

War Resisters' International Office and Executive Report

November 2015 – August 2016

Put together by the WRI Executive Committee and Staff

Introduction

Another year has passed, and with it far too much death and destruction caused by wars and militarism. But people around the world continue to stand up for peace and resist the military (non)solutions, the arms race, the injustices, the unequal distributions of resources. In this annual report, you'll read about some of these struggles; conscientious objectors refusing being part of the war machine, groups around the world taking action against the militarisation of youth, peace activists coming together to learn from each other and strengthen ongoing campaigns and networks.

The report include an account of the WRI programme activities since the last Council, the work of WRI and its affiliates in the different regions of the world, the WRI internal business, WRI publications, statements and press releases, the WRI campaign to stop the violence in Turkey , WRI's financial situation and finally an outlook for the coming year. As you will read in the report, organisations and individuals continue to find WRI to exchange experiences and knowledge, forming links between peace activists around the world and building stronger movements as we learn from each other.



Action preparations at the Stopping the War Business Seminar and Action in Seoul 2015

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WRI Internal

Council 2015

The Council 2015 took place before the International Seminar on War Profiteering in Seoul, South Korea, from the 13th to 15th of October 2015. There were 15 Council members plus observers and staff present; Treasurer Sergei Sandler joined by skype for part of the meeting. The most important decisions included:

- Until next year's Council, associate members of WRI will be asked if they would wish to apply becoming Sections. The Council 2016 will then decide on those applications.
- The next International Assembly will be held in 2017 or early 2018; the Exec will explore options for places.
- The hundredth anniversary of WRI is in 2021; the Exec will explore if there is enough support in the Netherlands to hold it in that country where WRI was founded.
- The budgets for 2015 and 2016 were approved.
- A Listening Committee is to be set up to find a new member for the Executive replacing Sergei who has become treasurer.
- For the revision of Rules and By-laws, the Council favours the two-round election of Council members practiced the last two International Assemblies. The system of postal ballots should be maintained and adapted so that it fits this new electoral procedure.
- Four new members were accepted to WRI as Associates: Centre of Peace Studies (Croatia), Antimilitarist Collective of Medellin (Colombia), Community Self-Reliance Centre and National Land Rights Forum (both Nepal).

The full minutes of the meeting have been shared (file "Council Meeting October 2015 to wri-internal with appendices.pdf")

*WRI
Council
meeting in
Seoul 2015*



Executive

The Executive, consisting of Jungmin Choi, Cattis Laska, Sergei Sandler (Treasurer), Christine Schweitzer (Chair) and Hülya Üçpinar has held two face-to-face meetings since last Council: 22th-24th of January in London and 17th-19th June in Göteborg (Sweden).

Additionally, the exec meets usually once per month on the phone.

Though being one member short after Dominique Saillard left the exec as treasurer, the group is working very well together.

Main topics that the Exec dealt with in this past year, were: the preparation of the Council 2016 (including the decision that it would be an eCouncil), budget, finance and fundraising, the International Assemblies 2017/8 and 2021 and accompanying the work on the various programmes run by the office and the respective Programme Committees. For some of Exec (Hülya, Christine) and staff (Semih) the situation in Turkey and our campaign on it have been a special focus (see the section in this report).

Working groups

The Women's Working group and **the Queer Working group** both still formally exist, but have neither of them met in person or online the past year. There are e-mail lists for both groups, and there has been some activity on the lists during the past year.

Staff

Andrew Dey and Hannah Brock are both working 4-days a week each, and Semih Sapmaz works on a freelance basis. They hold regular meetings (the notes of which are shared with the Executive Committee), and are planning an away day in September, focusing on work plans for the coming year.

Andrew works on the Nonviolence Programme, and Hannah on the Right to Refuse to Kill Programme. Semih works freelance for both the Countering the Militarisation of Youth programme and the Right to Refuse to Kill Programme.

Andrew became a father in October 2015, and WRI grants staff a month of co-parenting leave. He took this as two weeks when Robin was born, with an additional week in July 2016. He plans to take the final week as his partner begins work again in September.

Hannah will have been at WRI for five years in September 2017, and is able to take a one month sabbatical. She plans to take this earlier in the year, so as not to disrupt plans for the upcoming International Conference.

Volunteers and interns

For three months from November 2016 we were joined in the office by Taya Govreen Segal, an activist from Israel, as a Right to Kill intern.

It was great to have Taya around the office. She was working particularly on a survey of grassroots activists about conscientious objection and conscription in their contexts. This was a chance to contact many groups around the WRI network. The results of this will appear in an online interactive map, which will appear on WRI's relaunched website this autumn.

She also engaged with the Eastern Mediterranean network of conscientious objectors, as a CO from Israel, and helped to draft [their statement](#) on militarism in the region.

Additionally, she undertook speaking engagements in England and Scotland, mostly focusing on the experience of conscientious objectors in Israel, but including one on the Israeli arms trade, a write-up of which you can find [here](#).

It was great to have Taya in the office and we are keeping in touch.

We are grateful to artist Ralph Ziman, who is helping us design a new logo. Lyn Setchell has been helping us with the eBook design of the Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns, and an edit of the print edition of the Handbook. We are also very appreciative of the time spent by Rob Brew, who helps with our IT equipment in the office, making sure that our software is up to date.

Martyn Lowe, who was a regular volunteer in the WRI office for many years, visits the office once a year for three to four days to help us with the annual fundraising appeal, and we are very glad of his contributions! Kim Edwards also helped to send out the November 2015 fundraising appeal.

James Ryan spent a week in the office as part of his college work experience, helping with some administration tasks and uploading translations to the WRI website – thanks James!

