



Women in Black
London

**Say NO to war
and militarism**

24 May was International Women's Day for Peace & Disarmament

International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament began in Europe in the early 1980s, when hundreds of thousands of women organised against nuclear weapons and the arms race.

Most peace work is done by women, yet most peace movement public leaders are men. Leadership in peace is recognized by the annual **Nobel Peace Prize**, which also overwhelmingly has been awarded to men. Since 1901 the Prize has been awarded to 26 organisations and to 102 individuals – only 16 of them women.

1905: Bertha von Suttner, author, peace activist

1931: Jane Addams, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)

1946: Emily Greene, WILPF

1976: Betty Williams and Mairead Corrigan, Peace People, Northern Ireland

1979: Mother Theresa

1982: Alva Myrdal, International Peace Bureau

1991: Aung San Suu Kyi, democracy leader

1992: Rigoberta Menchu, indigenous rights

1997: Jody Williams, landmine ban activist

2002: Shirin Ebadi, human rights advocate

2004: Wangari Maathai, environment activist

2011: Tawakkol Karman, Leymah Gbowee,

President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, women's rights

2014: Malala Yousafzai, girls' rights activist

Worldwide, women work for peace on all levels: local, regional, national and international. They care for survivors, organise self help groups, bridge differences, work on the past, help with reconstruction and initiate a new culture of peace. These efforts usually receive little publicity and support. Most of the women are completely unknown except to those they help.

Women in Black say:

- **Militarism and war are being made to seem a *normal* solution for dealing with those who displease our government. But violence is no antidote to violence. We believe the UK government should adopt peaceful, non-violent solutions to national and international problems.**
- **Women and children suffer in specific ways in war: rape, forced prostitution, sexual trafficking and abuse of women and children increase during and after war; 80% of refugees fleeing war are women and children; their burden of nurture and care is heavier.**
- **Militarism diverts spending from health, education and development. Arms dealers profit from war while people die in need of clean water and food. The UK exports arms and military equipment to over 150 countries. The spread of small arms increases danger for women.**

For further information and to become active:

Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy,

www.acronym.org.uk

Campaign Against the Arms Trade (CAAT),

www.caat.org

Femmes Africa Solidarité, www.fasngo.org

IFOR Women Peacemakers Program (WPP),

www.ifor.org/WPP

International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA),
www.iansa.org/women

Ruta Pacifica de las mujeres, www.rutapacifico.org.co

Women's International League for Peace and

Freedom (WILPF), www.peacewomen.org

Women Waging Peace, www.womenwagingpeace.net

UN Development Fund for Women,

www.womenwarpeace.org

Women in Black is an international network of feminists committed to peace and justice, opposed to war, militarism and other kinds of violence. We call for an end to violence, whether its purpose is state power, economic exploitation or personal control. We work to build bridges in situations of conflict, and choose non-violence in our actions. We believe a more respectful, just, co-operative and caring way of life is possible.

Women in Black hold vigils every Wednesday from 6 till 7 pm at the Edith Cavell Statue, opposite the door of the National Portrait Gallery, St.Martin's Place, London WC2. The vigils are silent, women-only and if possible we wear black. Contact us at wibinfo@gn.apc.org or look <http://london.womeninblack.org/> Donations for leaflets most welcome