



קואליציית נשים לשלום **تحالف النساء للسلام**

## Coalition of Women for Peace

### Annual Report 2007



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2007, the year after the Second Lebanon War, was not an easy one for the peace movement in Israel. The normalization of the 40-years' occupation regime in the West Bank and the continuous lethal siege on Gaza, the exhaustion of peace activists and the difficulty to mobilize new ones, the rising militarism and the general distress in Israeli society, all presented a serious challenge.

In the Coalition of Women for Peace [CWP], we insisted on projecting a feminist voice against the occupation, focusing on both its disastrous effects on the Palestinian civil population, and the high moral, social and economic price paid by the Israeli society for keeping three million people under military control. It has been a year of non-stop activism for a just peace. We report here on some highlights.

## ➡ Advocacy Campaigns

### "Time for Peace: 40 Years of Occupation are Enough!"

Worldwide protest marked 40 years of military occupation of the Palestinian territories in June 2007. Peace organizations in Israel joined forces in the ad-hock "40 coalition" to conduct a series of public events and protest actions, aiming to mobilize the 'centrist' Israeli public for the call: End the Occupation, Time for Peace!

The Coalition of Women for Peace provided the organizational infrastructure to establish a shared platform for direct actions, media work and press conferences, street visibility, information distribution, etc, and led the preparations for the mass-rally<sup>1</sup> on the 9<sup>th</sup> of June - the International Day against the Occupation [photo, left: Khulood Badawi and Yana Knopova, CWP, chanting from the stage at the rally].



The mass-protest brought together several thousands of people with different ideologies and affiliations, chanting in unison:

"After 40 Years of Occupation - Gaza and Sderot are Still Burning!"  
"In Palestine and Israel - Children Want to Live!"  
"NO to Occupation - YES to a Just Peace!"

Israel's leading news web-portal reported that night: "Basam Aramin, a bereaved father and co-founder of the Combatants for Peace movement, said that violence will not solve the conflict and only negotiations will put an end to this horrible situation. Nurit Peled-Elhanan, whose daughter was killed ten years ago in Jerusalem, said that Basam and she are 'both victims of the brutal occupation, which corrupts this land for 40 years. We came to cry for the destiny of this place, which buried our children. We are united, not only by the death inflicted on us by the occupation, but in the strong desire to raise our living children in the way of peace and fraternity, not in the way of violence and wars'."

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<sup>1</sup> Participating organizations in the mass-rally: Peace Now, Gush Shalom, Coalition of Women for Peace, Yesh Gvul, Combatants for Peace, Anarchists Against the Wall, New Profile, Tandi, Machsom Watch, Women in Black, The Fifth Mother, The High School Seniors' Letter, Banki, The Israeli Committee Against House Demolitions, The Alternative Information Center, Indymedia, The Social TV, The Left Forum of Haifa University, The Student Coalition of Tel Aviv University and others. Parties also joined us in this demonstration: Meretz, Hadash, Balad. The event was organized in cooperation with the High Follow-Up Committee of the Arab Population in Israel.

## "Security for Women"

During the recent scandals on sexual violence by government officials, the public discourse was dominated by prejudice, myths and misconceptions about sexual violence. This presented an excellent opportunity to speak on women's security. CWP built a coalition with 14 women's organizations<sup>2</sup> to launch a joint campaign: Security for Women from Sexual Violence of Senior Officials in the Government.

From direct actions to Internet ads and intensive media work (with over 160 media items), we employed multiple strategies in this campaign. These actions have radically changed the public image of sexual violence victims - from anonymous shadows to active women demanding justice. Indeed, although women's voices are often marginalized, if heard at all, the coalition of 14 organizations with constituency of tens of thousands of women could not be ignored, and the campaign became part of nearly every public discussion. The final chord of the campaign - mass-demonstration against the plea bargain with the former president Moshe Katzav, led by the Rape Crisis Centers - brought 20,000 women and men to the Rabin square in Tel Aviv!