WRI is supported by a large network of translators – some are members of the Council or Executive, others have volunteered through our website. They include Carlos Barranco, Nayua Abdelkefi, Igor Seke, Matias Mulet, Laura Perez Poza, Oscar Huenchunao, Pedro Ballesteros, Clara Delgado, Eva Aneiros, Cristian González, Mabel Pedemonte, Mayra Cavilla, Yolanda Alvarez, César Pérez, Gabriela Garcia Calderon Orbe, Martin Vallarino Arrospide, Carolina Olivero, Lydia Saiz, Mariana Avalaos, Manuel Torres, Paul Rankin, Ruby Starheart, Grace Brown, Anjali Mukhi Navalrai, Kevin Siegel, Inge Dreger, Gerd Buentzly, Christine Schweitzer, Rainer Sonntag, Caroline Wedler, Richard Meakin, Diana Vega, Laura Guthrie, Benjamin Lacey, David Scheuing, René Burget, Tikiri, Bastien Zara, Eve Tignol, Nolwenn Gaudin, Yoann Re, John Bogard, Lydia Castiello, Romain Ducroux, Maude Boudreault, Lewis Sinkala, Eleonora Romagna, D. Phillips, Asunción Serrano, Laura Poza and Laura Sanquer.

As well as this list of volunteers, many people help us through the [Rosetta Foundation's](#) website [trommons.org](#), which links up volunteer translators with not-for-profit groups for one of tasks. Thank you to all of them!

Finally, thanks to our proofreading volunteers, Emma Green, Spencer P. Malloy, Andrew Jackson and Lyn Setchell.

WRI Programmes

Countering the Militarisation of Youth Programme

International Week of Action Against the Militarisation of Youth

The Second International Week of Action Against the Militarisation of Youth was held between 14th and 20th November 2015 with the participation of many activists across the world. The week followed the first ever [week of action](#) took place in 2014 and a [day of action](#) held in 2013.



With the week of action in 2015, we have extended our theme from education to other aspects of youth militarisation. With this aim the name of the week was changed from the "International Week of Action for Military-Free Education and Research" to the "International Week of Action Against the Militarisation of Youth". Throughout the week, antimilitarists from different countries organised street actions and protests; held meetings, talks and workshops; and run social media campaigns all of which challenged the many ways militaries and armed groups engage with young people. The events and actions that took place reflected the various aspects of youth militarisation and resistance to it, from counter-recruitment and peace education to arms fair and different forms of military presence in public spaces.

The groups and organisations/institutions that supported the week included Aseistakieltäytäjäliitto AKL(Finland), Conscientious Objection Association (Turkey), Desmilitaritzem l'Educació (Catalonia), ForcesWatch (UK), German Peace Society - United War Resisters' (DFG-VK) (Germany), Joves d'Esquerra Verda (Catalonia), Peace Action Wellington (New Zealand), Schools of the Americas Watch (USA), War Resisters League (USA), United Nations Association Cardiff and District Branch (UK), Women in Black (UK), The National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth (USA), The National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Otago (New Zealand), Cuerpo Con-Siente (Colombia), and the Latin American and Caribbean Antimilitarist Network (RAMALC).



year's events [here](#).

The third week of action is going to take place between 14 and 20 November 2016. In this year's events/actions we are focusing on the many ways young people's minds and bodies are recruited into the armed forces, and to war. See our call out [here](#).

Alongside this organisational support, the week was also supported by many individual activists from different countries/regions (including Nepal and the Pacific Island of Guam as well as others) via particular events and/or on social media. See the full report of the previous



Website

The content of antimili-youth.net, the website of the Countering the Militarisation of Youth programme, was improved via new stories from across the world - together with pieces by, and interviews with, activists from different countries. Its up-to-date content also includes visual material, i.e. videos and galleries. The website is available in three languages: English, Spanish and German, although due to capacity issues and practical reasons there is more content available in English.

The site functions as an online resource centre for the activists and members of the general public interested in countering the militarisation of youth. With antimili-youth.net, we aim to help the network active on the issues around youth militarisation worldwide to share ideas and tactics, as well as to communicate with the general public.

Social media and publications

Countering the Militarisation of Youth Programme has a page on Facebook sharing content from antimili-youth.net and other sources relevant to youth militarisation and resistance to it. Aside from the page, we have initiated a Facebook group "War is not a Game" this year, where activists are invited to share content from their work and/or updates from their countries. You can follow our page [here](#), and be a member to our group [here](#).

This year we have also initiated an email newsletter "Antimili-Youth News" sharing stories on youth militarisation from different countries with the network. In order to subscribe to our list, please send email to cmoy@wri-irg.org.

Future work and Fundraising

Currently we are working on developing a new project that focuses on the gender dynamics of youth militarisation. The project, convening meetings and developing a resource, will explore how

gender is used to militarise young people across different countries, and how different approaches to gender could be utilised to tackle this. Our fundraising work for it continues and if we succeed we are hoping to start in summer 2017.

Evaluation

Achievements

- The second International Week of Action took place with the participation of various groups and individuals across different countries..
- The website antimili-youth.net was further developed in content with up-to-date stories and contributions by the activists within the network.
- More appearance for CMoY and its field of work on social media via the page and the group.
- Expanding network with new subscribed members to our email list and newsletter "Antimili-Youth News".
- Overall, with the achievements mentioned above, CMoY - as a new WRI project initiated last year- could develop into an independent WRI programme.

Challenges

Limited funds, and so time, for the coordination of the programme. This restricts WRI's capacity to expand the programme with new activities.

Nonviolence Programme

Constructive programmes

A significant focus of work for the programme this year has been developing a resource on Gandhi's concept of 'constructive programmes'. After publishing the second edition of the Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns, we felt there was a need for material and resources outlining how social change is also sought through 'constructive' means, that still change orthodox power structures and form of structural violence. Examples might include housing cooperatives, land trusts, occupied factories, occupied farm land, the Occupy movement, community gardens, and radical health collectives.

The nonviolence programme committee has spent some time and energy discussing this idea, gathering case studies, and outlining and debating principles. We feel it is an underrated and under-explored field. In June 2016 we finally felt we had gathered enough to begin work on a publication; this will be developed in a similar fashion to the Handbook (and other WRI publications), with different people invited to write chapters based on their specific experiences.

Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns

Translations

Work has continued this year in developing translations of the Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns. The translation of the first edition into French has been completed and uploaded to the website.

Work has continued by a group of volunteers in translating the second edition into German and Turkish. When they are finished they will be uploaded to the website, and made available on the WRI online bookshop.

