

## Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Consultative Status with United Nations ECOSOC, UNCTAD and UNESCO  
Consultative Relations with FAO, ILO, and UNICEF



### Australian Section

Mr Adam Bandt MP  
Leader of the Australian Greens  
[Adam.Bandt.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Adam.Bandt.MP@aph.gov.au)

Dear Adam,

I write on behalf of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Australia) to request your advice about priority foreign and defence policy issues.

Our organisation has been advocating for peace for over a century, yet we continually see decision makers choose militarisation rather than dialogue to resolve conflict.

Therefore, we would welcome the opportunity to receive your response to our short questionnaire about how Australia could increase its role in strategic diplomacy and peace building.

We would appreciate this being returned to us **by 20 April 2022** so we can advise our members about the policies you will pursue in government.

Should you need any further information please contact me on 0418 181 843 or at [president@wilpf.org.au](mailto:president@wilpf.org.au).

Thank you.

Yours sincerely



Margaret Reynolds  
President

10 April 2022

Att: Survey Questions



## **SURVEY QUESTIONS – APRIL 2022**

1. We know Australia can be an active force for peace, security and justice. What policy commitments will you make to increase the capacity of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, so that Australia can vigorously pursue its national interests and “just peace” through diplomacy and other effective tools that make redundant the blunt instrument of war?

As [set out in our policy platform](#), the Greens will put human rights at the centre of foreign policy.

The Australian Greens will adopt a human-rights centred approach to foreign policy. That starts with using diplomatic relationships to advocate for human rights around the world, and strengthening multilateral relationships based on a commitment to human rights. The Australian Greens will support the passage of Magnitsky-style legislation to target those who commit serious human rights abuses, and protect human rights around the world.

In a speech at the end of last year, Senator Rice outlined the importance of [Australia supporting the UN's Responsibility to Protect mandate](#):

As well as talking about human rights in West Papua, I want to touch on some different approaches that we can take to ensure human rights are protected and central to our foreign policy approaches. After the 1994 Rwandan genocide and the 1995 Srebrenica massacre, the world became powerfully aware of the urgent need for timely, decisive and coordinated international responses to mass atrocities. An agreement was reached through the United Nations for the Responsibility to Protect, or R2P, a norm encouraging states to take action to ensure that the horrors of Rwanda and Srebrenica would never occur again. At the 2005 World Summit, all UN member states made a commitment to R2P, recognising our shared responsibility to protect populations which are being violently and systematically targeted, and to halt mass atrocities regardless of where they're happening in the world.

As R2P provides a mandate for coercive as well as diplomatic measures, it's important that it be used appropriately and that we do not forget nor overreach its sole purpose of civilian protection. While we should be wary of when we use R2P to justify coercive measures, we should embrace its ideas of atrocity prevention, of mutual assistance and of international solidarity against grievous human rights violations. R2P gives us an avenue to act to halt atrocities and to protect human life.

Australia should be actively supporting R2P, both through advocacy and policy routes, by developing an atrocity prevention unit to improve our ability to prevent and respond to regional atrocities and by clarifying our national atrocity response strategy. Australia can become a global leader in R2P, advocating for human rights and protecting populations across the globe.

2. The power to declare war currently rests solely with the Prime Minister. How will you work to introduce legislation that requires votes in both the House of Representatives and the Senate to authorise any future Australian Government commitment to war or conflict?

In 2021, Senator Steele-John introduced a war Powers reform Bill before the Senate. In November 2021, the Senate's FADT Legislation Committee released the report on Senator Steele-John's Bill for reform of the war powers, and stated that the bill would not proceed.

If passed, this law would mean that to deploy the ADF overseas there would need to be a vote of both houses of Parliament. The War Powers Reform Act will ensure that a peace-focused approach is brought to our defense force, and that members of parliament will be held to account for the consequences of sending Australians to war.

The Greens are committed to re-introducing a War Powers Reform Act to the Senate. Additionally, former senator Scott Ludlum introduced and debated versions of this war powers Bill for many years prior to his departure from the Senate.

### 3. What plans do you have to foster an Australian foreign policy that is committed to conflict resolution and peacebuilding?