**"A Smith Research poll sponsored by a coalition of women's organizations found that 74 percent of Israelis do not believe that a convicted sexual offender should be allowed to serve in a senior public office."**

*Jerusalem Post, April 25, 2007*

*'Security for Women' Campaign – Channel 2*

*The newscaster: "Very soon Ehud Olmert will have to decide on Ramon's return to the government. This is not an easy decision, because the protest will be strong, and it has already started at the entrance to the Knesset... These women vowed to do everything they can to prevent this... ...The day after tomorrow Ehud Olmert will have to decide: to listen to the verdict, the public and the women, or to go against the stream and let his friend Haim return to the government. One thing is clear: Ramon wants to go back and is willing to vow loyalty to Israel and its laws. This time for real."*



Available on <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TzFWtATVfjk>

The success of this campaign laid the foundations for further cooperation between women's organizations. Today, 17 organizations are petitioning the High Court of Justice to re-consider MK Haim Ramon's presence in the Knesset following his conviction.

## ➡ Occupation Industry Research

### "Who Profits from the Occupation?"

This new corporate research project, launched in 2007, aims to create and publish a database of companies and corporations profiting directly from the occupation. These corporations are increasingly involved in real estate deals on occupied territory, the development of settlements, the construction of fences and walls that are arbitrarily dissecting Palestinian land, the paving of a separate road system that only Jewish settlers and the army are allowed to use, and the sale of equipment used for human rights violations and the repression of the civilian population. Some of these are public firms,

<sup>2</sup> Achoti – for women in Israel; The Association of Rape Crisis Centers in Israel; Itach – Women Lawyers for Social Justice; Isha L'Isha; Kayan; Tel Aviv Rape Crisis Center; Women Against Violence - Nazareth; Kol Ha-Isha (The Woman's Voice); Israel Women's Network; The Association for Feminist Studies and Gender Research;

Israeli or international, which can be held publicly accountable for their direct involvement. At times, such firms have tried to obscure or downplay their involvement in disputed projects.

We hope this information will raise public awareness and stimulate a candid public debate about the costs and benefits of the occupation to different parts of Israeli society, and how these interests influence political decision making. In this project we cooperate with various groups and organizations concerned with corporate accountability, trade justice and labor rights globally.



## ➡ Outreach to the Israeli Public

### Reframing Security

Security is often used by Israelis to justify the continued occupation. In the "Reframing Security" project we affirm the value of security, but expand it to include the broad range of "human security" - economic and environmental security, safety from gender-related violence, protection from oppressive and discriminatory policies. By challenging the narrow militaristic understanding of "security" in Israel, the program conveys the message that achievement of a negotiated peace within the Middle East region - Palestine, most urgently - would certainly do more to ensure our security than the current situation of conflict and occupation.

Educational curriculum for 'centrist' Israelis: CWP developed a large pool of contents on 'human security' conducted by women-experts. This is a rich and detailed curriculum of workshops, lectures and tours, all dealing with the different aspects of human security - social, economic, environmental, political, etc. We work with coordinators of youth groups, high schools, education colleges, NGOs and others who have the ability to influence their constituencies and expand the discourse on human security.



"Security for Whom?" post-war conference: The annual Herzeliya Conference on Israel's National Security offers a very limited understanding of security and reflects the narrow interests of the speakers, all members of the political, military and economic elites. In response, "Isha L'Isha" - Haifa Feminist Center and the Coalition of Women for Peace held for the second time the Annual Alternative Conference, entitled "Security for whom?"

[Photo 1: Dr. Nabila Espanioly, opening remarks; Photo 2: audience]



Located in Haifa, that had greatly suffer from the recent Second Lebanon War, the alternative conference addressed the destructive effects of Israel's militarist "security" policies, especially during the war, and presented a wide agenda on security and safety for all residents of the region.

Jewish and Palestinian speakers reflected the diversity of Israel's citizens and discussed security in its actual influences on our lives. This year the conference was also followed by a book entitled "Security for Whom? Feminist Perspectives on Security", published in three languages - Hebrew, Arabic and English.

## Reality Tours

Since the launch of Reality Tours in 2004, CWP brought thousands of Israelis to witness the Separation Wall and the military checkpoints inside the West Bank, and come to understand their consequences for the lives of Palestinians.

With their integration in the Reframing Security program this year, the tours went through two major developments: an increased focus on target groups (mainly youth and educators) and new tour routes illustrating the absence of security for the citizens of Israel - districts of women-trafficking in Tel Aviv, poverty and neglect in the Arab city of Nazareth, challenges of a mixed city in Haifa, and more.



