



WILPF RESOLUTIONS

12th Congress
Paris, France
August 4 – 8th, 1953

I Ratification of the Geneva Protocol

Believing the use and even the preparation of chemical and biological weapons to be a crime against humanity

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953,

Requests all Governments to ratify without reservation, if they have not already done so, the Geneva Protocol of the 17th June, 1925, on the prohibition of the use of poison gas and bacteriological warfare.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom makes an urgent appeal, moreover, to all the Governments to give a clear undertaking that they will no longer experiment on or manufacture such weapons.

II Refugees

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953, expresses its firm conviction that the refugee problem should continue to form a vital part of the work of International Headquarters and of the Section.

Firstly: because the vastness of the accumulation of human misery and despair involved renders it one of the main barriers to the building of peace and endangers the social life of the whole world community. Roughly 60 million people are still uprooted and it is estimated that Korea will ultimately add another 10 million to the total.

Secondly: because the basic need of the refugee is for a home, spiritual as well as material, and a job, and the fact that he is without either is a flagrant denial of Human Rights for which the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom should and does unceasingly work.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom feels very strongly that these Human Rights should be granted to everyone - without discrimination on political or any other grounds.

III Race Relations in South Africa

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953,

Deeply regrets the decision of the Government of the Union of South Africa refusing admission to the United Nations Commission of Three charged by the General Assembly to study the racial situation in South Africa in the light and principles of the Charter of the United Nations;

And in view of these circumstances is glad to note that the Commission accepts testimony, written or oral, by representatives of Governments of Member States of the United Nations; of Non-Governmental Organizations and also by private individuals.

IV Admission of Countries to the United Nations

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953,

Advocates the admission to Membership of the United Nations of every country recognizing the purposes and accepting the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

V Against Racism

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States that, since its foundation in 1915 the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has united women of many countries without discrimination of race.

It has fully approved the formal condemnation by the United Nations of the crime of Genocide and has studied with satisfaction the work of UNESCO on the subject of race and its conclusive condemnation of racism.

It welcomes every step taken, legal, social, educational and spiritual, to remove the disabilities resulting from race discrimination; but is distressed to see that racial discrimination is still practiced in numerous regions of the world.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom protests energetically against such practices which are unworthy of any civilized society, and is critical of Governments which not only do not repudiate the false theories which seek to justify such practices but even base their politics upon them.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom recalls to the States Members who have adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that it is

their duty to ensure respect for the principles of the Declaration which imply absolute condemnation of all discrimination.

VI Korea

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Rejoices that the fighting in Korea is ended;

And seeing in the meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations the possibility of a new era of cooperation in the Far East, urges the Assembly to draw the Government of the People's Republic of China into the forthcoming discussions at all points, recognizing it as the effective Government of that country.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom believes that no lasting peace can be established until the Peking Government is accorded its rightful place in the Security Council, the General Assembly and all other organizations of the United Nations.

VII Waterways and Polar Regions

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953,

Observing the increasing evidence of conflict between certain nations in regard to the occupation and control of territories in the Polar Regions and of those waterways which are of international importance;

Recognizing the complexity of the issues involved and also the diversity of international organizations concerned with the study and regulation of the problems which arise in these fields;

Affirms its belief that, in order to remove such causes of international tension, these territories and waterways should be increasingly brought under some form of international control which would ensure the use of their facilities and resources for the benefit of all nations;

Urges the National Sections of the WILPF to study the matters which may be nearest to their governments; and

Commends to the International Executive of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom further consideration of these questions with a view to approaching the United Nations.

VIII Arbitration

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953,

Welcomes the recommendations to be brought to the United Nations General Assembly by the International Law Commission in connection with arbitration procedure at the Hague under the International Court of Justice,

And urges all National Sections of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom to study these recommendations and press Governments to support them.

IX Indo-China

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Distressed by the heavy loss of life and money already suffered by France and Viet-Nam,

Refuses to consider as a satisfactory solution the replacement of French soldier by those of the Viet-Nam army and the financial assistance given by the United States which prolongs the war;

Strongly appeals to the Governments concerned to open negotiations for a "cease-fire" in Indo-China, and to arrange a Peace Conference giving the people of Indo-China the right to self-determination and safe-guarding the legitimate interests of the whole population.

X The United Nations Report on Forced Labour

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Which has always strongly supported the principles of Human Rights,

Declares that the question of Forced Labour is pertinent to the discussion of the Covenants on Human Rights.

The United Nations ad hoc Committee on Forced Labour has now released its Report on this question.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom urges the United Nations organs concerned to take energetic action on the basis of the Report.

