

The Norwegian Nobel Committee
Henriks Ibsens gate 51
0255 Oslo

30 January 2013

Dear Sir/Madam

NOBEL PEACE PRIZE NOMINATION 2013: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

I am pleased to convey to you the IPB's nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize 2013.

Born protesting against war

WILPF is the oldest international women's peace organisation, with a record dating back to 1915. Over 1,000 women from 12 countries met in April of that year in The Hague, in spite of war and closed borders. The Congress issued a strong protest against the war and rejected the claim that war can protect civilians and especially women. It adopted a set of principles for lasting peace and international cooperation, and sent delegations to the governments of both belligerent and neutral countries in a bid to halt hostilities and to establish international mediation. It set up a "Women's International Committee for Lasting Peace," which would convene a further Congress of women in parallel with the official peace negotiations at the end of the war. This Congress met in 1919, where the organization received the name it has had since. In 2015, WILPF will celebrate its centenary in The Hague.

Distinguished laureates

Over the years, many thousands of women have been mobilised by WILPF in all continents to work for peace, disarmament, human rights and social justice. These include some distinguished figures and notably, two Nobel Peace laureates. In 1931, **Jane Addams**, WILPF's International President was awarded the Prize for her leadership in both peacemaking and social justice. In 1946, WILPF's first International Secretary, **Emily Greene Balch**, was also presented with the award – an obvious acknowledgement of WILPF's achievements and endeavours.

During peace and war

In the interwar period WILPF engaged with most of the key international issues, including support for the new League, the refugee situation and the harsh conditions of Germany under the Versailles Treaty that paved the way for the second World War. WILPF was an active force in collecting a large petition for disarmament in 1929: "*We have said no to war, say no to guns too.*" Nine million signatures were submitted to the League. In the 1930s opposition to the growth of fascism and the persecution of Jews in Europe became central to WILPF's work.

Since 1945, WILPF continued its efforts for disarmament and peace, with particular emphasis on strengthening the United Nations. Today WILPF has international offices in Geneva and New York and follows in particular the work of the UN Conference on Disarmament, the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the UNGA/UNSC and the Human Rights bodies. The task is to report on meetings and negotiations, and help present the peace movement's positions to the delegates.

In recent years WILPF has developed special expertise in three main programme areas: [Disarmament](#) (Reaching Critical Will), [Human Rights](#) and [PeaceWomen](#). In addition they run projects combining elements from each of these three programmes.

Disarmament

The Reaching Critical Will (RCW) programme was established in 1999 to facilitate NGO participation and activity in relation to UN disarmament efforts. Through reporting and documentation, RCW helps ensure that negotiations can be followed by everyone, even if they are not present at the international meetings. This is a vital and much valued role. RCW reports continuously during the meetings of the Conference on Disarmament, the General Assembly's 1st Committee and other disarmament negotiations on its website, which also has an extensive archive. In 2012 RCW covered in detail the talks about the proposed Arms Trade Treaty. In 2013, RCW is central to the work of the NGO conference in Oslo for a convention banning nuclear weapons. All participants in the UN disarmament work (diplomats, journalists and activists) use RCW's website and newsletters, since they have a reputation for being reliable and thorough. RCW allows also organizations with few resources to acquire relevant information. RCW is operated by WILPF with limited financial resources and considerable voluntary effort.

Human Rights

This work is based on the 'WILPF Comprehensive Approach', whose main objective is to bring together issues of peace and security with women's Human Rights. WILPF believes that peace and security are an integral part of Human Rights, and that only through respect for Human Rights can we tackle the root causes of conflict. This approach aims to raise awareness within the Human Rights Bodies of violations against women, to increase their use of gender analysis, and to expand grassroots NGO participation, thus making Human Rights systems work more effectively for women, and in particular for those in conflict situations. WILPF's Human Rights programme in Geneva focuses on the Human Rights Council/UPR sessions; on several Treaty Bodies such as CEDAW and CERD; and on Working Groups and meetings with Special Representatives. WILPF International participates in the sessions, reporting to their Sections and helping them in turn to report to the Human Rights Bodies through oral statements, side events and networking activities.

Peace women/UNSC 1325

In 2000, the Security Council passed the historic resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The resolution was prepared by a group of women's organizations, including WILPF. WILPF has since followed up efforts to implement the resolution through the [Peace Women project](#), which reports on how women worldwide have used the resolution. Over several decades WILPF has organized seminars and conferences for women in conflict areas. For example, in 2012, WILPF organized a major conference in Geneva for women from North Africa and the Middle East which discussed and presented women's demands following the "Arab Spring."

Full details of the work of WILPF and its 40 national sections can be found at <http://www.wilpfinternational.org>

A Champion of Peace

WILPF has been nominated as an organisation at least three times for the Nobel Peace Prize (already as early as the 1950s). We believe that the outstanding work of this extraordinary worldwide community of women deserves a further nomination this year.

Given the breadth and depth of WILPF's engagement with all the key peacemaking issues of the past century, and today's challenges also, WILPF must undoubtedly be considered a 'Champion of Peace', fully meriting the award of the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize.

Yours sincerely

Colin Archer
Secretary-General