



## WILPF RESOLUTIONS

33<sup>rd</sup> Congress

Brisbane, Australia & online

24 July 2022

During the WILPF International Congress 2022, held in Brisbane (Australia) and online the following resolutions were adopted:

### Situation of Indigenous and Environmental Defenders in Brazil

We, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, on the occasion of our 33<sup>rd</sup> International Congress,

*Having observed with deep concern* the dismantling of socio-environmental public policies and agencies by the Brazilian Government of Jair Bolsonaro, in addition to the escalation of violence, threats and persecutions and other human rights violations of Indigenous Peoples, environmental human rights defenders and other human rights defenders;

*Recognising* that Indigenous women are at the forefront in protecting Indigenous Peoples' rights to their lands, territories and natural resources and that they face additional discrimination based on their identity as Indigenous people and as women, which is further exacerbated when these identities intersect with other characteristics, including age or disability;

*Deploring* the murders of Brazilian expert on Indigenous Peoples Bruno da Cunha Araújo Pereira and British journalist Dom Phillips, found dead on 15 June 2022 in the Javari Valley Region. Their murders are in many ways a consequence of the Bolsonaro government's policy of dismantling the system of protection for Indigenous communities enshrined in Brazil's Constitution as well as of weakening and, in practice dismantling, government agencies, such as FUNAI, the Brazilian national agency mandated to oversee Indigenous affairs, and IBAMA, Brazil's main environmental enforcement body. As a result of this government's policy, FUNAI has been taking a more hands-off approach towards protecting Indigenous land and people. After being removed from his post as coordinator of FUNAI's Department for Isolated and Recently Contacted Indigenous peoples, Bruno Pereira had decided to take unpaid leave to fulfil the request of the Indigenous organisation UNIVAJA and undertake the checking that

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FUNAI no longer did, and thus, to continue to support them in their struggle to ensure implementation of the Brazilian Constitution;

*Deploing* also the armed aggression on 24 June 2022 in Mato Grosso do Sul against two communities of the Indigenous Peoples Kaiowa and Guarani by private security officers in Kurupi/Santiago Kue (Navirai) and by the Polícia Militar (military police) in Guapo'y Mi Tujuri (Amambai), which caused two deaths (including that of a young woman) and serious injuries to several members of the communities. This case shows an illegal decision by the Government of the State of Mato Grosso do Sul that by not deliberately recognizing the initiative of Indigenous Peoples as a land conflict, caused the military police to intervene in an extremely violent way, in a situation that required the intervention of the Federal Justice;

*Recalling* the complaints made by associations and political bodies such as The Brazilian Anthropology Association (ABA), Amnesty International, Reporters Without Borders, Survival International, Amazon Watch, Human Rights Watch on 16 June 2022; the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights on 11 and 18 June; the ABA, ANPOCS, SBPC, ABPC, Sociedade Brasileira de Sociologia on 28 June; the resolution 2022/2752(RSP) of the European Parliament on "the situation of indigenous and environmental defenders in Brazil, including the killing of Dom Philips and Bruno Pereira" of 7 July 2022;

*Having regard* to the Universal Declaration on Human Rights; the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (N°169), and the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights, to which Brazil is a state party; the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders; the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters (Escazú Agreement), which Brazil has not yet ratified;

Our organisation:

- Calls on the Brazilian authorities to uphold Brazil's obligations to respect, protect and fulfil Indigenous Peoples' rights, including those arising from international and regional human rights treaties to which is a state party, and to implement recommendations received from the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and other human rights mechanisms;
- Condemns the murders of Bruno Pereira, Dom Phillips and the Indigenous people in Guapo'y Mi Tujuri (Amambai), which took place in June 2022, and all other crimes and human rights violations and abuses committed against Indigenous Peoples, and defenders, individuals and organisations that support them;
- Demands that the Brazilian authorities conduct an exhaustive, impartial and independent investigation into the murders of Bruno Pereira, Dom Phillips and the members of the

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Indigenous community in Guapo'y Mi Tujury (Amambai), as well as into all violations and crimes committed against Indigenous Peoples and defenders, individuals and organisations that support them, and ensure that those responsible be held accountable;