War Profiteers

War Profiteers News

The programme continues to publish War Profiteers News, in English and Spanish. There have been five editions published since the last annual report. The newsletter is a useful tool for developing relations with members of the network and beyond, as we gather their stories and experiences. The back issues are available at: https://www.wri-irg.org/publications/war_profiteers

Stopping the War Business: Seoul

In October 2015, WRI members and friends gathered Seoul for the 'Stopping the War Business' seminar, jointly organised by WRI staff and our affiliate 'World Without War'. The seminar was a two-day gathering of activists countering war profiteering in its many guises. Activists shared stories of successful campaigns, tactics they are using, and found common ground in their various struggles. After the seminar, there was a nonviolence training led by South Korean trainers, to prepare for the ADEX arms fair.

A direct outcome of Stopping the War Business was a more nuanced assessment of the process of police militarisation. Several speakers and workshops focused on this subject. We published a piece on the subject – [Police Militarisation is Global](#) - co-authored by Tara Tabassi from War Resisters League and Andrew Dey from WRI in the February 2016 edition of War Profiteers News. We have also successfully applied for a Quaker Peace and Social Witness Peacemaker, and at the time of writing we are looking forward to being joined by Sarah Robinson in September 2016. Sarah will spend her time researching and developing resources on the different ways police forces are being militarised. Sarah will be splitting her time evenly between WRI and Campaign Against Arms Trade.



ENAAT & Farnborough

The annual “European Network Against the Arms Trade” was held in London this year, and Andrew Dey attended. The network acts primarily as an information-sharing and solidarity network, but in the last year has also hired a staff member who works on countering working developments in the European Union, including pushes towards granting large amounts of funding to arms companies for research.

The meeting was hosted by the Campaign Against the Arms Trade, and coincided with their actions against the Farnborough Air Show (a large trade show of military aircraft and other weaponry).

Training

Arbi Harnet

In June 2016, we hosted a training and strategy session for the core group of the Arbi Harnet (“Freedom Friday”) campaign, a network of diaspora activists agitating for social change within Eritrea. Eritrea is a highly militarised, authoritarian state. Arbi Harnet have been using innovative techniques – such as mass phone calls – to spread news within the country. Several members of the core group were able to attend, and we were hosted by Stellan Vinthagen at the University of Massachusetts, with Matt Meyer also supporting the training.

During the training, we visited a local Eritrean community centre, that was in support of ‘opposition’ activists within the country. We met with them, discussed the training and context within Eritrea.

Future project work

Website for handbook and resources

We have recently been granted funding to develop a new microsite for the Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns. With new content (including on Constructive Programmes, see above), this site is provisionally called 'The Nonviolent Resistance Manual', and will be a much more accessible and user-friendly resource than the current format, which is difficult to navigate and quite unattractive. It will also include a feature to allow users to contribute new content, stories, and methods, based on their own campaigning and nonviolent activism. We hope to begin work on this resource in the autumn of 2016, once the work on the main WRI site work has been completed.

Fundraising

In the past year, we have successfully applied for grants from:

- Network for Social Change
- Andrew Wainwright Reform Trust

We were also generously supported by antimilitarists from Spain, who pooled over 4,000 euros from their tax objection for the programme.

Evaluation

Achievements

- Some exciting project work is taking place within the Nonviolence Programme, with work on constructive programmes and police militarisation two areas where we will develop work in the future.
- Through the Stopping the War Business seminar, and War Profiteers News, we have developed stronger links with anti-arms trade activists in different regions.
- Several funding opportunities have opened up, though still sporadic and not covering all core costs.
- Successfully applying for another QPSW Peacemaker.

Challenges

Fundraising for the programme – though brighter in 2016 than previous years – remains a challenge, and of course every minute spent raising money is time not spent elsewhere.

The Right to Refuse to Kill Programme

Programme activities

Work with country and regional movements

Bolivia

We have made contact with a new CO in Bolivia, José Miguel Orías, whose claim to be

recognised as a CO has been judged by the Bolivian constitutional court; as expected, the court ruled against him, blaming the lack of regulation of the right within Bolivian law. We are working with legal support group Rights in Actions (*Derechos en acción*) in Bolivia, to raise funds to allow them to take the case to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACtHR). If successful, this could be an important opportunity for a new precedent to be set, updating the IACtHR's view on the subject.

Eastern Europe

Our project supporting COs in Eastern Europe is developing and ongoing, but the web resource for refusals in Ukraine, Russia and Lithuania has been delayed. The website will be launched later this year. In March of this year, it was announced that the conscription that had been reintroduced in Lithuania in 2015, initially for five years, was to become permanent.

Rwanda

Since December 2014 a Rwandan activist has been interviewing Rwandan ex-combatants in diaspora, with the intention of producing a report focusing on barriers to leaving the armed forces. The first results of this research will be ready to be published this year. The first-hand testimonies are from soldiers who faced problems leaving the army.

As well as raising awareness, this report could be used for advocacy with the Rwandan government, through partners.

Thailand

There is no alternative service or CO recognition in Thailand. In 2015 a CO publicly declared his refusal; he is yet to be called up. From WRI, Hannah, along with COs in Korea Jungmin Choi and Yong-suk Lee, will visit Thailand in November 2016. We will learn more about the situation.

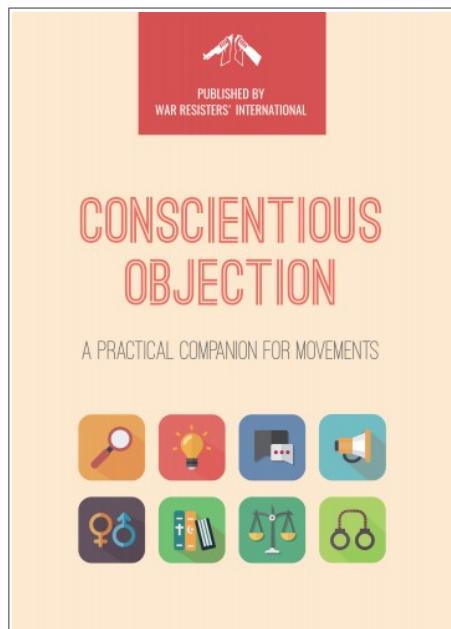
We also hope to meet with the Thai Transgender Alliance, who are working to protect transwomen who are called up to military service in Thailand, as well as other peace campaigners, and other nonviolence practitioners in Thailand.