The Australian Greens believe that nonviolent conflict resolution is the most effective way of promoting peace and that global cooperation facilitated by peaceful nonviolent conflict resolution is essential to ensuring human and environmental wellbeing. We also maintain that civil society organisations, including ethnic and women's groups, should be fully involved in conflict prevention, peace-making and post-conflict reconstruction, including at the highest level.

The Greens have a plan for:

- Full implementation of Australia's obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and other UN resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, and the Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.
- A high-level international peace conference, under UN auspices, to reach consensus on a comprehensive global disarmament strategy.
- Reinvigorating peace and conflict studies in Australian schools, universities and national institutions.
- Active promotion of peace and non-violence through education.
- Promoting the role of women, LGBTQIA+ people, First Nations peoples, and multicultural communities in decision making in all stages of peace processes, agreements and transitional governance structures.
- To ensure that regional defence agreements support an independent and peaceful role for Australia in the region and are consistent with our international and human rights obligations

### 4. What economic policies do you recommend be implemented to support growth and employment in sectors such as health, education and renewable energy rather than in armaments manufacturing?

The Australian Greens will reduce military spending from 2.2% to 1.5% of nominal GDP by 2025-26 and redirect this money where it is needed most. We would invest \$5 million to develop a climate security white paper to guide a coordinated and large-scale response to climate change risks. We are also committed to re-directing expenditure to promote peace in our defences, including through a Parliamentary Defence Office to provide independent advice to Members of Parliament.

For more information on our extensive reform policies including the specific areas you mentioned, please check out our website:

- <https://greens.org.au/platform/world>
- <https://greens.org.au/platform/health>

- <https://greens.org.au/platform/climate>
- <https://greens.org.au/platform/economy>
- <https://greens.org.au/platform/education>

5. Climate change impacts are a major driver of global conflict. What will you do to move Australia from the worst to the best in addressing the climate emergency, particularly in emissions reductions? What will you do to build a non-partisan, collaborative approach?

The Australian Greens have a plan to phase out coal, oil and gas whilst creating jobs.

The Greens plan includes:

- Immediately ban the construction of new coal, oil and gas infrastructure, ensuring we can transition our economy to zero carbon energy while maintaining a safe climate
- Help out mining workers and communities by creating long term, sustainable industries to assist in the move beyond fossil fuels and to ensure people do not lose work
- Phase out the mining, burning and export of thermal coal by 2030 to ensure we do our bit, so the world does not go over the 1.5 degree climate cliff

Our fully-costed climate action plan will create hundreds of thousands of jobs, bring electricity costs down, and drive our economy into the future to ensure that no one is left behind.

6. Please outline your policies to build a comprehensive, fully resourced Australian civilian capacity capable of responding to domestic emergencies (such as natural disasters, pandemics) so that the ADF is not routinely called upon?

The Greens plan includes:

- Legislating to make fossil fuel companies pay to clean up their mess, and reinvesting those funds in our infrastructure - from floodproofing stormwater drains, to improving the capacity of our transport systems to handle heat waves.
- Keep people safe as we battle global heating and work to return the world to a safe climate, by increasing vital funding for emergency services like firefighters
- Better funding the BoM, and CSIRO to predict the impacts and help us plan

Following the impact of COVID-19, the Greens are also committed to ensuring pandemic preparedness.

The Greens plan includes:

- Establish a National Centre for Disease Control with \$246 million of funding to lead a unified, apolitical health approach across the entire country and ensure we can deal with the threat of new emerging diseases
- Invest \$250 million over the next two years into Covid-19 vaccine research
- Ensure we can produce enough of our own vaccines onshore for everyone by building operating a publicly-owned mRNA vaccine production facility
- Use a boosted foreign aid budget to invest in COVAX to support global equitable vaccine access

7. What are your plans for prioritising Australian commitment to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women peace and security, to ensure equal participation of women at all levels of decision making in peace processes?

The Australian Greens are committed to the full implementation of Australia's obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and other UN resolutions on Women, Peace and Security, and the Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. We are also committed to promoting the role of women, LGBTQIA+ people, First Nations peoples, and multicultural communities in decision making in all stages of peace processes, agreements and transitional governance structures.

8. Is there anything you would like to add?