## Russian-speaking immigrants

The immigrant public from the former USSR, which comprises 20% of the entire population in Israel, is traditionally considered to be dominated by conservative views on many issues, from gender roles to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Over the past four years, the Russian-speaking group in CWP has grown to become an empowered group of activists. The activist group also ran a capacity-building weekend seminar in order to reflect on previous activities, evaluate them and engage in long-term planning of future activities. We estimate that 250 Russian-speakers directly participated in our activities this year, but tens of thousands more were exposed to our views through the Russian-language mass media and our Russian-language website: [www.perspektiva.co.il](http://www.perspektiva.co.il).

Israeli media in Russian: We organized a gender-mainstreaming seminar for senior journalists and editors, focusing on Palestinian women under occupation. We see the Israeli media in Russian as a significant factor in the formation of right-wing positions amongst many of the Russian-language immigrants, as well as a potential key actor in changing them.



Activist youth camp: The Activist Camp exposed 40 Russian-speaking teenagers (aged 15-19) to critical views on burning social matters, most of which are rarely discussed in Israeli society - racism and stereotypes, socio-economic gaps in schools, gender roles and more [photo, left: the group on an alternative tour with a Bedouin feminist activist].

Study day: Domestic violence - the 'Russian' version: CWP and the Haifa Support Centre for Victims of Domestic Violence initiated this event, attended by dozens of professionals, immigrants' organizations directors and Haifa Municipality officials, crisis centre volunteers and journalists. It was a pioneering event in breaking silence around domestic violence in the Russian-Israeli public. It has also motivated a group of activists to establish an emergency hotline in Russian.

Women's community theatre group: This year, the group produced a new play - a creative feminist anti-war interpretation of Lysistrata, integrating the participants' experiences from the Second Lebanon War.

## Public Education

Public workshops on women & peace: CWP is often invited to lecture and facilitate workshops on various aspects of the occupation of Palestine and women's role as leaders in the peace movement. This year we held dozens of talks, workshops and lectures in different forums, sharing the knowledge and experience accumulated in the women's peace movement.

12-meetings course with the Social Economic Academy: Together with the Social Economic Academy, CWP designed a public-education course entitled "Security, Economy, Society". The course analyzed the factors which constitute personal and public security and examined the consequences of the power claimed by the concept of "national security". It was held in Tel Aviv and attracted women and men of all ages and backgrounds.

Land Day events in Nazareth and Sakhnin: This series of public activities for Jewish and Arab women, co-organized with Bat Tzafon, explored aspects of institutional oppression through prevention of accessibility and violation of space. The activities included workshops developing feminist perspectives on space policies, a youth theatre play based on testimonies of Palestinian and Jewish women from 1948, screening of the film "Arous Al'Jalil" ("the Bride of Galilee") followed by a discussion, and a panel with women activists from Kayan - feminist organization and Ma'an - forum of Arab women's organizations in the Negev. We've also joined the annual Land Day demonstration in Sakhnin.

## Media Activism

Trying to penetrate the media under any circumstances is not easy - for messages framed by feminist peace organizations it is all the more difficult. In 2007, our Media Project continued to employ a number of strategies in order to change this reality. Media work was crucial for the success of our advocacy campaigns, as well as our day-to-day work.

Working with Journalists: We work to recruit the support of journalists and others who influence public opinion for our messages. By creating long-term relationships with reporters we ensure fair coverage and occasionally even see our messages duplicated by the reporters themselves [quote, right.]

**"Education budgets in Israel are among the lowest in developed countries. At least we have a lot of tanks and arms, and soon we will all be uneducated and ignorant enough to actually feel secure with it"**

*(Merav Michaeli, journalist, HOT News, September 18, while interviewing our speaker)*

Interviews and opinion pieces: CWP placed dozens of opinion pieces in the Israeli media and our activists were interviewed about their views and political activities in many different contexts. Some examples:

Abir Kobty wrote about the appointment of the first Arab Minister in the Knesset and the illusion of equality, Ynet ❖ Dr. Hannah Safran about the exclusion of women from political militarist discussions on national security, NRG ❖ Khulood Badawi about opening negotiations channels with Arab neighboring countries, Ynet ❖ Inna Michaeli participated in a round table discussion on "Political Affair" on Channel 9 to explain why sexual violence is a social problem rather than "a women's issue" ❖ Neta Rotem was interviewed on Al Jazeera English-language TV channel, to discuss the state of the Israeli society one year after the Second Lebanon War.

The range of issues addressed by CWP activists reflects the broad feminist vision for a just society, connecting poverty and anti-social economic policies to the price of occupation,

linking the rising racism and sexism with militaristic education, and suggesting an alternative agenda for a decent life.

