



17 February 2025

**Oral statement to the CEDAW Committee's
Half-day of general discussion on gender stereotypes**

WILPF welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this half-day of general discussion on gender stereotypes, to which we have sent a written submission.¹ In this statement, I will highlight some of our main points.

At the outset, WILPF would like to stress that, throughout this general recommendation, the CEDAW Committee must adopt a more expansive approach to gender, beyond the gender binary of men and women, to expressly include trans, nonbinary, gender non-conforming people and people of other genders.

In our written submission, we underscore the need to interpret the obligations under Article 5 through an intersectional and wide approach addressing all forms of sex/gender/gender identity-related discrimination.

We also recommend that the Committee build on its work on structural discrimination and conceptualise the phenomenon of gender apartheid under the Convention.

It is also essential that the Committee continues to draw attention to the devastating human rights impacts of weapons. This general recommendation must recognise the firearms industry's harmful exploitation of gender stereotypes, militarised and violent notions of manhood in marketing strategies and the impacts of such practices on gender-based violence and on the enjoyment of all the rights under the Convention.

¹ Submission to the CEDAW Committee's Half-day General Discussion on Gender Stereotypes (GR41)
https://www.wilpf.org/advocacy_documents/submission-to-the-cedaw-committees-half-day-general-discussion-on-gender-stereotypes/

Furthermore, WILPF recommends that rather than underlining the fact that in some countries gender stereotypes exclude women from jobs involving arms (as the concept note does in paragraph 77), the Committee should use this general recommendation to analyse and challenge how gender stereotypes influence our entire security systems and peace processes. WILPF's analysis of the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda shows that many states are disproportionately focusing on increasing the number of women in the military or in peace-keeping operations instead of focussing on a holistic implementation of the agenda grounded on the realisation of all human rights. We also believe that the Committee should address gender stereotypes that exclude women and people of other genders from disarmament efforts.

Finally, we recommend that the Committee analyse and address how gender stereotypes create barriers to participation in international decision-making fora, particularly for women, trans, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming individuals. These include discriminatory visa policies or invitations to participate in multilateral fora. The Committee should recommend that States Parties, —and particularly those with Feminist Foreign Policies—, act to address these issues including within their foreign service and visa-granting services in order to support these activists.