

International Women's Day

March 8, 2019



- *Honouring women's lives*
- *Celebrating women's resistance*
- *Working for non-violence, peace and justice*

Violence against women and young people knows no borders. It occurs in peace and in war. A few facts:

- Rape is a widespread weapon in war. Eg. in the Eastern Region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, 40% of women have experienced rape (Journal of the American Medical Assn).
- In peacetime, rape is a weapon by which men control women. Rape Crisis Centres in the UK responded to more than 200,000 helpline calls last year – four thousand in an average week.
- Domestic violence is the major cause of death and disability for women aged from 16 to 44 years in Europe, accounting for more casualties than cancer or traffic accidents (Council of Europe);
- Up to 70% of female murder victims worldwide are killed by their male partners (WHO);
- Annual official crime statistics in the UK show that 90% of crimes involving violence against the person are committed by men; and 99% of sexual violence is committed by men. Two women every week are murdered by male partners.
- Worldwide, one out of three women has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused, usually by someone known to her, at some time in her life. (Finding of 50 surveys from around the world, cited by Amnesty International.)

Standing in vigil at the Edith Cavell Statue in central London today, as International Women's Day approaches, we are four organizations that work against male violence; for respect, inclusion and equality for women; and for peace with justice.

Million Women Rise: We see male violence against women and children as a global pandemic that devastates the lives of women, our families and our communities. It also threatens to undermine efforts to bring about sustainable development. We invite you to join our rising this Saturday, March 9, meeting Selfridges at Duke St/Oxford St 12.30 to rally Trafalgar Square 3.00 pm. [<info@millionwomenrise.com>](mailto:info@millionwomenrise.com)

Southall Black Sisters: we are a group of black and minority women, secular and inclusive, founded forty years ago in West London to support Asian and African-Caribbean women in gaining more control over their lives. We actively oppose the growing state and religious authoritarianism that we believe is fostering the conditions for both patriarchal and racist violence. [<info@southallblacksisters.co.uk>](mailto:info@southallblacksisters.co.uk)

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom: Founded in 1915 WILPF campaigned fiercely against two World Wars. It was active in bringing about UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. With branches worldwide, WILPF actively campaigns for an end to current wars devastating women's lives in Syria, Yemen, DR Congo etc. [<ukwilpf.peace@gmail.com>](mailto:ukwilpf.peace@gmail.com)

Women in Black: We are worldwide network of women committed to peace with justice and actively opposing militarism, war and other forms of violence. Our London branch holds a vigil around the Edith Cavell statue, St.Martins Place, London WC2, every Wednesday from 6 – 7 pm. Women only, in silence, we wear black. New members warmly welcomed. [<wibinfo@gn.apc.org>](mailto:wibinfo@gn.apc.org)