CONCODOC

We are excited about the relaunching of the WRI website in autumn 2016. Improved presentation and accessibility of the site will make it easier to subscribe to email lists on CO news and action, follow WRI on social media, and access our resources. Following our agreement last year with the International Fellowship of Reconciliation to use their Universal Periodic Review reports to update WRI's Conscription and Conscientious Objection Documentation (CONCODOC), we have already updated Austria, Kyrgyzstan and Singapore, and will continue to update others on a rolling basis. On our new website, CONCODOC will be more interactive, with colour-coded mapping and clearer links to CO groups in-country.

Conscientious Objection: A Practical Companion for Movements

Conscientious Objection: A Practical Companion for Movements was published in October 2016. It includes contributions by activists from many different movements and countries across the WRI network. It is available for free online, as well as being on sale in our webshop.



The book articulates different CO strategies and motivations, with gender and militarism as a main theme. Through a crowdfunding campaign, we were able to send books for free to many COs around the world. We have had very positive feedback from many activist readers, commenting on the breadth and depth of material, the intersectional understanding of the analysis, and the diversity of experiences explored.

We are coordinating a Spanish translation, which will be published this year, and translations in Thai and Korea (through [World Without War](#)) will come out in 2017.

If you are interested in arranging the translation of this resource into your own language, please write to hannah@wri-irg.org

Events

Prisoners for Peace Day

[Prisoners for Peace Day](#) was marked on 1 December, with people all around writing to conscientious objectors and other nonviolent activists in prison. As usual, we produced a [Prisoners for Peace list](#), giving info and contact details on those imprisoned. This is a version of the Prisoners for Peace list, which is constantly updated, and kept on our website here: <http://www.wri-irg.org/inprison>

We also sent out a paper version of this list, with the November funding appeal.

This year Finnish CO Visa Savolainen wrote a blog post¹ reflecting on the importance of receiving many cards of solidarity on Prisoners for Peace Day whilst he is under home detention in Finland. Read it here: <http://www.wri-irg.org/en/PfP-day-cards>

International Conscientious Objectors Day



Since 1985, 15th May - [International Conscientious Objection day](#) - has been used to celebrate those who have - and those who continue - to resist war, especially by refusing to be part of military structures. In 2016 actions occurred in Germany, Republic of Korea, Britain, Turkey and Venezuela, amongst other places.

The new [#SoyCivilNoMilitar](#) campaign in Venezuela held an event at which 43 new people

1 <http://www.wri-irg.org/en/PfP-day-cards>

declared their conscientious objection to militarism! Find out more about the campaign from [their magazine](#).

In Turkey, the Conscientious Objection Association, [Vicdani Ret](#), worked with the Tahir Elçi City Forest Coordination to organise a seminar and action in Amed (Diyarbikir), called "We Will Not Let Amed Turn Into Garrison Town". Four new conscientious objectors publicly declared their refusal, but the police prevented them from entering Tahir Elçi city forest to plant trees as they had intended. Find the report [here](#), and watch the video [here!](#)



[World Without War](#) in Korea led a cycling action to highlight the 700+ Korean young men in prison for refusing military service.



Photo: Tim Wallis

Groups in Germany and Britain held local events to raise awareness of the experience of conscientious objectors, both in the past and today. In two British cities - Leicester and Carlisle - two new stones were laid to remember conscientious objectors.

In a neat bit of guerilla street art in London, activists from the [Haringey First World War Peace Forum](#) placed info posters on streets where COs lived in the first world war. 350 of 20,000 British conscientious objectors lived in north London.

Many others supported on social media, using the [#COday](#) hashtag. See more photos of different actions [here](#).

Publications

The [CO-Update](#) newsletter is being published every two or three months. It remains the

only wholly international newsletter on conscientious objection to military service and military recruitment that covers different motivations.

The [CO-Alert](#) system is still active, but is being used slightly less frequently than in previous years, partly because of changes in certain states which mean COs are less likely to be imprisoned.

Israeli CO Tair Kaminer told us that receiving tens of messages whilst in prison was an enormous help in continuing through the cycle of imprisonment, release and repeated call up in Israel. We had distributed Tair's contact information in a CO Alert, which had prompted supporters to write to her.

Staffing

Hannah Brock works four days a week on the Right to Refuse to Kill programme. Semih Sapmaz also works freelance on the Right to Refuse to Kill programme.

RRTK programme committee

The Right to Refuse to Kill programme committee continues to be in regular contact.

The RRTK committee currently consists of Merve Arkun (Vicdani Ret Derneği – the Association of Conscientious Objectors in Turkey), Rachel Brett (Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva), Igor Seke (from Serbia, now living in Mexico), with Sergei Sandler (New Profile, Israel) convening the committee, and Hannah Brock and Semih Sapmaz working on the RRTK programme.

Funding

We are grateful for the continued support of the [Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust](#). This year our grant was renewed, so we can expect funding for the programme from that trust until April 2020. We seek funding for specific projects on top of this main grant.

Evaluation

Achievements

- We continue to make contact with new conscientious objectors in different countries. Many of them find us, through our website or through word of mouth.
- International CO day this year had more interest than in many years. It continues to be a useful day for campaigners to raise awareness of conscientious objection today.
- Networking: we share information and contacts with other international groups supporting COs, including [Forum 18](#), the [Quaker United Nations Office](#), [Connection e.V.](#), and the [European Bureau for Conscientious Objection](#), amongst others. In this way, we benefit from the work of expertise of others, and vice versa.

Challenges

- Interest in our public work, e.g. subscriptions to the [CO Update](#) and [CO-Alerts](#), has remained at a similar level for a number of years. We hope that with improved social media reach, and through our new website, we will be able to get more people involved. This will make WRI's solidarity work for COs more effective.

- With more capacity in the office, we could do more work to support COs! One full time role means that we are limited in the country movements we can work with and support we can give. This has been an ongoing challenge since the programme started.

WRI in the regions

Pan African Nonviolence and Peacebuilding Network (PANPEN)

Introduction

This report summarizes the activities of the PANPEN, what was achieved, challenges being faced, and recommendations. The report is also an attempt to document, critically reflect on the network, its mandate and best way forward. It mostly covers the period October 2015 to mid October 2016.

