



Australian Section

PO Box 934
DICKSON ACT 2602
13 January 2020

The Hon. Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

An urgent appeal for Australia to work for peace in the Middle East

We, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), write to ask the Australian Government to do all it can to reconsider our current military involvement in IRAQ and ongoing relations with IRAN. Especially we ask that our government commit to withdrawing Australian military forces from IRAQ and the Persian Gulf, and to refrain from committing Australian forces to attack the Iranian people or its territory.

We have been advised that the recent attacks on Iranian officials, and in particular the assassination of Iranian General Soleimani and other Iraqi officials, was illegal and hence may have been equivalent to an act of war by the United States and a violation of international law. We are concerned that this action may lead to further violence. The 2003 invasion of IRAQ, in which Australia participated, has led to further destruction and unrest in this region. Let us not further exacerbate the already fragile region with further military action.

We acknowledge that the situation is fraught, given the Australian military's involvement in policing shipping movements in the disputed Straits of Hormuz. We ask the Australian Government to do all in its power to develop and independent foreign policy with the aim of bringing peace to the Middle East. A reversal of its decision to send HMAS Toowoomba to the Strait of Hormuz, adjacent to IRAN, would send a clear message of its commitment to peace.

We urge our government to avoid actions that might be interpreted as war like, and to direct Australia's energy and effort into peace building in the region.

Yours sincerely,

Christine Henderson
President
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF Australia)

Copied to Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence