

Iraq

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Resolution

The 25th Triennial Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1-6 July 1992 in Santa Cruz, Bolivia:

Continued non-military sanctions are resulting in shortages of food and medicines and causing widespread disease and malnutrition in Iraq; sewage systems, power plants and other facilities destroyed in the war cannot be replaced because of a lack of spare parts.

Economic sanctions are still enforced by the UN, preventing Iraqis from importing the food and medicine they need to live, and the spare parts and machinery needed to adequately repair installations necessary to the survival of the population. Prices of basic necessities, such as infant formula and cooking oil have risen far beyond the means of most Iraqis.

Governments' rations cover only a small percentage of a family's needs and average earnings have fallen to less than 7% of pre-crisis levels. Almost 1 million Iraqi children are suffering from malnutrition. The infant mortality rate has risen by about 300%. Iraqi children continue to die at the rate of 500-1000 daily.

The incidence of typhoid, hepatitis, meningitis, and gastroenteritis has become epidemic. Hospitals lack medicine, vaccines, and anaesthesia, and cannot treat curable diseases. International relief workers and medical experts have called Iraq a "public health catastrophe", a country "on the verge of famine".

The Iraqis have agreed to several formulas for selling oil, with UN monitoring. All that which has been agreeable to the Iraqis has been vetoed by the US, UK, or France. The option offered to Iraq, comparable to the only option offered for withdrawal from Kuwait before the war is one without dignity and fails to assure the level of resources needed.

US citizens cannot determine the policy of the Iraqi government, but they can influence the policies of their government, and it is the US government that is the force behind the maintaining of UN sanctions against Iraq.

WILPF urges that:

A. The people of Iraq not be held hostage for the political purposes of the US, the UK, or any other governments.

B. Concerned individuals and organizations contact their parliaments, congresspeople, heads of state and the UN Secretary-General urging them to support the lifting of humanitarian sanctions against Iraq so that it may begin to restore its hospitals, homes, schools and its civilian infrastructure and meet its humanitarian needs.