What was achieved

Over the past year, many PANPEN-related activities have taken place which involved one or more members of the Network while not necessarily being direct Network projects. The following is a brief review of such PANPEN-related projects which have involved PANPEN members and/or grown out of PANPEN discussions:

- A new book, *Satyagraha/Ujamma: Connecting Contemporary African-Asia Peacemaking and Nonviolence* is due out in early 2017, edited by Matt Meyer and Gandhian scholar Vidya Jain and containing several essays by PANPEN and WRI members. Growing out of a PANPEN-supported conference of the Africa Peace Research and Education Association conference held in 2015 in Abuja, Nigeria, the new book features PANPEN members Yash Tandon (whose essay specifically focuses on the development of PANPEN and our Cape Town meetings), Moses Monday John (writing on developments in Southern Sudan), Ousseina Alidou (writing, with Matt Meyer, on revolution and nonviolence), Bernadette Muthien, Patrick Bond, Sixte Vigny Nimuraba, and a reprinting of the Eco-socialist Horizons call to action which was debuted and discussed in Cape Town at the WRI and PANPEN meetings. In addition, long-time WRI members and friends Michael Mazgoankar and Rajiv Vora are featured in the book, which contains an introductory poem by Dream-wolf which also served to introduce our Cape Town conference.
- Matt Meyer continues to serve as a liaison with other African peace studies and peace research groups, especially in the orbit of the International Peace Research Association (IPRA). IPRA's next major conference is being held in Freetown, Sierra Leone in late November 2016, under the leadership of PANPEN colleague and IPRA Secretary-General Ibrahim Seaga Shaw. One link in this network, which will be spotlighted in Sierra Leone but will also be useful in our future work, is with Cyril Obi, coordinator of the Africa Peacebuilding Network (APN) – founded approximately the same time as PANPEN and with more of an academic focus, funded as part of the US-based Social Science Research Council.
- Eritrean organizer Selam Kidane, leader of the Freedom Fridays/Arbi Harnet organization which brings together activists inside the country, those in the

Diaspora, and non-Eritrean supporters, helped conduct an international retreat and strategy session in June 2016. This retreat was a direct result of conversations and planned made at the Cape Town conference. PANPEN member Kassahun Checole presented at the session, as did Matt Meyer; WRI members and supporters of PANPEN Stellan Vinthagen and Andrew Day were also deeply involved in the retreat.

- d) PANPEN member Steve Sharra of Malawi helped found and continues to coordinate the Pan African Educator's Forum, an on-line exchange on education at all levels, both from and effecting African students, youth, and teachers. A number of PANPEN members are subscribers and contributors to the Forum.
- e) PANPEN members Sixte Vigny Nimuraba and Elavie Ndura of Burundi continue to develop the Burundian Education Project and additional related grassroots nonviolence work in Burundi. As appropriate and needed, they continue to inform and involve other members of the PANPEN network regarding events in their country and the Great Lakes region.
- f) PANPEN colleague and WRI affiliate Alain Ah-vee of LALIT in Mauritius just helped coordinate a September 2016 international solidarity conference on the issue of continued US occupation of Diego Garcia, displacing the native population and militarizing East Africa and the Pacific Ocean with nuclear weapons and conventional warfare. Other WRI affiliates and PANPEN supporters were in attendance at the conference, including WRL Clare Bayard from California.
- g) PANPEN colleague Stephen Zunes, Chair of the Academic Advisory Council of the International Center on Nonviolent Conflict (ICNC), provided special testimony to the United Nations Committee on Decolonization, on the case of Western Sahara. The testimony can be found on the website of the Sahara Press Service, here: <http://www.sprsasd.info/news/en/dossier/stephen-zunes-testimony-conference-decolonization>
- h) Additional liaison work with related global associations have come in various forms. PANPEN members Elavie Ndura and Matt Meyer presented, along with ICNC's Senior Director for Education Maciej Barkowski, at a Washington DC-based panel on "MLK's Path to Peace: Reclaiming and Renewing Nonviolent Responses to 'Global Crisis'" (see <http://www.usip.org/events/dr-martin-luther-king-s-path-peace>). Meyer has also remained in contact with International Fellowship of Reconciliation coordinator Lucas Johnson regarding their Africa-based work, and with Mubarak Awad and Michael Beer of Nonviolence International (presenting on Africa at a special luncheon meeting), about the possibility of collaboration with PANPEN on various grassroots nonviolence trainings, including with activists from Congo-Brazzaville, Ethiopia, and elsewhere.
- i) Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge of Embrace Dignity (www.embracedignity.org.za) was invited to address a conference at the University of Cartagena, Colombia to share the experience of South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy and to highlight the important role of academics in the Colombian peace process. This was two weeks prior to the public signing of the peace accords in Cartagena on 26 September 2016. The invitation for Nozizwe was facilitated by a local organisation,

SembrandoPaz (<http://www.sembrandopaz.org/>) an organisation that promotes justice, peace and works on the ground with peasants, youth and women.

Challenges

Although the network has registered number of successes given its voluntary engagement there are some challenges. These includes but not limited to; increasing political tensions in countries such as South Sudan, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Nigeria...etc which has negatively impacted on participation of PANPEN members, limited some coordination plans and ability to engage effectively. Failure to conduct face to face meeting of the network since July 2014 further contributed to drop of energy level coupled with increasing engagement of members with their other business.

Recommendations and the way forward

- i) PANPEN and WRI should plan for Africa regional nonviolence exchange follow up program. The plan should also include a fundraising strategy.
- ii) Search for possibilities to engage PANPEN members in small scale research projects to document and disseminate nonviolence success stories in the region and beyond.
- iii) PANPEN, WRI and Africa Support Team to brainstorm, coordinate and find a better way to reactive PANPEN activities in 2017 and beyond.

Conclusion

In conclusion, though not always assertive as a consolidated Network *per se*, PANPEN has remained linked to many struggles in every region of the continent, through its many partners, supporters, friends, and members. It is our hope and expectation that, in the near future, further consolidation and growth can take place, as we prepare for additional face-to-face meetings of the Network as a whole. Its worthnoting; since its establishment in 2012 and reorganization in June 2014 Pan African Network on Nonviolence and Peacebuilding (PANPEN) has not only connected the African grassroots civil resisters and nonviolent activists but empowered them to take actions to transform violence, promote peace, democracy and nonviolent alternatives to conflicts.