- Urges the Brazilian government to recognise and protect the traditional lands of Indigenous Peoples, including by resuming the demarcation of Indigenous territories in compliance with the Brazilian Constitution (Art. 231) and protecting those territories from illegal land seizures; by reinstating and strengthening the capacities of FUNAI and IBAMA to ensure the effective enforcement of the rights of Indigenous Peoples and of environmental law, in line with Brazil's obligations under international law; and by cancelling all mining requests around Indigenous lands registered with the National Mining Agency (ANM);
- Condemns the recurrent militarised responses, violence and excessive use of force against Indigenous Peoples, including in Amambai on 24 June 2022, and urges the authorities to ensure that these and all allegations of human rights violations by security forces be promptly and thoroughly investigated by an independent body capable of prosecuting perpetrators;
- Urges the Brazilian authorities not to resort to security forces when addressing land conflicts with Indigenous Peoples and to prioritise culturally appropriate mediation mechanisms;
- Urges the Brazilian authorities to take immediate action to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of Indigenous Peoples and those supporting them, to put in place effective, comprehensive and gender-responsive protection measures for environmental defenders and other human rights defenders as well as for journalists who report on this issue, and to ensure effective access to justice and remedy;
- Urges Brazil to ratify the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters (Escazú Agreement).

# Supporting the International Decade for People of African Descent

In its 2015 Manifesto, WILPF committed to eradicating war by addressing its root causes. Among the causes identified were social systems of racist supremacy, cultural domination and religious hierarchy. The Manifesto included an urgent undertaking to strive creatively to bring about social systems that accord no privilege to people or peoples of a given physical type, culture or religion. In the 2022 document “WILPF’s Commitment to becoming an anti-racist movement,” we have stated that as a feminist peace movement, we are committed to take action to identify, address and counter both the causes and the manifestations of such structural racism within our movement, so we are in a better position to fight it in the world.

There is a need to strengthen national, regional and international cooperation in relation to the full enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights by people of African descent, and their full and equal participation in all aspects of society. The UN General Assembly has proclaimed 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2024 to be the International Decade for People of African Descent ([resolution 68/237](#)). The theme for the International Decade is identified as “People of African descent: recognition, justice and development” with the following objectives:

- Promote respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by people of African Descent, as recognised in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#);
- Promote a greater knowledge of and respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of people of African descent to the development of societies;
- Adopt and strengthen national, regional and international legal frameworks according to the [Durban Declaration and Programme of Action](#) and the [International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#) and to ensure their full and effective implementation.

This 33<sup>rd</sup> International WILPF Congress welcomes the UN General Assembly’s initiative for the International Decade for People of African Descent. Congress calls on all Sections and Groups to support the initiative by:

- Disseminating the draft programme of action produced by the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent;
- Publicising the welcoming of the proclamation of the International Decade for People of African Descent on WILPF Sections and Groups’ websites until its end in December 2024;
- Mandating the workforce on antiracism to embed the framework of the draft programme of action by the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent in their action plan;

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- Working proactively to promote respect, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by people of African Descent, and a greater knowledge of and respect for the diverse heritage, culture and contribution of people of African descent to the development of societies.

The Congress also requests WILPF Sections and Groups to report to the International Secretariat on actions taken to support the International Decade.

The Congress calls on the International Secretariat to:

- Support WILPF Sections and Groups in using relevant spaces available to advocate to strengthen national, regional and international legal frameworks including the **Durban Declaration and Programme of Action** and the **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination**, and work to strengthen their full and effective participation;
- Report to the next Congress on the advancements made in WILPF's work towards recognition, justice and development of people of African descent.

## Breakdown Impacts on Women and Women's Role in Governance

The 33<sup>rd</sup> International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), *Recalling* that participation in public and political life, including through elections, is a human right protected in international human rights law instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);

*Recalling also* that Article 7 of CEDAW requires States parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country, and in particular, to ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right to vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; and to participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government; to participate in non-governmental organisations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country;

*Recalling further* that governments have made strong commitments to ensure the full participation of women and girls in public and political life in instruments such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and that ensuring women's participation in decision-making bodies is one of the pillars of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and ensuring youth's participation in decision-making processes is one of the pillars of the Youth, Peace and Security agenda;

*Deeply concerned* at the extremely low level of representation of women in national and local governance in Lebanon, as described in WILPF Lebanon's statement "Lebanon's Breakdown: Impacts on Women and Women's Political Participation" of 22 July.

*Bearing in mind* that the next municipal elections in Lebanon will take place in May 2023.