XI Stationing of Foreign Troops

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Believing that the stationing of foreign troops in many countries, sometimes under conditions which amount to the granting of improper extra-territorial rights to the foreign powers concerned,

And believing that this state of affairs aggravates the danger of war and increases international misunderstanding,

Expresses its earnest desire to see these troops withdrawn and all foreign occupation ended with the least possible delay.

XII The Bonn and Paris Agreements

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953,

Protests vigorously against the Bonn and Paris Agreements which would re-establish the German army and are contrary to the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, and

Earnestly begs the National Sections of the Women's International league for Peace and Freedom whose Governments have not already ratified these agreements to persuade them not to do so.

XIII Communications and Petitions Now in the Secretariat of the United Nations

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Is shocked to learn that there are in the files of the Secretariat of the United Nations thousands of Communications and Petitions which, due to lack of instructions from the competent organs of the United Nations, cannot be adequately handled;

Notes Articles 62 par. 2 of the United Nations Charter which authorizes the Economic and Social Council "to make recommendations for the purpose of promoting respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all", thus providing the legal basis for action on the part of the Economic and Social Council;

Supports the proposal made to the Commission on Human Rights that a series of categories be set up to deal with the substance of the Communications and the underlying problems and principles revealed.

This Congress suggests:

That the organ of the United Nations entrusted with handling Communications should classify them according to the underlying problems and principles involved and thereby minimize and discourage the odium of insult, accusation and attack in order to eliminate the widespread fear of mutual recrimination and scornful abuse;

That the concern of those in charge of processing Communications, rather than focusing attention on the charges of violations, should be to give a stronger sense of security to the victims of any violations; develop a greater realization of the significance of individual Human rights and stress the importance of the obligations assumed by those who signed the United Nations Charter.

This Congress shares the distress of the persecuted and oppressed who have looked to the United Nations for redress of their grievances and, realizing that it may take years to ratify the Covenants on Human Rights,

Urgently appeals to the Member States of the United Nations to exercise their good will and imagination and give to the UN Secretariat prompt instructions for action on the Communications now in the hands of the Secretary General.

XIV The Right to Read

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953,

Deeply concerned about renewed attacks on the Freedom to Read pledges itself to defend, wherever necessary, everyone's right to think, to read and to judge. Free thought, free writing, free reading are essential to the preservation of a free community and a creative culture.

The suppression of dissident ideas and controversy must, of necessity, destroy intellectual and spiritual diversity, flexibility and elasticity - the most precious characteristics of a democratic society.

XV The Right to Exploit Freely Natural Wealth

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953,

Notes with great interest the Resolution on the Right to Exploit Freely Natural Wealth and Resources" adopted by the Seventh General Assembly of the United Nations on December 21, 1952.

This Congress reminds Governments of the fact that the peoples of the world take the provisions of the Charter and the decisions of the United Nations literally and very seriously, and also attach to this Resolution the expectation that its principles of justice and sovereignty will soon be translated into concrete and practical action at a

time, when the peoples on Continents called under-developed but in fact under-privileged while striving very hard to achieve their political independence find themselves largely handicapped in their struggle for economic self-determination and independence.

In pleading for the rights of the peoples in question the XIIth Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom does not only plead for them and their own rights. The dangerous discrepancy now developing between their political emancipation on the one hand and their economic dependence on the other hand creates constant serious tension and must eventually lead to major conflict and war.

XVI Capital Punishment

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953,

In pursuance of the Appeal for the Abolition of Capital Punishment addressed by the International Chairmen of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom to the Governments of the World on January 10, 1953

Urges WILPF National Sections and members to take the lead in creating in their respective countries public opinion strong enough to influence Parliaments and Governments to take the necessary steps for the Abolition of Capital Punishment.

Capital Punishment violates the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and disgraces any community which permits itself the right of sending fellow citizens to death.

This Congress regrets the limitations of the present provisions of Article 5 of the Draft Covenant on Civil and Political Rights concerning Capital Punishment, and urges that this Article be amended to read:

"EVERYONE'S RIGHT TO LIFE SHALL BE PROTECTED BY LAW. THE DEATH PENALTY SHALL BE ABOLISHED."

XVII The Right to be Heard and Protected by Law (The Right of Petition)

The XII International Congress of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom meeting in Paris, August 4-8th, 1953,

Deeply regrets that the provisions of Article 52 of the Draft Covenant of Human Rights as recommended by the recent Ninth Session of the Commission on Human Rights restrict to States Parties the right to bring matters concerning the violation of Human Rights to the attention of another State and, after six months, to the 'Committee' on Human Rights and,

Urges the coming Eighth General Assembly of the United Nations to protect those whose rights are violated by providing a new article entitling the Human Rights "Committee" (to be set up) to receive and consider also Communications from individuals and from Non-Governmental Organizations and to initiate itself proceedings in cases serious enough to justify international action by the United Nations.