In summary, though not always assertive as a consolidated Network *per se*, PANPEN has remained linked to many struggles in every region of the continent, through its many partners, supporters, friends, and members. It is our hope and expectation that, in the near future, further consolidation and growth can take place, as we prepare for additional face-to-face meetings of the Network as a whole. We appreciate the interest and support from WRI and despite challenges, our work continues to grow and is being recognized not only in Africa but globally.

Latin American and Caribbean Antimilitarist Network (RAMALC, in Spanish)



This last year marked a turning point for the RAMALC network. After many years of loose collaboration mostly manifested in joint statements and the use of a list serve to share information among RAMALC's members, the network was consolidated by three main activities: (1) a regional gathering in Mexico on the theme of nonviolent strategies, fear, protection and communication. (2) Publication of the first issue of RAMALC's magazine "[Rompiendo Filas](#)" (Breaking Ranks). (3) Launch of the website <http://ramalc.org>. During this period of time another important development was the incorporation to the network of a member from Cuba helping expand the network to more countries in the region.

Annual regional gathering

As a response to the extreme violence and the high repression of social movements across the region, RAMALC members agreed that it was important to hold a training where we could look at the role that a nonviolent and antimilitarist approach can have in the region and in particular in cases of high levels of violence such as in Mexico. Looking at nonviolent strategies in these contexts as well as sharing tools, skills and experiences on how to work with fear and protection and taking action in solidarity with local struggles were the main goals of the gathering.

Mexico City was the location set for the RAMALC regional training. The event was co-organised together with SERAPAZ and hosted by the Museo de la Memoria Indómita as well as the Huitzilapan and Xochicuautla communities resisting a motorway that will destroy their forest and hugely impact their livelihoods. Mexican organisations that facilitated sessions during the training were Serpaj (nonviolent strategies), Peace Brigades International (protection) and ALUNA (fear). On the last day RAMALC joined the march in commemoration of the first anniversary of the disappearance of the Ayotzinapa students. The gathering also came up with statements in support of Huitzilapan and Xochicuautla and one in support of [Ayotzinapa](#) and all disappeared in Mexico.



Currently RAMALC is planning its next annual regional gathering, which will take place in Asunción, Paraguay under the theme of nonviolent strategies to counter the militarisation of bodies and territories in Latin America and the Caribbean. This gathering will continue to strengthen the network with the specific goal to get new members from the Southern Cone of Latin America.

Rompiendo Filas

This year saw the launch of the first issue of [*Rompiendo Filas*](#) the magazine of RAMALC. After several attempts to come up with a publication of the network we came up with a magazine. This first issue had a wide selection of themes and texts formats including stories, essays, interviews etc. *Rompiendo Filas* provides a voice to the network and a place to engage in a dialogue about nonviolence and antimilitarism in the region, filling an important gap within social movement publications. This issue was available as a pdf and was launched in several countries where there are members. Currently the network is working on its second issue which will focus on militarisation of bodies and territories to be ready for the Paraguay gathering.

Ramalc.org

Finally the network has a website <http://ramalc.org> where members can upload new content and where you can download *Rompiendo Filas*. The site is still a work in progress and we hope it will help to bring more visibility to the network and become a place for

people from outside the network to learn about the network's activities. If you go to the site you will also find videos and radio recordings. The plan is to slowly increase the number of postings in the site, so keep an eye on it.

Representation

Members of RAMALC continue to be represented at WRI events. Lexys Rendon from Venezuela was present at the South Korea Council where she gave a presentation on the impact of extractive industries to the livelihoods of local communities in Latin America. Lexys as well as Igor Seke are members of the WRI Council.

Hopefully by having a stronger RAMALC there will be more opportunities for collaboration with WRI members in other regions.

The East-Mediterranean regional network

In the recent months, the Eastern-Mediterranean network has regained some energy. In March, the network released [a joint statement](#), criticising the militarised responses to crises in the area, and supporting imprisoned COs.

In addition, the email list has been actively used to update on persecution of COs, and campaigns. These updates were also used for calls for solidarity, and were met with active participation.

One example is the [#refuse2occupy campaign](#), started by Mesarvot ad a social media campaign in support of Israeli COs, and expanded by the network to include a solidarity vigil in Athens, and a planned press conference in Cyprus (happily cancelled thanks to the release of Tair Kaminer).

Around the military coup in Turkey, updates and [statements](#) sent on the network were especially valuable as a reliable source of information, and a radical anti-militarist analysis.

European Antimilitarist Network

No to NATO

In October 2015, activists from [Trident Ploughshares](#) in Britain and [ofog](#) in Sweden travelled to the south of Spain at the invitation of [AA.MOC](#) to take part in actions against Trident Juncture, NATO's military exercises that took place across Italy, Portugal and the state of Spain. Trident Juncture was billed as the "*largest exercise of NATO since the end of the Cold War*"². Read a report by Angie Zelter [here](#).

² The 82a División Aerotransportada in its Facebook page, 2 July 2015:
<https://www.facebook.com/BripacBrigadaparacaidista/photos/a.761288087289195.1073741833.474829159268424/842851109132892/?type=1&permPage=1>



Earlier in the month, a group of [Antimilitaristes-moc](#) activists blockaded tanks destined for usage in the [Trident Juncture](#). Two activists unveiled banners with the words "[War Stops Here](#)" and "Sorry for the inconvenience: obstructing war preparations", four more activists rapidly chained themselves with lock-on tubes to the tracks of two Danish Leopard tanks parked due to be transported to the main manoeuvre site of San Gregorio (Zaragoza). Six people were arrested and released later with charges.

Burghfield June

In June 2016 activists from [AKL](#) and Women for Peace from Finland, [Agir Pour La Paix](#) from Belgium and [DFG-VK](#) from Germany (members of [ofog](#) in Sweden were supposed to come, but were prevented) travelled to Burghfield, a nuclear weapons factory in southern England, to take part in a month of action called by [Trident Ploughshares](#).

A blockade began on 6 June, and incredibly was still in place at the end of the following week. Three people from Finland were arrested, and having not attended a court hearing the following month, a warrant is out for their arrest when they return to Britain.



Other actions later in the month kept disruption up at Burghfield for the whole month of action – watch a video [here](#).

