneva office and other international partners, WILPF Germany also developed a Human Rights strategy against trade agreements such as Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership, TransPacific Partnership and Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement. Within the German Women’s Security Council, the Section continued to lobby for the implementation of UNSCR 1325 and a gender action plan. This included writing to Angela Merkel expressing their support of her strategy in response to the ‘refugee crisis.’ The German Section was also coinvolved in the COP21 activities.

Young WILPF groups have been formed in Berlin and Konstanz, and are together preparing workshops for and with refugee women in the aim of raising awareness of refugee concerns and needs.

WILPF Ghana

This year WILPF Ghana concentrated mainly on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, collaborating with the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Centre (KAIPTC), WANEP and the Media on Women Peace and Security. As a Member of Women Peace and Security Communications Network (WPS CommNet), the Section held several events as a part of an ongoing effort to educate the public on UNSCR 1325, and to also encourage women participation in governance and peacekeeping processes. WILPF Ghana followed up on the 2014 WPS Media Forum, WPS Media Working Group, Longterm Media Engagement Strategy, and held a workshop on Election monitoring for the 2016 Ghana election.

The 18-19 February 2015 meetings served as an opportunity to brainstorm details for a longterm WPS media engagement strategy to mark the twin anniversaries of the Beijing Platform of Action and UNSCR 1325.

The Section also worked with communities in the Eastern region of the country on campaigns for peace and character education, for a culture of peace in basic schools. For International Day of Peace celebrations, WILPF Ghana organised a seminar called ‘The Culture of Peace’ in schools.

WILPF Italy

During 2015, members of WILPF Italy held a number of seminars and training sessions on gender violence, UNSCR 1325 and ecosystem protection. The Section also participated in WILPF’s activities related to COP21.

WILPF Italy participated in numerous initiatives against war (Movimento NO WarNO Nato), dishonest and unlawful international commerce deals (Movimento NO TTIP) and nuclear weapons (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and public activity in Rome for 70 year anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki). The Section also took part in solidarity actions to help refugees and immigrants who have arrived in Italy.

In collaboration with the Department of Gender Studies of the Roma University, WILPF Italy organised a national seminar “The courage of women for peace” in order to remember and celebrate the Italian women who took part in the foundation of WILPF in The Hague, or joined the Italian Section in the early days.

Together with AISHA (a Palestinian association of women in Gaza), and Tavola Valdese’s financial help, the Section started a project called ‘For a Life Without Violence,’ aiming to give women sufferers of violence or indigence the opportunity to learn an artisan craft to improve their conditions and help them find a place in society.
WILPF Lebanon

In 2015, WILPF Lebanon helped Syrian refugees (who exceed 40% of the Lebanese population) by bringing vital supplies to camps in the Beqaa Valley, and helping to furnish a school made for children who cannot attend regular schools.

The Section worked to introduce human rights and other international documents, such as CEDAW, Beijing platform for action and UNSCR 1325, to university students. This was to both raise young people’s awareness on human rights issues, and to encourage interest in WILPF. The Lebanese Section is now enriched with new young and enthusiastic members.

Collaborating with other NGOs working for peace and security, WILPF Lebanon advocated against the great number of small arms in the hands of young people and the effects this has on their families’ safety, and on the imbalance of women in decision-making positions, especially representatives in the parliament.

WILPF Mexico

In 2015, WILPF Mexico continued with its academic activities, looking to realise more rights for women, prevent violence against women and girls and bring perpetrators of gender-based violence to justice.

Parallel to that, the Section is developing a critical view on social justice, based on Nancy Fraser and Iris Marion Young’s theory on political recognition, redistribution and representation. The ultimate aim of this is to promote awareness and media coverage of female homicide (femicide) in Mexico. Rates of femicide, which is often related to organised crime and is very dangerous for women due to a lack of institutional protection and a dysfunctional justice system, is alarmingly high in Mexico, and is constantly rising.