While fully recognizing that the sovereignty of National Governments is a reality, this Congress, equally aware of the fact that recourse to national authorities may in many cases be exhausted or even impossible, holds that the discrepancy between the reality of national sovereignty on the one hand and the cruel reality of facts faced by the many legally unprotected, on the other hand, makes the right to petition from individuals and private organizations the more imperative.

It is the most earnest desire of this Congress to see the confidence of the peoples of the world in the work of the United Nations restored by the explicit recognition through the General Assembly of the equal and inalienable right of ALL members of the human family to be heard, and protected by the rule of law- regardless of their nationality or residence.

PASSED BY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

I Freedom of the Press

The International Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom assembled in Paris, August 10-12th, 1953, and attended by delegates from many countries,

Wishes to record an energetic protest against the lack of integrity in much of the contemporary press and would urge that every legal protection be given to the exercise of free judgment and discussion.

II Germany and the Peace Treaty

The International Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom assembled in Paris, August 10-12th, 1953, urgent that a conference of the Four Powers on the highest level be called to negotiate the final peace treaty with Germany.

The Women's' International League for Peace and Freedom recommends the following points to be considered in the negotiations :

1. That the status of Germany should be that of a Federation of her "Laender", unified, disarmed and neutralized;

2. That this status should be guaranteed by the Four Great Powers and the United Nations;
3. That the small neighboring countries should have a voice in the negotiations and be protected by the guarantees given;
4. That plans for neutralizing neighboring States should be developed with a view towards creating a broad belt across Europe of neutral States making them independent of the Great Power blocs'
5. That steps for the disarmament of Europe should be promptly taken as a part of total and universal disarmament.

III Lessening of International Tension

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom which has always advocated the peaceful solution of international conflicts, notes with satisfaction the signs of lessening tension which have been apparent during the last few months.

The International Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom assembled in Paris, August 10-12th, 1953, asks all National Sections to be alert to the factors which obstruct peace, wherever they are found, and to support any measures which contribute to the bringing together of peoples.

IV World Disarmament and World Development

The International Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom assembled in Paris, August 10-12th, 1953, Views with concern the extension of militarism and rearmament throughout the world.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has followed with interest the deliberations of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and was encouraged by the news received during meetings that the United States Senate had adopted a resolution on universal reduction and limitations of armaments.

Members were moved by the report made to the WILPF Twelfth International Congress of the work of Japanese women to maintain their Constitution with its disarmament clause. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom welcomes all constructive steps but would point out that these efforts must be extended and implemented.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom urges that a Conference be called by the United Nations to which representatives from all nations should be invited to consider practical steps towards total and universal disarmament.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom further recommends that such a conference should undertake to develop a plan for using the resources in money, manpower and the treasures of the earth released through the lifting of the crushing burden of armaments, to attach the social and economic problems created by large scale hunger, disease and illiteracy which have been among the prime causes of war.

V Statement on Non-Violent Methods

Throughout its history the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has maintained a policy and program consistent with its purpose to work by non-violent means for the establishment of those political, economic, social and psychological conditions throughout the world which can assure peace and freedom.

The International Executive Committee of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom assembled in Paris, August 10-12th, 1953, received with great interest the report to the Congress on Possibilities of Applying Non-Violent Principles and Techniques in Current Politics.

To implement the work of this Commission on Non-Violent Methods, the Women's International league for Peace and Freedom recommends:

1. that each National Section make a careful study and discussion of this report;
2. that information be made available to their membership concerning the Seminar held at New Delhi, India, January 5-15, 1953 which considered "the contribution of Gandhian outlook and techniques to the solution of tensions within and among nations"; the Second World Congress of Sociology of the International Sociological Association to be held at Leige, August 25 - September 1, 1953, which expects to evaluate current studies of various types of tensions and conflicts between groups within nations; and information on studies made by UNESCO of problems likely to create national or international tensions;
3. that a thorough study be made of those movements within each nation which seek to resolve tensions and to work by non-violent means for those conditions in their own countries which can assure peace and freedom; and
4. that these findings be sent to International Headquarters to be used in such a way as may be deemed useful - e.g. as a basis for study or consideration at a Summer School, at the next Congress or through PAX ET LIBERTAS.