Media course for activists: In six meetings the participants, all feminist peace activists, acquired key tools for media work, in theory and in practice: from critical media analysis to formulating messages, simulating TV interviews, writing op-eds, and more.

International Women's Day: Together with Isha L'Isha - Haifa Feminist Center we composed a list of women experts who can be interviewed on a variety of subjects and distributed it to TV and radio stations. We discussed with editors of opinion sections in different media channels the insufficient number of published articles written by women. Ma'ariv took on the initiative and published only articles by women that day, including an article by Dr. Hanna Safran, CWP activist, entitled "March 8<sup>th</sup> - Not a Day for Celebrations", calling: "Give us a day without rape, give us a day without violence, and we will celebrate all year long!"

## ➡ Creative Protest

The Raging Grannies: The Coalition's group of women over age 65 who write and perform political satire in song has had a boost in its popularity rating by appearing on a prime-time TV program. The high-light of the year was the performance in Jerusalem at the big rally marking 20 years of the existence of Women in Black [photo, right].



From Tel Aviv to Ja'ayus: Joining Palestinian families in the West Bank during the olive harvest season (October/November) has become a tradition for Israelis in the peace movement. However, every year we see the same people partaking in this activity. This year we decided to recruit new participants in a creative way: we organized an olive picking happening in a central boulevard in Tel Aviv. Speakers from the annual Olive Harvest Coalition talked about the situation in the West Bank and invited people passing by to join the next harvest on Saturday.

"Women and Revolution" cultural-political evening: This special event brought some inspiring historical examples of great women changing political reality: Rosa Luxemburg, Huda Sharawi, Emma Goldman and Alexandra Kollontai. Not one seat remained empty at the Arab-Hebrew theatre in Jaffa, as young women and veteran activists came together to recall that political change requires from us to be able to imagine a different life: free of violence, discrimination and oppression [photo, right].



## ➡ Capacity Building and Support for Member Organizations

Capacity building: CWP is an active member of the Coalition Against the Wall, the Coalition Against Unemployment and the Coalition for Unrecognized Villages in the Negev.

This year we also joined the struggle for refugees seeking political asylum in Israel, many of whom are detained in Israeli prisons.

Financial support: In 2007, CWP raised \$139,190 for projects of its member organizations: ♦ \$43,970 for TANDI's empowerment center for young Arab women; ♦ \$22,200 for Bat Shalom's political education for young Jewish and Palestinian women; ♦ \$13,350 for Noga Feminist Journal; ♦ \$37,670 for Ahoti: Empowerment of Mizrahi Women (not a member organization in the Coalition); and \$12,000 for reporting and auditing of the aforementioned 4 grants (all funded by a grant from the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation). CWP also gave funding to a newly formed group Bat Tzafon in the north, to New Profile for "Gender and Militarism" international seminar in Neve Shalom, and to the Fifth Mother for their new website (all together \$10,000). We also supported the protest tent of women without housing in Jerusalem for basic expenses (\$1,000).

Website: CWP runs a 3-language website (Hebrew, English and Arabic): <http://www.coalitionofwomen.org>. In December 2007 we began a reconstruction process in order to transform this website into a major source of information on the women's peace movement in Israel.



The Coalition of Women for Peace congratulates Lily Traubmann and Nayla Ayesh who were awarded the prize "La Donna dell'Anno 2007" ("the Woman of the Year") given by the Regional Council of Aosta Valley - Italy, for their relentless work for a just peace.

We pay our deep respect and appreciation to Women in Black of Jerusalem who marked 20 years of weekly vigils against the occupation, for a just peace.



We extend our solidarity to Women in Black around the world in their struggles.  
We are all Women in Black.

## CWP Supporters in 2007

We wish to thank all the activists whose great passion for peace, countless hours, endless energies, political thought, incredible courage and imagination make all this happen. Women whose determination to end the occupation and to ensure life worth living opens a window of hope.

The Coalition of Women for Peace expresses its gratitude to:

### Individual Donors

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## Become Involved!

Financial support enables us to work more effectively, respond to immediate events through direct action, and engage in long-term programs for peace education.