Fully supports WILPF Lebanon's recommendations to:

- Lebanon to fulfil its human rights obligations and commitments and reform its electoral law (at the national and local levels) as follows:
  - Introduce quotas of at least 40 per cent for women candidates on electoral lists at national and local levels, and put lists at risk of not being registered if they fall below this percentage;
  - Allocate at least 33 per cent reserved seats for women candidates across all electoral constituencies;

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- Adopt a law to criminalise any act of violence against women in the context of political and public life, and raise awareness among the wider public;
  - Include the prevention of violence against women in politics in the mandate and competence of the Electoral Monitoring Body, so that it can monitor, prevent and respond to violence perpetrated against all women active in politics and adopt an efficient complaint and prosecution mechanism;
  - The Electoral Monitoring Body must ensure gender-balanced and fair media coverage during the electoral campaigns.
- Political parties in Lebanon to promote women's representation without prejudice in the upcoming elections and adopt internal measures to reserve funding for women candidates.

# Facilitation of Visas for Women Activists to Enjoy Their Right to Participate in International Meetings

## Preamble

*Recalling* that the right of women and girls to participate in public and political life is enshrined in human rights treaties, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

*Recalling also* that governments have made strong commitments to ensure the full participation of women and girls in public and political life in instruments such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs);

*Recalling also* that the participation of women in decision-making bodies is one of the four pillars of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 and its subsequent related resolutions (the Women, Peace and Security agenda), and that UNSC Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security urges states to consider ways to increase the inclusive representation of youth in the decision-making bodies at all levels in local, national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention and resolution of conflict;

*Recalling further* that with the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders<sup>1</sup> UN member states have committed themselves to ensuring that human rights defenders can seek the protection and realisation of human rights at the national and international levels, and that the UN General Assembly, in its resolution 68/181 on women human rights defenders, has acknowledged that women of all ages who engage in the promotion and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and all people who engage in the defence of the rights of women and gender equality, individually and in association with others, play an important role, at the local, national, regional and international levels, in the promotion and protection of human rights;

*Noting with grave concern* that the low representation of women, including young women, in decision-making processes is a challenge in most countries around the world. Indeed, many African women activists and women activists from other regions, including the Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA), Eastern Europe, Central Asia, South Asia, and Central and South America, face structural barriers that limit their ability and opportunity to travel to meetings they wish to attend, including international meetings concerning their own countries. The refusal to issue visas by certain embassies, very often of Western countries, is a recurrent obstacle to their participation. In addition,

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<sup>1</sup> 53/144. Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms



women activists from countries in conflict, from contexts where civil society is repressed, and from contexts where women face patriarchal exclusion and mobility restrictions, as well as women activists from groups in situations of marginalisation (e.g., women with disabilities, asylum seeking, refugee and migrant women, internally displaced women, Indigenous women, women belonging to minorities), face increased obstacles in exercising their right to participation.

*Underlining* that some WILPF members have repeatedly been denied visas by several European embassies under the pretext that "there is no guarantee of return". In some contexts, such as Afghanistan, they have had to travel to neighbouring countries in order to even apply for a visa for a third country, something that entails additional costs, even higher when they are not allowed to travel without being accompanied by a male family member, and potential exposure to security risks during travel. The unreasonable states' practice of requiring people to travel outside of their own countries to submit a visa application also contributes to environmental damage. Furthermore, the requirements for financial guarantees (e.g., proof of sufficient financial means) create disproportionate obstacles for women activists, who often face gender-based discrimination in the economic sphere, for instance regarding the right to work, to own property or to have a bank account. WILPF is aware that Syrian feminists and women human rights defenders operating from neighbouring countries, such as Turkey, Jordan or Lebanon, face compounded administrative challenges related to their status, and Syrian women in areas outside regime-controlled areas face administrative hurdles in providing 'valid' identification papers as these are issued from *de-facto* authorities and affiliated institutions that are not considered legitimate by the regime or by any other country.

*Noting* that conversely, women from Western countries are easily and regularly issued visas for meetings in Africa and more generally in countries of the Global South. These practices are indicative of a legacy of colonial and racist history in the migration policies of many states. This reality is akin to discrimination and marginalisation of women from the Global South and other non-Western countries, and in particular African women, and infringes on their right to participate in international meetings in person. They should be able to make their voices heard, share their experiences, expertise and good practices, but also have the possibility to benefit from physical contact with the rest of the world and to enjoy the opening of other opportunities. This is particularly important as in many contexts women activists do not fully enjoy their human rights to freedom of expression and freedom of peaceful assembly and association, and to participate in political and public life at the national level.