WILPF Nigeria

In April 2015, WILPF Nigeria monitored and observed the 2015 General Elections (Governorship and the State House of Assemblies) in Nigeria as part of the innovative initiative Women’s Situation Room-Nigeria (WSR-Nigeria). This is part of WILPF Nigeria’s continued work towards peace, disarmament, the elimination of conflict and violence and the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Nigeria.

Led by Joy Onyesoh, WSR-Nigeria was convened by 17 women-led organisations through the National Women’s Platform for Peaceful Elections (NWPPE). WILPF Nigeria coordinated a six-person secretariat in Abuja and a second physical Situation Room was set up in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. WSR-Nigeria reported incidences of violence against women and the police, arson, shootings, and intimidation by armed men and; blatant electoral malpractices being perpetrated by political parties. The electoral violence brought to light by WILPF Nigeria has jeopardized the safety and security of women and all Nigerians. Therefore, WSR-Nigeria has called on Nigeria’s Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and all political parties to continue to maintain the integrity of the electoral process and; for security forces to increase efforts to uphold the rule of law and ensure the safety and security of lives and property.

WILPF Nigeria also continued other work during the year including Training-the-Trainers Programme, which uses UNSCR 1325 to strengthen women’s economic empowerment and combat community gun violence, and which has now trained over 7,200 women.
WILPF Norway

The main activity in the Norwegian Section was WILPF’s 100th anniversary. The celebrations included local meetings, exhibitions and publications, and the Section hosted a conference in Oslo in September 2015.

Advocacy activities in 2015 were related to disarmament, NATO membership, the militarisation of northern Norway, UNSCR 1325, the development of a culture of peace, and Norwegian arms production and export. A key area for the Section is the link between militarism, environment and development through the umbrella organisation FORUM and the WILPF Environment Working Group.

WILPF Palestine

Over the past three years, repression and violence have been increasing in Palestine under the Israeli Occupation, particularly as a result of expanding settlements, arbitrary detention, and harassment. While the deteriorating conditions impact all aspects of civilian life, women remain disproportionately and systematically impacted by the Israeli collective punishment policies. In this context, WILPF Palestine has been facing tremendous challenges in conducting its activism, but has nevertheless devoted its time and efforts to follow up and document the continuous violence against Palestinian women.

Palestinian members participated in different workshops and conferences, calling on the Palestinian authorities to take effective measures to ensure the protection of women and to promote their participation in society at all levels.

WILPF Palestine participated in a project called 'Towards the institutionalisation of the UNSCR 1325 to achieve the peace and security of Palestinian Women,' highlighting violations of Palestinian women in the West Bank. The Section also attended several workshops including a preparatory workshop on the national strategic plan for implementing UNSCR 1325. WILPF Palestine further participated in a press conference launching a national campaign to combat violence against women under the slogan "end the occupation ... an end to the violence."

The Palestine Section was also a part of the committee established to prepare reports on international agreements and treaties for the State of Palestine, on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

WILPF Sweden

In 2015, WILPF Sweden continued to lobby the Swedish government to take a more active and progressive role in disarmament processes and to hold Sweden accountable to its promise of a feminist foreign policy. Successes include Sweden’s decision not to prolong its military cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia. WILPF Sweden is increasing pressure on the government to join the humanitarian initiative against nuclear weapons, and to sign the humanitarian pledge. The section is also engaged in the process to draft Sweden’s new National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

The Swedish section has expanded its capacity-building collaboration with WILPF DRC, Nigeria and Cameroon, culminating in a regional conference on conflict prevention and the implementation of UNSCR 1325. WILPF Ghana and several emerging groups also attended the conference. WILPF’s 100th anniversary was celebrated at the national level as well as in the local branches.
**WILPF Switzerland**

On 26 February 2015 WILPF Switzerland, together with other NGOs, presented 100,000 signatures to the Swiss government expressing dissent with its intention to buy drones from Israel.

