

## **WILPF AGM 2025 – Human Rights Network Report March 2025**

The Auckland Human Rights Network (AK HRN) is a virtual network with a mailing list of about 160 professional and NGO human rights activists and supporters and provides a mechanism for sharing and distributing a wide variety of human rights-related information, local, national and international, that might not otherwise be accessible.

The impetus for the Auckland Human Rights Network formation was the World Conference on Women: “Action for Equality, Development and Peace”, convened in Beijing by the UN in 1995. Kiwi delegates returned home enthused and monthly meetings of representatives of various like-minded human rights groups began at the Human Rights Commission in Auckland. Joan Macdonald and Beverley Turner would take minutes and send out a monthly newsletter. Gradually they also forwarded, under the HRN banner, other relevant information and reports. When Joan’s health declined in about 2016, Nola began to work with Beverley, forwarding relevant news items, and attending bi-monthly meetings at the Trades Hall. Dwindling attendance led to a decision to go completely online in about 2016. In 2024 Beverley asked to step down and Nola would now like to do less forwarding.

The dedicated AK HRN email address [hrnetworkauckland@gmail.com](mailto:hrnetworkauckland@gmail.com) set up by Megan in 2022 works very well and so it is now much easier for others to assist with forwarding, which over the past year has been carried out by Nola and Megan.

The Human Rights Network welcomes and forwards items of news and information, local, national and international, that are neither provided by our mainstream media, nor easily accessible through other reference sources. We gladly forward notices of relevant actions, zoom meetings and podcasts, but would remind people to send these directly to the HRN email address [hrnetworkauckland@gmail.com](mailto:hrnetworkauckland@gmail.com). Unfortunately notices of these at times reach AK HRN too close to, or even after the event date. Yet the actions or often-impressive line-ups of speakers are deserving of a much wider audience and level of participation.

Below is an indication of the range of material shared through HRN.

Local: Auckland region: Amnesty International, Auckland Women’s Centre, Baha’i Community, Converge/iCAN, Cuba Friends Auckland, NZ Human Rights Commission, NZ Peace Foundation, Oxfam, Pacific Women’s Watch-NZ, Pax Christi, Palestine Solidarity Network Aotearoa, Peace Movement Aotearoa, Quality Public Education, Tamaki Treaty Workers, WILPF-Tamaki Makaurau and World Beyond War. These are all agencies circulating HR-related topics for discussion/action, as well as disarmament, International Justice and human rights issues. HRN receives and forwards NZ Human Rights Foundation blogs as well as their news; also, invitations to law lectures on human rights-related topics which are offered at the University of Auckland.

National: Indigenous rights issues and Gun Control issues have featured in recent years. Information from UNANZ, NZ Statistics, NZFVCC/events and training, NZ Ministry for Women’s NGO caucus meetings, plus invitations to events/reports from NGOs/events/activists, e.g., CPAG – Child Poverty Action Group, Shakti, Ak Women’s Centre, UN Women NZ, Pacific Women’s Watch-NZ and news from NZ Council for International Development /CID, are all circulated from time to time. Also occasional, ‘one-off’ publications with a strong human rights focus and some campaigning material from Oxfam and Greenpeace, containing petitions, etc., are also forwarded, as are recent warnings of

environmental threats in Golden Bay, such as Te Waikoropupu Springs and the potential Siren Gold's mining plans and their impact on the Cobb Valley.

International: In the past reports from the United Nations/UN in New York and Geneva and their NGO agencies, e.g., UNCSW, UNCHR, and invitations/ news from UNCSW in New York and News/ commentaries on climate change and humanitarian crises were forwarded, always 'Bcc'. Likewise, items from 'civil society', e.g., Avaaz, Change.org, Brookings Institute, IPS daily/weekly reports and WUNRN, Global news from UN Women, UNCSW, UNHRC, UN CEDAW, WUNRN and other UN agencies have been in the past been forwarded by Beverley, but I (Nola) know I have been remiss in searching out some of these this year.

The upsurge of material emanating from the invasion of Ukraine, the Palestine/Israel situation, the implications of recent political changes and, domestically, the impact of the coalition government's proposals and legislation, has altered the character of our mail-outs, many more of which are now updates on the next round of demonstrations, etc. The shift in emphasis in what we send relates to trying to achieve a balance, ensuring people are informed about what they're unlikely to read elsewhere but not overwhelming them. Perhaps we should add a short 'Further links' list at the end of some communications?

Feedback would be much appreciated. We have asked for this previously, but recently the lack of response has been disappointing. Yes, the enormity of much of the material we are sent for forwarding is often mind-numbing, but feedback would be very helpful.

*Nola Smith, Megan Hutching*  
*March 2025*