

# **Women's International League for Peace and Freedom**



Statement on the UN Security Council  
thematic meeting on counter-terrorism  
27<sup>th</sup> September 2010

On 27 September, the UN Security Council will hold a thematic meeting on counter-terrorism where the United Nations will reconfirm their commitment to combating terrorism and address evolving challenges posed by terrorism. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) believes that this meeting should be an opportunity to further consider and address underlying causes of terrorism, instead of focusing on military solutions.

In order to address terrorism more effectively, WILPF encourages the UN Security Council to emphasize and address the underlying causes. It is impossible to achieve international security without concerted efforts towards the realization of all human rights, for all peoples, and we therefore urge the Security Council to address the linkages between terrorism and the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights. WILPF argues that economic and social development, including international cooperation and assistance, can play a role in reducing support for terrorism by preventing the conditions that give rise to violence in general and to terrorism in particular. The international community must avoid funding security and counter-terrorism by diverting resources from education, health, water and food programmes. Such diversions may have serious consequences for the affected communities and will not contribute to the long-term social and economic stability that is needed to counter terrorism.

We recognize that terrorism continues to be a serious concern and a significant threat to international peace and security. It attacks values that are central to the Charter of the United Nations, such as respect for human rights, the rule of law, rules governing armed conflict and the protection of civilians, tolerance among peoples, and the peaceful resolution of conflict. As such, all member states have the duty to take effective counter-terrorism measures. However, some of the measures adopted by states have themselves often posed serious challenges to human rights and international law. Counter-terrorism measures such as "deliberate" or "targeted killings" to eliminate specific individuals, "shoot-to-kill" policies, torture and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, illegal extraditions and deportations, deprivation of liberties, and other serious violations of human rights are not capable of prevent the root causes and will instead only be counter-productive to combat terrorism.

WILPF urges the Security Council to consider the links between military expenditure, arms trade, violent conflict, and the reduction of available resources for social and economic development when addressing the topic of terrorism. The continued investment in militarism does not make the world safer and history has shown that military responses have rarely been successful in stopping or preventing terrorism. Instead, the Security Council should outline a non-military approach that aims to address the underlying inequalities that fuel terrorist activities, and take into account the impact of the protection and promotion of women's human rights. Measures should be implemented that allow equal access to resources and sustainability for all. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute noted in their 2010 Yearbook that the economic crisis worldwide appeared to have a little effect on levels of military expenditures, arms production or arms transfer. In 2009 military expenditure totalled an estimated 1531 billion USD, which is an increase of 5.9% compeered to the year of 2008. This funding could be spent on human security, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Instead of continued increase in military expenditures, me must take action to fight poverty, inequality, and instability. Only such measures will establish true peace and security for all humans.