### How to Make a Contribution:

- ❖ Write a check (€, \$ or £) to "Coalition of Women for Peace" and mail it to:  
P.O. Box 29214, Tel Aviv-Jaffa, Israel 61292.
- ❖ For a US-tax deduction (minimum \$100), make out a check to "New Israel Fund". Write in the memo line that it is for the Coalition of Women for Peace, and mail it to NIF, 1101 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Washington, DC 20005-5639.
- ❖ For a UK-tax deduction (minimum 70 GBP) make out a check to "New Israel Fund", write on the memo line that it is for the Coalition of Women for Peace, and mail it to New Israel Fund, 25-26 Enford Street, London W1H 1DW.
- ❖ For a Netherlands-tax deduction, deposit into the bank account of Stichting Ontwikkeling Mondiaal Leiderschap, Javakade 162, 1019 RW Amsterdam, account 697683222, writing on the memo line: "Education program of the Coalition of Women for Peace".
- ❖ For a Swiss tax benefit, make out a check to "Neuer Israel Fonds Schweiz", write on the memo line that it is for the Coalition of Women for Peace, and mail it to NIF-Schweiz, Postfach 425, CH-4010 Basel. Or deposit to Postscheckkonto 40-37333-1.
- ❖ Or from anywhere, you can make a wire transfer directly into our bank account: Israel Discount Bank, Hamoshava Branch #062, 21 Emek Refaim St., Jerusalem, Israel. Beneficiary: Coalition of Women for Peace. Account Number: 967017-512400. Swift Code: IDBLILIT 062. From Europe: IBAN No. IL 011062 967017 512400.

## CWP Member Organizations

Machsom-Watch - was founded in 2001 in response to repeated reports of brutality against Palestinians at military checkpoints. The group documents human rights violations, works to end the policies that limit the freedom of movement of Palestinians in the territories, and seeks to bring the occupation to an end. [www.machsomwatch.org](http://www.machsomwatch.org)

Women in Black - organize weekly vigils in which women dressed in black stand at busy intersections holding signs with the slogan "End the Occupation". The group was founded just after the outbreak of the first Intifada. Today hundreds of Women in Black vigils exist around the world. The vigils take place every Friday, 1-2 p.m., in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa, and other central locations in Israel. [www.womeninblack.net](http://www.womeninblack.net)

Bat Shalom - is the Israeli partner of "The Jerusalem Link", an Israeli-Palestinian partnership of women for peace. Since 1989, Bat Shalom women have worked for a genuine peace, grounded in a just resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Bat Shalom holds dialogue groups, public education events, and political actions. [www.batshalom.org](http://www.batshalom.org)

Bat Tzafon - Bat Tzafon works to promote just peace and an equal voice for Jewish and Arab women within Israeli society. Bat Tzafon holds two annual events: "Sukkat Shalom" and a "Land day" political seminar.

TANDI - Movement of Democratic Women in Israel - was founded in 1948 and has been working ever since for a just peace and equality for Palestinian citizens of Israel. Through conferences and courses, TANDI raises awareness about equality for women in the family, the work place, and other spheres. TANDI celebrates two annual events: International Women's Day and International Children's day. [www.mdwii.com](http://www.mdwii.com)

New Profile - has worked since 1998 to change Israel's profile from a militarized, war-driven society to a peacemaking community that respects the rights of all its citizens. Through lectures, youth groups, exhibitions, and other events, New Profile works to demilitarize Israeli education and society, and support the right of men and women to conscientious objection and to refuse to serve in the military. [www.newprofile.org](http://www.newprofile.org)

The Fifth Mother - is the re-grouped "Four Mothers" Movement, which was instrumental in ending the Israeli occupation of Lebanon. With the slogan "War Is Not My Language," The Fifth Mother brings the unique voice of women, with insights from language and conflict resolution, to provide an alternative to the militant language now defining the political conflict. [www.the-5th-mom.org](http://www.the-5th-mom.org)

WILPF - Women's International League for Peace and Freedom is a well respected international organization with sections in 37 countries, including Israel. WILPF works toward world peace, total disarmament, the abolition of violence in the settlement of conflict, and replacing war with negotiation and conciliation. It also seeks to democratize the UN system and to support environmentally sustainable development. [www.wilpf.int.ch](http://www.wilpf.int.ch)

Noga Feminist Journal - began publishing in 1980 to provide news and analysis from a feminist perspective about issues in Israel and abroad. Noga has provided an important outlet for the voices of women, and over the years has become an influential journal. [www.noga-magazine.org](http://www.noga-magazine.org)

NELED - Women for Coexistence was founded to bridge the gaps between Jewish and Palestinian women citizens of Israel. The group meets monthly and conducts solidarity meetings with Palestinian women in the Occupied Territories.