



## Women, Peace and Transnational Activism: A Century On

31 March 2015

Mile End Institute Queen Mary University, Mile End E14NS

The centenary of the Women's Peace Congress, which took place at The Hague in April 1915, offers a unique opportunity to reflect on the past, present and future of women's transnational organising and to ask how far feminist perspectives have been mainstreamed into international debates about security, development and human rights over the past century.

The women from belligerent countries who gathered at The Hague whilst war waged across Europe developed a vision of gender-based solidarities which transcended national borders and in which peace and women's rights were intimately intertwined.

The congress led to the creation of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), which soon became one of the most distinctive voices within internationalist politics in the interwar period and a powerful strand within twentieth-century trajectories of feminist internationalism.

This event, a joint initiative between QMUL's Mile End Institute and History & Policy, will take the 1915 Congress and the founding of the WILPF as a point of departure to explore critical questions about the relationship between gender, activism and international politics, drawing on a range of historical and contemporary perspectives.

Event Organiser: Dr Helen McCarthy, Deputy Director Mile End Institute

Guests are welcome to join just one or all three sessions:

### Part One

Please arrive to register at 3pm

(3.30pm – 4.45pm): Activism in Historical Perspective

This session will focus on 1915 as a milestone in histories of feminist internationalism and a starting point for a broader discussion about the ways in which women have organised – in the past and the present-day – across national borders.

Chair and commentator: Lucy Delap (History and Policy)

Speakers:

Ingrid Sharp (Leeds): The Women's Peace Congress at The Hague and women's human rights

Laura Beers (Birmingham): The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and the origins of feminist internationalism

Celia Donert, (Liverpool) Feminism, transnational activism and the Cold War

Helen McCarthy (QMUL) The United Nations and Women's Rights in historical perspective

(4.45pm – 6pm): Activism and Institutional Change

Having considered the dynamics of women's organising, this panel now shifts the focus on to activism and institutional impact in the present day.

Chair: Kim Hutchings (QMUL)

Speakers:

Eleanor O'Gorman (Cambridge): What Difference has Security Council Resolution 1325 made?

Christine Chinkin (LSE/Matrix Chambers): International activism and sexual violence against women: The Istanbul Convention

Clare Duncanson (Edinburgh): Gender, peace-building and economic empowerment

6.30pm – 8pm

Are Women's Rights Human Rights?

This roundtable will ask three leading voices in contemporary global gender politics to reflect on how far women's rights have become fully recognised as human rights, and what role women's organising, including feminist action, have played in achieving this change.

Anita Anand, BBC journalist and chair of Any Answers (chair)

Dame Barbara Stocking, Principal of Murray Edwards College, Cambridge and former head of Oxfam

Frances Guy, Christian Aid, former UN Women Representative for Iraq and former British Ambassador to Yemen

Baroness Berridge, Chair of All-Party Group for International Freedom of Religion or Belief

All attendees are invited to join the speakers for a reception after the event.

To register for this free event please go to <http://mei.qmul.ac.uk/> and click on Events.

For further information please contact Catherine Miller [c.miller@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:c.miller@qmul.ac.uk) @MileEndInst