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

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

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

— From WILPF’s submission to the Human Rights Committee’s pre-session on Egypt, February 2022.
Some of the key outcomes of these efforts include:

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

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

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

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

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**To Achieve Peace, We Must Disarm.**

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

— Laura Varella, Reaching Critical Will Programme Associate