On International Women’s Day, a WILPF delegation marched with 4,000 men and women in the capital Bern, demanding the implementation of the ‘equal pay for equal work’ law.

For WILPF’s 100th Anniversary WILPF Switzerland participated in several events and projects, including publishing a brochure on the history of the Swiss section. At the Women Stop War Conference in The Hague, the Swiss section sponsored the workshop on “Mass Media and Conflict” with Amy Goodman and Sabine Schiffer, and donated 1,200 Swiss chocolate bars and 1,200 pairs of women’s shoes to the marketplace – to raise funds for Syrian refugee women and to urge the Canadian government to stop native women in Canada being murdered on a daily basis. WILPF Switzerland held an evening on ‘Women from Yemen After the Revolution in Zurich’, and also participated in the “19-15-2015 Zimmerwald Conference” in memory of the call for peace by renowned socialists 100 years ago.

**WILPF UK**

In 2015 much of UK WILPF’s work focussed on the Centenary History Project, which was supported by a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Working with Clapham film unit we made a film ‘These Dangerous Women,’ which is on Youtube and had an exhibition and a booklet telling the story of the British Women who tried to go to The Hague in 1915. The exhibition has been shown in 19 locations in England, Wales and Scotland.

In 2015, eight UK WILPF delegates went to Congress and 40 UK members to Conference. The Section held a seminar on ‘Climate Change, Environment and Militarism.’ There was a week of WILPF events at Edinburgh University, culminating with WILPF Secretary General Madeleine Rees giving the Chrystal Macmillan lecture.

Throughout the year, the Section also took part in demonstrations around the country in protest of Trident replacement and TTIP, and in support of refugees and linking climate change to militarism.

Above is a selection of national work. WILPF International also continued work in other countries and on numerous conflict affected countries including projects in Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and across the Middle East.
A WILPF SUCCESS STORY:

WILPF

Over the last few years WILPF has flourished in Africa. WILPF has expanded with four official WILPF Sections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Ghana and Cameroon. New national groups are also emerging in Uganda, Chad, Kenya, South Africa and Burundi. Why is WILPF thriving in Africa? We took a closer look into one of the newest Sections in Africa. Meet WILPF Cameroon.

By Isabel Bull

The 2015 WILPF African Regional Conference, which took place from the 27-28 November 2015, was hosted by WILPF Cameroon. Held in Yaoundé, and focusing on the ‘participation of African women in conflict prevention and conflict management,’ it symbolised the climax of what has been such a great year for WILPF Cameroon.

WILPF Cameroon’s story began in 2012 when the now President Sylvie Jacqueline Ndongomo found out about WILPF. Sylvie asked if a Cameroon Section could join the WILPF family, and in April 2015, this finally happened when WILPF Cameroon became a fully-fledged WILPF Section during the WILPF Centennial Congress at The Hague.

“The year 2015 was a huge success for WILPF Cameroon considering the fact that we became an official WILPF Section and got legal recognition in the country. 2015 gave us the opportunity to make WILPF known in Cameroon and share its vision of building peace with women as key strategic players,” explains Sylvie.
WILPF’s successful expansion in Africa has been exciting. “WILPF has been expanding so well [here] because of its futuristic vision for Africa,” says Guy Feugap of WILPF Cameroon. According to Guy joining WILPF was an imperative for Cameroon to avoid the conflicts that have been affecting their neighbours in recent years.

It is suffice to say, however, that it has not been plain sailing for WILPF Cameroon over the past year, as they face a number of difficulties. One major obstacle is a lack of funding: WILPF Cameroon is made up of 17 members, all of whom work as volunteers, who hold down a primary job too.

Furthermore, as Guy points out, it is not easy for WILPF Cameroon to gain access to government officials, which is a primary strategy used by WILPF to bring about change: “You need a request to meet a minister. They will not receive you unless there has been pressure coming from the outside on them,” says Guy.