*Recalling* that WILPF is an organisation that works for the advancement of women's rights worldwide, social justice, equal opportunities, and against discrimination. WILPF's mission includes the promotion of the implementation of international instruments such as CEDAW and the implementation of all four pillars of UNSCR 1325 and subsequent related resolutions, including the participation pillar, which reiterates the right for women to be present at decision-making tables, to participate in decision-making that affects them, and to influence policies through their presence and actions.

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*Underlining* in this regard that the recurrent denial of visas to women activists from the Global South and other non-Western countries for meetings organised by WILPF or by other partners at the international level or for meetings of the United Nations (UN) or other international organisations, constitutes a considerable obstacle to their enjoyment of their right to participation.

It is important for WILPF to fight against any system of exclusion. That is why the 33<sup>rd</sup> International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, meeting from 16 to 24 July 2022, adopts this resolution and makes the following recommendations:

### **Recommendations**

- WILPF calls on all countries and in particular Western countries to implement their obligations and commitments under instruments such as CEDAW, the SDGs and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as UNSC Resolution 1325 and UNSC Resolution 2250, the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, the UN General Assembly resolution 68/181 on women human rights defenders, by facilitating the participation of women peace activists and other women human rights defenders in international meetings through ensuring that their embassies, including those in Africa, issue them visas for travel to their territory and that no travel to a third country is required in order to submit a visa application;
- WILPF also calls on all countries, and in particular on Western countries that have adopted feminist foreign policies (FFP), national action plans to implement UNSC resolution 1325, and policies on the protection of human rights defenders, to duly integrate in such policies actions to ensure fair, transparent and gender-responsive visa regulations and policies, as well as support measures, including funding, to guarantee access and the effective participation of peace activists and other women human rights defenders in international fora;
- WILPF Sections invite the WILPF International Secretariat to identify ways to further support visa facilitation for WILPF members and more generally advocacy actions to support their participation, including in international meetings;
- WILPF encourages all WILPF members around the world, particularly those in Western countries, to support, where they can, the process of obtaining visas for WILPF members and more generally to undertake advocacy to support their participation in order to maximise the opportunities for participation for all.

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## Global Cooperation for the Health of the Planet

*Whereas* the deliberate, ongoing destruction of small farmers and food sovereignty in favour of corporate power and an industrialised and militarised agrifood system has created the global food, hunger, health, and ecological crises, and created the preconditions for the global pandemic of COVID-19; and

*Whereas*, the global pandemic of COVID-19 has caused massive and devastating loss of life and health to people in countries around the world, and is accelerating the impacts of the globalised system built on industrial agriculture, food system financialisation and market concentration, hyper-specialisation/monocropping of commodity crops, industrial animal farming, fossil-fuel derived packaging and agricultural inputs, and free-trade agreements; and

*Whereas*, responses to the pandemic rely on similar methods of militarisation, financialisation and market concentration; and

*Whereas*, a symptom of this intersectional crisis is that in 2021 around eleven billion doses of Covid-19 vaccine were produced globally with grossly inequitable access, the majority of vaccines going to the developed countries, and vast profits returning to global pharmaceutical companies; and

*Whereas*, another manifestation of this crisis is that because of US foreign policies towards Cuba, the world cannot take advantage of the advancements and contributions that Cuba has developed in responses to pandemics including COVID-19, HIV/AIDS, and Ebola, especially in Africa and in Latin America; and

*Whereas*, these vaccine disparities mirror and deepen pre-existing disparities in health and create a catastrophic moral failure and global public health crisis which is disproportionately impacting Indigenous populations and racialised minorities in wealthy countries and in the countries of the global south; and

*Whereas*, the 12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial meeting of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in June 2022 continued to protect the interests of Big Pharma by refusing to adopt a comprehensive waiver of intellectual property (IP) restrictions on vaccines, treatments and tests related to Covid-19 within the WTO's Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS) agreement; and

*Whereas*, these decisions are preceded by the WTO's imposition of international food standards for trade, including forcing countries to adopt technological agricultural methods and patented agricultural inputs; and

*Whereas*, the equitable recognition and support of global knowledge and resources, including but not limited to agroecological food production, vaccines, and medications, are the only means by which this pandemic will be controlled and by which future pandemics will be prevented;

*Therefore*, in accord with WILPF's principles of people over profit and global health and wellbeing as a prerequisite for true peace, we call on all Sections of WILPF to promote discussions with their governments that call for unrestricted cooperation amongst all countries to improve human and planetary health along the vision put forth in this resolution; and

*Therefore*, we ask the International Secretariat to do research on the issue of a treaty that would allow for unrestricted agricultural, scientific, and medical cooperation amongst all nations of the world and report back on their findings.

# Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone

*Whereas* members of the United States Section of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF US) have worked towards the establishment of a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone in the Middle East, with two of WILPF US national committees, **DISARM-End Wars**, and the **MEPJAC (Middle East Peace and Justice Action Committee)**, a decade ago having cooperated to make a **statement** on it that they eventually distributed at the United Nations Helsinki Conference in April 2012; and

*Whereas* the *Culture of Peace* newsletter reports that on 9-10 June 2022, scholars and experts met in Mongolia to discuss the importance, challenge, and prospects for Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (“NWFZ”), and, “The participants congratulated Mongolia on the 30th year of its unprecedented initiative to establish a single state NWFZ,” noting that more than half of the world is now covered by Nuclear Weapons Free Zones, as shown on the world map published with *Culture of Peace* **newsletter article from Mongolia**; and

*Whereas* establishing Nuclear Weapons Free Zones as first steps, as noted in the article in *Culture of Peace* above, has been accomplished in many global regions, the idea and goal of establishment of a Nuclear Free Zone in the Middle East has now been expanded to a Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone (“MEWMDZF”); and

*Whereas* there was a **meeting** in 2012 at the United Nations on the creation of such a Zone; and, there is now a UN process underway for the establishment of a **Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East**; and

*Whereas* people are unaware about what Nuclear Free and Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zones are, and are even more so about the idea and possible establishment of a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone;

*Therefore, let it be resolved* that we, at WILPF’s 33<sup>rd</sup> International Congress, call for all of our Sections and Groups to engage in education projects on Nuclear Free Zones and Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zones (WMDZFZs), with the assistance of our International Secretariat’s offering members more information and ideas for possible actions based on suggestion by the Sections in the region, such as:

- WILPF Sections and Groups do more to familiarise themselves with the subject of MEWMDZFZs, including by reading **newsletter articles** and other materials written on the subject by WILPF’s Reaching Critical Will programme;
- WILPF’s International Secretariat is requested to provide a budget for this issue so the concept and eventual reality of a MEWMDZFZ can grow and be better known;

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- Members in our Sections and Groups can do the work to provide information throughout each Section's and Group's membership so that members can in turn inform their communities;
- Members in our more-established Sections, in particular, must do more education on this topic, ideally reaching out in particular to religious institutions, educational institutions from the primary levels through colleges and universities as well as members in other civil society organisations;
- Members in Sections and Groups can show documentaries and put pressure on television stations and other local, regional and national media outlets to show video and/or audio documentaries and presentations;
- Sections also can reach out to our UN representatives;
- Members in the USA Section, in particular, can reach out to members of the USA Congress to press strenuously and more effectively for these representatives to move higher up on their immediate and annual Federal budget cycles the issues of substantive appropriations reductions in all areas of the huge war and armaments budgets that currently exist; to participate in the current UN process on a WMDFZ in the Middle East; and as this proceeds the Section must also build national membership in order to establish active national Section subcommittees for this work;
- Our Middle East Sections, in particular, can be encouraged and assisted by the International Secretariat in developing information sources for outreach on a MEWMDZ, as well as in developing and undertaking concrete actions for such outreach; and,
- We, WILPF members in our entirety, must ensure that our members in our Middle East Sections are able to work with others in civil society in their countries to help each of the Middle East countries develop confidence-building measures and stepping stones to peace, which require a hope, sense and finally reality of Middle East stability; and

*Therefore, let it further be resolved* that we call for our WILPF International Secretariat to press for:

A regional conference at which members and representatives of a diverse civil society can work cooperatively to lay out: An agenda for mutual security for all countries involved in the Middle East, as well as to advance negotiations for peace and a just and fair economy for all; so we also ask WILPF members to do our utmost possible to work on this issue.

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