The network is looking at ways to communicate more regularly, and take part in each others' actions effectively. We are looking at bringing in more groups from different countries in Europe, and look forward to joining actions against war together in future!

Many members of the network continue to use the slogan [War Starts Here](#), and other antimilitarist groups outside the network also use it.

COP21

Though not a full network event, several members of WRI affiliates from Europe were present at the mobilisation around the COP21 climate change negotiations, held in Paris in December 2015.

ENAAT

The annual European Network Against the Arms Trade meeting was held in London, in July 2016. Andrew Dey from the WRI staff participated, as did several affiliates from Belgium, Germany, UK, and Switzerland. ENAAT has had funding for a staff member this year, which allowed them to work more collaboratively, specifically on shifts within the EU on funding for research by the arms trade.

WRI in East, South and South East Asia

In October last year there was a WRI Council meeting in Seoul, Korea alongside the Stopping the War Business international seminar and action which was co-hosted by the South Korean affiliate World Without War (WWW). Krishnakant Chauhan from India and Subhash Kattel from Nepal were present, and Subhash co-facilitated a workshop on constructive program at the international seminar. During the Council meeting two new affiliates from Nepal, Community Self-Reliance Centre (CSRC), National Land Rights Forum (NLRF), were approved.

Work with Netiwit Chotiphatphaisal, new Thai conscientious objector, who is part of a group called 'New Thai People' is also ongoing. The WRI London office and WWW from Korea (who are the closest neighbour in WRI network) will visit this group in the middle of November and discuss how we keep solidarity and support each other. We are very much looking forward to meet them and hope this will be a good chance to widen our circle especially in Asia region and work closely each other.

WRI in Oceania and Australia

WRI has an affiliate in Australia, and an individual member in West Papua. An article was submitted to the second edition of the Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns about the ongoing nonviolent resistance to the Indonesian occupation of West Papua. Through the war profiteers initiative we have also made contact with a group in Australia, and in New Zealand. Both groups are resisting arms trade events in their local towns, and featured at various points in War Profiteers News.

WRI in North America

A report from WRI in North America will be sent separately.

Publications

All of WRI's publications are available on our website.

We have written a simple 'writing guide' for the website, to encourage people to consider submitting ideas for stories to our publications. It is available here: <http://www.wri-irg.org/en/Writing-for-WRI> ([German](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#))

Series Publications

The Broken Rifle

The Broken Rifle is WRI's main newsletter, and is published in English, Spanish, German and French. It is published online, usually with a downloadable pdf version available, and sent out as an email newsletter.

Staff often use The Broken Rifle when travelling and attending events. We use Issuu to publish the PDF 'magazine' version of the Broken Rifle, which makes it much easier to read on tablets, laptops, and e-readers, and to embed on the website. You can sign up for free, as well as read past issues in all four published languages, here:

<https://issuu.com/warresistersint>

Since August 2015, the following issues have been published:

- December 2015: Stopping the War Business
- May 2016: Antimilitarism and Climate Change

War Resisters' Stories

War Resisters' Stories is a short monthly bulletin of news from the WRI network. Each month it contains five stories, both from the office and from the WRI network. It is designed to give people highlights of recent activities, as well as direct them towards upcoming

events, in a brief and engaging way.

CO-Update

The CO-Update, produced in English, is the eNewsletter of the Right to Refuse to Kill programme. Since summer 2012 it has been produced bimonthly. It contains updates on conscientious objection and conscription around the world, as well as news of RRTK activity.

CO-Alert

WRI launched this email-based system for alerting subscribers to the imprisonment or other difficulties faced by conscientious objectors in July 2001. Since then, hundreds of CO-Alerts have been distributed. The CO-Alert system has been integrated into WRI's conscientious objection database, and is now managed entirely through the WRI website. CO-alert is an English-only email list, although some alerts are also available in other languages on the WRI website. Please encourage as many people to join this list as possible: <http://lists.wri-irg.org/sympa/info/co-alert>

War Profiteers News

The email newsletter War Profiteers News is published in English and Spanish, usually bimonthly. It has been an important tool to provide information on matters related to war profiteering to a wide range of groups and activists, and facilitates networking of groups working on war profiteers.

Social media

We continue to develop our social media work. We aim to post on Facebook once a day, on Twitter as regularly as seems appropriate, and on other networks – like Diaspora – too. We have also tried to regularly repost and retweet content produced by groups affiliated to WRI.

Facebook

Find us here: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/War-Resisters-International/116749965016853>. We now have over 4,000 followers! Our most popular posts this year were about CO's in Israel, CO Day events in South Korea, and UK train drivers refusing to ship ammunition in preparation for the invasion of Iraq.

Twitter

You can find WRI at <https://twitter.com/warresistersint>. We have over 3,400 followers. You can use this list to see twitter feeds from WRI's affiliates.

Books

Handbook for Nonviolent Campaigns

This year the work on translating the handbook has been a focus. Volunteers in Germany have almost completed the translation into German, and the Turkish translation is almost finished as well. Before his passing, Abraham was translating the second edition into

Tigrinya, and his wife continues that work.

The translation into French of the first edition has also been completed, and the design work is being done by WRI staff for distribution later in the year.

Conscientious Objection: a Practical Companion for movements

“Conscientious Objection: a Practical Companion for Movements” was published in October 2015, following a successful crowdfunder to raise the necessary funds. A Spanish translation is almost complete, and a Thai and Korean version will be published online (and in hard copy for the Korean version) next year.

Statements & Press Releases

Since the last annual report, War Resisters' International has released one statement, [condemning the murder of human rights lawyer Tahir Elçi](#), in Turkey.

Campaign: Turkey - Stop the Cycle of Violence

In Spring 2016 War Resisters' International launched a new campaign focusing on the escalating cycle of violence in Turkey. The campaign, initiated in response to demands from WRI activists in Turkey, is coordinated with a group of WRI members based in both Europe and Turkey. The activities, run in collaboration with Connection e.V. from Germany, included a delegation visit to Southeast Turkey, a petition addressing the EU, and an advocacy trip to Europe by two human rights defenders from Turkey. WRI's currently working on new activities to take place in 2017 and continues its campaign to stop the cycle of violence in Turkey.