WILPF Cameroon has benefited from the help of WILPF Sweden. However, WILPF Sweden has also faced funding difficulties in their quest to help their sisters in Cameroon: “It has been hard for us to get financial support for our work with WILPF Cameroon. This is because many funders limit their support to so called conflict and post conflict countries. And since Cameroon is not seen as a conflict country we struggle to find funding,” says Tove Ivergard of WILPF Sweden.

Despite the difficulties, however, WILPF Cameroon has achieved a lot over the past year; their story for 2015 proves that WILPF can thrive and push for peace and freedom in Africa and perfectly exemplifies the success of WILPF’s African expansion.

2015 successes

One great success has been the incredibly positive way WILPF Cameroon has been received by the general public. Guy explains, “We come out of meetings and workshops and people are very amazed by what we have to say. We are welcome in Cameroon, we are very appreciated in Cameroon.” This reaction has given WILPF Cameroon the unique opportunity to really use its popularity as a leverage to garner support to generate change.

They have created a great outreach programme, working with other civil society organisations, made up of women and young people, to form a coalition proposing ways to tackle terrorism to the government, as well as representing Cameroonian civil society in panels and meetings at the United Nations and the African Union.

WILPF Cameroon has also worked hard popularising the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the UN Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons (UNPoA), as a means to reduce gender-based violence through the procurement of these arms.

WILPF Cameroon has been most dedicated, however, to its mission in securing a NAP for UNSCR 1325 in Cameroon. On the 31 August 2015, Sylvie held a working meeting with Mr. Calice Abessolo, Director of Social Promotion in the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Family in the Cameroonian Government. Mr. Abessolo noted the importance of having a NAP for this, and the two sides agreed to collaborate in order to bring this about.

Having overseen the beginning of the expansion of UNSCR 1325 to Cameroon over last year, WILPF Cameroon cites the continuation of this as their big project for 2016.
The NPT Action Plan Monitoring Report
March 2015

MARCH 2015

Five years after the 64-point NPT Action Plan was adopted in 2010, this monitoring report provides a straightforward review and assessment of the Plan’s implementation.

WILPF Report on the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, Beijing+20
APRIL 2015

This report summarises the 14 events sponsored and co-sponsored by WILPF during the CSW59. These events together offered regional and global perspectives, and gave a voice to women working on peace, disarmament, and women’s rights around the world.

WILPF Manifesto 2015
APRIL 2015

At the Centennial Congress in The Hague 2015, WILPF adopted its new manifesto, which is the official declaration of our organisation’s intentions, views and work for the coming century.

Through the Lens of Civil Society: Summary Report of the Public Submissions to the Global Study on Women, Peace and Security
MAY 2015

This summary brief provides nine strategic recommendations for the UN Security Council Resolution 2015 Global Study, based on the 47 public submissions from civil society shared through the public submissions process, which WILPF’s Women, Peace and Security programme facilitated ahead of the Global Study. This publication was submitted to the UNSCR 2015 Global Study lead author and team.

Pieces of Peace: Peace through Gendered Conflict Prevention
MAY 2015

This policy brief examines the means required for a more effective gendered conflict prevention; it focuses on eight key interlinked components: inclusive participation; gendered analysis; demilitarisation; disarmament; women’s human rights; environmental sustainability and development justice; local to global responses; and an independent women’s movement.

Not ‘Women’, but ‘Women and Children’: The International Community Burying the Agency of Syrian Women
JUNE 2015

This publication carefully draws together the pattern of language used in Member States’ oral interventions during the sessions on Syria and the Commission of Inquiry to Syria.
Gender-based violence and the Arms Trade Treaty

AUGUST 2015

This briefing paper aims to provide background on terminology around gender-based violence and to highlight relevant questions for risk assessments under article 6 and 7 of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Trading arms, bombing towns

SEPTEMBER 2015

This briefing paper looks at the lethal connection between the international arms trade and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, and makes recommendations to governments and others on policy and practice.

