



Women in Black  
London

# Women for Peace Opposing war and militarism

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

International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament began with Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp and spread around the world in the 1980s to oppose nuclear weapon deployments. In 2017 the women-led International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for raising awareness about the unacceptable humanitarian suffering caused by nuclear weapons, resulting in the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) which entered into force in 2021. The UK Government has still not signed.

Today, wars continue fuelled by the arms trade and the threat of the use of nuclear weapons. The UK Government is involved in both. This year we think especially of the women in Gaza, Sudan, DRC, Ukraine and Russia who live amidst terrible violence and hardship. Women's work for peace has never been more important. Women work to build conditions for disarmament, reconciliation and reconstruction. Women care for survivors, organise self-help groups, bridge differences, and initiate new approaches to build peaceful relations on all levels: local, regional, national and international. Most of the women doing this vital peace work are completely unknown except to those they help.

### WOMEN IN BLACK SAY

- Militarism and war are being made to seem a reasonable solution for dealing with conflict. But violence, weapons and war cannot build lasting and just peace. We believe the UK government should work for nonviolent political and diplomatic solutions to national and international problems and end its involvement in the global arms trade.
- 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. Their burden of nurture, care and vulnerability is made heavier. 80% of refugees fleeing war are women and children.
- Militarism diverts resources from health, education and development. 2024 saw a 9.4% increase in global military spending. This now stands at \$2718 billion!

### Learn more about women peacemakers around the world

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) [www.icanw.org](http://www.icanw.org)  
Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT), [www.caat.org](http://www.caat.org)  
Codepink network <https://www.codepink.org/>  
Mujeres de Negro  
<https://mujeresdenegromadrid.blogspot.com/>  
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), [www.peacewomen.org](http://www.peacewomen.org)

UN Gender and Women – Peace & Security  
<https://peacemaker.un.org/wps>

Buy **Women in Black: against violence for Peace with Justice** by Cynthia Cockburn and Sue Finch, published 2023.  
Price £ 16.00 ISBN 987-0-85036-784-3



**Women in Black** hold vigils every Wednesday between 6-7 pm at the Edith Cavell Statue, opposite the National Portrait Gallery, St. Martin's Place, London WC2. Our vigils are silent, women-only and if possible we wear black. We welcome all women who support our call for an end to militarism and war.  
Contact us: Twitter @WIB\_London FB @womeninblack.london

Donations for leaflets most welcome

May 2025