



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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To: President-Elect Donald John Trump and the New Federal Administration
From: The US national section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
Subject: Building Detente in Europe

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, US national section (WILPF US) is a nonprofit membership organization committed to non-partisanship. WILPF International is a non-governmental organization (NGO), assigned consultative status to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), that engages in dialogue impartially with all governments. WILPF has national sections and groups in forty-eight countries, with an international Secretary General and Secretariat based in Geneva. The WILPF International website is <https://www.wilpf.org/>. The WILPF US website is: <https://wilpfus.org/>. We will celebrate our 110th anniversary in 2025.

Originally this statement started out as an emergency message on peace in Ukraine prompted by the tensions between superpowers threatening a nuclear war, as in 1962 and again in 1983. Without attempting to address the specifics of the diplomatic steps needed to resolve the immediate tragedy and crisis of the war in Ukraine, a topic we leave to the more knowledgeable in the political realities of today, we look ahead to the opportunities for detente that this peacemaking process may open.

From this perspective, we would like to address some concerns and issues related to averting or ending a new Cold War between the USA and the Russian Federation, and towards bringing about the vision of President Mikhail Gorbachev, President of the USSR, of "a common house of Europe."

1. The Importance of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

The **Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)** represents what President Gorbachev sought: a 21st-century approach to the yearnings of Europe for peace and security. In contrast, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a relic of the Cold War, a vestigial and dangerous organization analogous to the appendix in the human body, presenting the peril of provoking rather than preventing war, as may well have happened in the Ukraine conflict. We see the demilitarized architecture for Europe of Presidents Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan, including some crucially important arms control agreements at the end of the old Cold War, as a safer and saner guide to a flourishing "common house of Europe."

The OSCE has concerned itself with Ukraine both before and after the outbreak of the current conflict (February 24, 2022) and should play an integral role in peace negotiations.

We emphasize that the effectiveness of the OSCE depends on the full inclusion of the Russian Federation in its proceedings. The 110 million Russians living within the European portion of their country deserve this closer integration into the civil society of Europe, and achieving this goal will be one important aspect of building a new and equitable global economic and political order based on multipolar plurality and peace. We note that Russia has deeply yearned for this integration into European civil society since the time of Czar Peter the Great (reigned 1682-1725), an aspiration recently and fittingly reaffirmed at St. Petersburg by an international conference of women, as detailed in Section 2 below.

We emphasize that using the OSCE is a thriftier path to European security for the USA than NATO. As President Dwight David Eisenhower declared (April 16, 1953):

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed."

It is also a more natural path, since the OSCE evolves out of the civil society of Europe. It is a safer path for Europe, the USA, and the world at large.

We write at a time of present and urgent danger, as signaled by this November 19, 2024 statement of nuclear weapons doctrine from the Russian Federation:

"Furthermore, a nuclear response is considered possible in the event of a critical threat to Russia's sovereignty, including through conventional weapons, including an attack on Belarus or a massive attack by warplanes, cruise missiles, drones or other aircraft crossing the Russian border."

We see resolving this immediate crisis and negotiating peace in Ukraine as only the first steps toward detente with the Russian Federation and further development and expansion of the structures of peace for a safer world which President-Elect Trump's predecessors Presidents Ronald W. Reagan and George H. W. Bush helped to establish. WILPF is ready to offer dialogue and suggestions throughout this process.

2. The Importance of Women in Conflict Resolution (UNSC Resolution 1325) and the St. Petersburg Conference on Peace, Nature, and Cooperation in the Baltic and the Arctic Regions and its Declaration (October 23, 2024)

We also affirm the central role of women in peacemaking under UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSC Resolution 1325, October 31, 2000) and progeny. We see WILPF's role of advising our government in the USA on war and peace issues as consistent with this UNSC resolution.

This role was highlighted by the St. Petersburg Conference on Peace, Nature, and Cooperation in the Baltic and Arctic Regions, which brought together an international group of women, including many from WILPF International, and their subsequent Declaration which is available

here: <https://worldbeyondwar.org/declaration-from-the-international-conference-in-saint-petersburg-russia/>

This Declaration urges: "Instead of the militarized concept of security, put emphasis on human and common security, prioritize peace, climate cooperation, environmental sustainability, equitable resource distribution as well as social, health and educational security." An important provision of the Declaration relates to the OSCE: "We call for an OSCE Summit in 2025 to mark its 50th anniversary-- and in the spirit of the Helsinki Summit in 1975 -- to include Russia and a broad spectrum of civil society."

We emphasize that peacemaking in Ukraine and detente in Europe could serve as a model and precedent for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 in other regions of the world, thus realizing the values of International WILPF.

3. Doveryay no proveryay: "Trust but verify"

We hold that a just and balanced peacemaking process resolving the Ukraine war should follow a favorite Russian adage for President Reagan: *Doveryay no proveryay*, or "Trust but verify." While saving Ukrainian and Russian lives is the immediate worthwhile goal, such a peace, beginning with good faith, can consist of and facilitate confidence-building measures which serve to verify the mutual trust of the parties and set the foundation for other agreements on arms control and peaceful and flourishing coexistence in a multipolar world. We see the fears of both sides, fueling a new Cold War, need to be addressed urgently:

(a) Fears on the part of the Russian Federation that the USA is out to dismember Russia and dominate the world. This worst-case scenario was regrettably made all too credible and plausible by the unwise Wolfowitz Doctrine, shortly after the old Cold War, holding that the USA would not tolerate "rivals" on the world stage (1992). We urge a *swift* repudiation of this pernicious doctrine which might well illustrate renowned Senator J. William Fulbright's book title *The Arrogance of Power*.

(b) Fears on the part of the USA and some Europeans that the Russian Federation is out to invade other European nations, a scenario much favored in the old Cold War.

First and foremost, the DISARM/End Wars Committee of WILPF US declares that regardless of the specifics of a peace solution, the USA, the Russian Federation, and Ukraine must be willing to make some compromises and "cease fire" in order to agree on treaty parameters and prepare for a decade or more of cooperative restoration and rebuilding. This will be only one step in building detente in Europe.