Assuring destruction forever: 2015 edition

APRIL 2015

This updated study explores the ongoing and planned nuclear weapon modernisation programmes in China, France, India, Israel, Pakistan, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

TRADING ARMS, BOMBING TOWNS

SEPTEMBER 2015

This table overleaf summarises the gaps in existing treaty law related to nuclear arms that a treaty banning nuclear weapons could fill.
Localising the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: A toolkit for Leveraging the 15th Anniversary of the UNSCR 1325

SEPTEMBER 2015
Published ahead of the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, this toolkit provides advocacy resources for leveraging the anniversary for action. The toolkit is localised in the context of Cameroon, where a National Action Plan on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is being explored as a result of such advocacy.

Women, Weapons and War: A Gendered Critique of Multilateral Instruments

OCTOBER 2015
This publication considers synergies and contradictions related to gender and women in a number of multilateral resolutions, treaties, and commitments on conventional weapons and women’s rights and participation.

Report on the 15th Anniversary of the UNSCR 1325

NOVEMBER 2015
This report overviews WILPF’s month of action around the 15th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution UNSCR 1325.
Financial overview

WILPF had a very rewarding 2015 with its 100th Anniversary celebrations: the Centennial Congress and the Peace Conference.

MORE THAN 1,000 PARTICIPANTS

Funds collected 2012-2015: 671,000 CHF

Total expenses 2012-2015: 667,000 CHF

Thanks to the financial contribution of WILPF national Sections, private donors and external public, most of our sisters, even those coming from financially weaker countries such as Nigeria, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Palestine, and the Philippines, were able to attend the important events, one of which took place in The Hague, the Netherlands.

WILPF also extends its gratitude to volunteers, participants and partners for their generous financial and in-kind contributions, and extends a special thanks to the Anniversary Coordination team for their extraordinary work and great commitment that enabled the success of this celebration.

Sources of funds - 100th Anniversary

- Registration fees for Congress/Conference: 31%
- Private foundations and other partners: 28%
- Individual donations: 19%
- Governments: 7%
- United Nations: 6%
- Section contributions: 4%
- Programme contributions: 4%
- Partner fees and booths/merchandise, sales and festival tickets: 1%
The 100th Anniversary has been challenging for WILPF on all domains. The path was long and uncertain, mainly because of fundraising challenges.

Eventually WILPF, with the precious contribution of its members and the very hard work of its staff, managed to bring more than 1,000 peace activists and changemakers together and to make the celebrations in The Hague one of 2015’s most significant events.

The diagram on page 55 summarises clearly the main sources of financial support received: the registration fees were obviously vital to organise the events and thanks to a substantial participation, the anniversary celebration was a success. Private foundations and partner organisations also played a huge role in supporting WILPF financially, as well as private donors who contributed through the ‘Committee of 100’ or anonymously.

As indicated above, at the end of 2015 there was a surplus on the Anniversary accounts. This positive balance will be used to cover expenses WILPF still incurs in 2016 in relation to the Anniversary.

2015, a year of significant change
WILPF continues to grow. The increased revenue from the previous year continued into 2015 aiding in the organisations work with the continuous support of our national Sections, our partners and donors.

There are substantial changes in the management and organisation and they need to be seen as part of a continuing process of moving the organisation forward, making changes when and where necessary to ensure long-term stability and sustainability.

2015 has been a year of transition in WILPF financial management
In practice, financial management is about taking action to look after the financial health of the organisation, and not leaving things to chance, for the strategic growth of WILPF.

Additional achievements in 2015 included the following:
- Improvement of internal control processes with the implementation of improved financial management tools such as Finance Management Manuals and associated practices and forms;
- Two new staff members were recruited which helped to improve the financial management and planning of WILPF;
  - Reinforcement of the Finance team at the Secretariat in Geneva with the recruitment of a Finance Manager.
  - Reinforcement of Office Management with the recruitment of an Office Manager at the WILPF UNO office in New York.