International delegation to Diyarbakır and Cizre

As part of the campaign an international delegation of peace activists and human rights defenders visited [Southeast Turkey between 25-30 April 2016](#).

The group, which consisted of seven activists from Austria, Germany, Spain, Sweden and Turkey, visited Diyarbakir, Cizre and surrounding towns affected by the curfews and armed conflict that have been ongoing since August 2015. See the profiles of the delegation members [here](#).

During their visit, the delegation met officials, including the Co-Mayor of Diyarbakir, and had meetings with numerous civil society organizations in the region. Following their visit, the delegation also issued a report from their observations, which can be accessed [here](#).



Successful Advocacy Trip

In the second half of June, two representatives of Turkish human rights organisations - Coşkun Üsterci, executive member of the Human Rights Foundation and Gamze Yalçın, executive member of the Human Rights Association - travelled to Geneva, Vienna,

Brussels and Strasbourg. They met with high-level human rights experts from the United Nations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and the European Commission. Besides an exchange of information, they had concrete discussions about how Turkish human rights organisations could cooperate more closely with European institutions.

Appeals to the European Union and the German State



In addition to organising delegation visits, War Resisters' International also launched an online petition addressing the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Federica Mogherini, on behalf of the European Union. The petition, initiated in March 2016, was calling on the EU not to lose sight of the situation in Turkey, and to take action on the escalating violence in the country. With the recent developments and changing context in Turkey, the appeal was ended in September 2016 with more than 1400 signatures delivered to Mrs Mogherini's office.

Together with the one addressing the EU, Connection e.V. and Bund für Soziale Verteidigung, both from Germany, initiated another petition which was addressing the German State. In parallel with the international petition, it ended in September 2016 too.

Next Steps for Our Work in Turkey

War Resisters' International and some of its affiliates are planning new activities to take place in 2017. In mid-September, a small group of WRI members met with organisations in Turkey to discuss how best to support them in their courageous work in the current tense situation. In order to follow the updates please subscribe to the monthly WRI News writing to info@wri-irg.org.

Finances and fundraising

Since our last Council meeting in Seoul, WRI's financial position has been more or less stable. We have had some successes in our fundraising effort, but their long-term implications are somewhat disappointing. We have more breathing space for now, but the future outlook is still worrying.

WRI ended 2015 with a small surplus of £2,445, and the first half of 2016 with a surplus of £7,265.³ Our total available reserves now stand at about £81,000. A detailed breakdown of our income, expenditures, assets and liabilities, will be presented together with the draft budget for 2017 at the eCouncil.

So far in 2016, we have had a few fundraising successes (alongside the usual share of failures). The Nonviolence Programme secured funding for several activities in 2016. Especially notable are a £9,000 grant we received from the Network for Social Change and a donation of approximately €4,500 we received in late 2015 from tax resistance money collected by antimilitarist activists in the Basque Country, and transferred to us by WRI affiliate KEM-MOC. Nevertheless, the funds raised for the programme's work this

³ The 2016 figure is a bit misleading: it includes funds raised for the Nonviolence Programme's work throughout the year, as well as a good number of individual donations that were in fact accumulated over several years, but (for technical reasons) only accounted for recently. Taking these into account would imply a roughly break-even balance for 2016 so far.

year are still smaller than the programme's annual expenditures, and the outlook for 2017 is, in fact, less optimistic than for the current year.

We are currently applying for funding to the Network for Social Change for our Countering the Militarisation of Youth Programme for 2017 (the Network for Social Change does not usually fund the same project two years in a row). On the other hand, no funding for the Countering the Militarisation of Youth Programme has been secured for 2016, at least so far.

Funding for WRI's Right to Refuse to Kill Programme comes mainly from a grant by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust (JRCT). We have been receiving this grant since 2001, and have just recently successfully renewed it for three more years (through early 2020). The significance of this grant for the work of the WRI office and its programmes is difficult to overstate. Beyond the its direct support for the Right to Refuse Programme, this grant allowed us to maintain a kernel of stability in our work more generally, at least safeguarding us against the possibility of sudden and total financial collapse. Moreover, our success in securing this funding for all that time is no accident. It has a lot to do with the fact that we genuinely share a political and ethical vision with the people in JRCT. And yet, the importance of this one grant for the financial stability—indeed survival—of our office and its programmes also demonstrates how fragile our position is. If, for whatever reason, we lose this one source of funding, our financial outlook will immediately turn extremely grim.

All this goes to stress the crucial importance of the one source of income that lies entirely in our own hands—WRI affiliates and individual supporters, or, in other words, you. After all, the WRI office is an organ of the WRI network; it exists for you, and relies on you for its work and for the resources that make this work possible. This includes your direct financial contribution—affiliation fees and donations, but also your involvement as volunteers, and the information we all share among ourselves. Even if we manage to obtain all the monetary resources we need through grant funding—and that too will not be possible without a lot of knowledge and volunteer work that comes from the WRI network at large—our affiliates' and individual donors' financial support will always remain a crucially important safety net that allows us to maintain political independence from our funders and to explore and develop new directions in our work. The more support in money and work we receive from you, the more time and effort the WRI office can devote directly to doing our work, including sometimes unpopular, untrendy, work, reflecting the priorities we all, as an International, set for ourselves.

Outlook to the Coming Year

What's in the future for WRI? The affiliates and the office will continue their work around the world with building peace and resisting militarism in its various forms. To name a few things, the Nonviolence committee is working on a new book about constructive programmes, the Right to Refuse to Kill programme will work on conscientious objection in Thailand with a new contact there, and the Countering the Militarisation of Youth programme will coordinate a third week of action against the militarisation of youth this November. Also, the office will have a new peacemaker, Sarah Robinson, who will work in a project on police militarisation with WRI and Campaign Against the Arms Trade. WRI's affiliates will continue their important work of speaking out against war, supporting COs

and countering recruitment, disrupting arms fairs and military bases, building nonviolent capacity, creating alternatives that are needed for building a safe and peaceful future.

In our eCouncil in October we will be discussing next steps for WRI and among those the next International Assembly, which will take place in 2017 or 2018, possibly in Latin America. There also we will have elections for individually elected Council members. Have a think about whether you'd like to get involved in WRI's future work against war!