Strategic update
Both the Geneva and New York offices’ management works in close collaboration with the International Treasurer, the UNO Treasurer and the Standing Finance Committee with the following objectives:
- Help WILPF managers to make effective and efficient use of the resources to achieve objectives;
- Improve collaboration with Sections through the ‘Treasurer’s Network’;
- Fulfill commitments towards stakeholders (beneficiaries, donors and members);
- Help WILPF to be more accountable to donors and other stakeholders;
- Gain the respect and confidence of funding agencies, partners and beneficiaries;
- Give WILPF the advantage in accessing limited resources (funding);
- Help WILPF prepare itself for long-term financial sustainability.

Members of the Standing Finance Committee have throughout 2015 engaged intensively in setting up improved financial management systems and on supporting the two offices toward that goal.

Sources of funding
One of the source of funds for the International Secretariat and the UNO Office is Section Fees, which represents 4% of WILPF International’s incomes in 2015.
Evolution of paid Section fees

Fundraising activities were also conducted, and the proceeds were used to fund projects in accordance with WILPF’s vision and mission. These fundraising activities are reflected in the graphic entitled “Sources of Funds in 2015” for the two international offices: Geneva and New York.

Source of funds in 2015 – International Secretariat Geneva

- Governments: 961,897.53
- United Nations: 325,645.78
- Private foundations: 367,591.80
- Partners/ major donors: 299,965.38
- Donations: 34,614.12
- Bequests and annuities: 9,578.52
- Individual International Membership fees: 2,028.00
- Section fees: 76,625.73
- Section contributions: 24,883.78
- WILPF 100 Anniversary
  - Registration fees - Partners fees - Booths: 237,563.71
- Misc Income/ Price obtention: 13,577.12

Total 2,353,971.47 CHF
Use of funds in 2015
– International Secretariat Geneva

- Human Rights programme: 4%
- WILPF 100th Anniversary: 20%
- Secretariat Administration: 23%
- Crisis Response programme: 40%
- Disarmament programme (Geneva): 13%

Sources of funds in 2015
– New York Office

- Bequests and annuities: 22,528.00
- Donations and contributions: 69,441.00
- New government grants: 32,599.00
- Foundation grants: 145,485.00
- Net investment revenue and other: 2,409.00
- Revenue from Geneva Office: 180,868.00

Total 453,330.00 USD
Use of funds in 2015 – New York Office

- Other: 4%
- WILPF 100th Anniversary: 11%
- UNO administration: 10%
- Women, Peace and Security programme: 56%
- Disarmament programme (New York): 19%

Looking ahead

Organisations operate in a rapidly changing and competitive world. All successful organisations go through periods of transition.

The capacity to change and develop over time is fundamental, particularly when there is competition and limited resources.

2015 was a challenging year for WILPF; we were in the early days of some of our new financial management improvements. We will continue in 2016/17 to strengthen the organisation’s financial management in order to secure the organisation’s growth and to develop WILPF’s financial sustainability.

We wish to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the many individuals who volunteered their time to contribute to the success of WILPF in 2015.

WILPF International Secretariat thanks you for your continuous support and generosity in helping us to prevent and end wars and conflict, and to work towards making our world a peaceful place for today’s and future generations.

To access our audited financial statements for 2015, please visit wilpf.org/audits-2015/
The Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) is an international non-governmental organisation with National Sections covering every continent, an International Secretariat based in Geneva, and a New York office focused on the work of the United Nations.

Since our establishment in 1915, we have brought together women from around the world who are united in working for peace by non-violent means and promoting political, economic and social justice for all.

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.

Our strength lies in our ability to link the international and local levels. We are very proud to be one of the first organisations to gain consultative status (category B) with the United Nations, and the only women’s anti-war organisation so recognised.