

Feminist  
Anti-war  
Resistance

# WAR BEGINS AT HOME



2024

Originally we followed the advice of the Swedish publisher Ariel and released the text of this brochure in Swedish first. However, now we publish it in both Russian and English for free distribution and consumption. Please pay attention – if you decide to distribute the Russian version of this leaflet, make sure you follow our Safety Protocol.

It was written by our activists, so the authorship is collective, not named. The book contains direct speeches from anonymous FAR activists in Russia who continue their anti-war resistance, and a chapter on structure, regulations and the challenges of horizontality. Our manifesto, values, our speech at the Aachen Peace Prize, as well as the history and map of the movement are published in the booklet. It was very important to describe everything we have been doing for almost two years now: charity campaigns, refugee aid, psychological help and much more.

Since many of us communicate anonymously and in different working groups, it is sometimes very difficult to put everything together and look at FAR as a whole. We have tried to summarize and systematize what can be posted about us publicly. We do not exclude that the book will change over time - together with us. Values, strategic goals, methodology, mission - these are things worth reconciling and defining every year. Right now we are in the process of a new reconciliation.

*\*\*If you want to become part of FAR and influence decision-making, you can read here how to do it.*

## 1. WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE CAME TO BE

Feminist Anti-War Resistance was initiated by a group of Russian feminist activists on February 25, 2022, in response to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. FAR started with one emergency chat room, but has eventually turned into dozens of autonomous cells and groups in Russia and abroad. We include activists from ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples, LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, people with migration and refugee experience, people who have experienced various forms of violence and discrimination. We are building mutual support networks with other anti-war movements and activist groups to unite and politicize more people who are ready to build a foundation for Russia's future together. Russia that is free from dictatorship, repression, militarism, imperialism and violence. We strive to support Ukrainian women and Ukrainians in general, as well as their political demands, and actively participate in initiatives to help those affected by Russian aggression.

In December 2022, after the publication of an open anti-war letter by mothers and wives of mobilized people, our movement was recognized as a "foreign agent". Many FAR activists in Russia have been arrested, tortured and searched, and many were forced to flee Russia to avoid criminal prosecution. In May 2023, Feminist Anti-War Resistance was awarded the Aachen Peace Prize. After a public vote,

the prize money went to the Ukrainian women's initiative "Martynka" and the Russian initiative "Vyvozhuk", which evacuates political prisoners from Russia.

## 2. OUR VALUES, GOALS AND STRATEGIES

One can join our movement by agreeing and subscribing to the values, introduced in our major document – the Manifesto.

## **MANIFESTO OF FEMINIST ANTI-WAR RESISTANCE**

On 24 February, around 5:30 a.m. Moscow time, Russian President Vladimir Putin announced a special military operation» in Ukraine, stating its goals as “denazification” and “demilitarization”. This operation had been in preparation for a long time – Russian troops had been moving to the border with Ukraine for several months. At the same time, the leadership of our country denied any possibility of an attack. It is now evident this was a lie.

Russia has declared a new war on a neighboring country and left it with no right to self-determination and no hope for a peaceful life. This is not the first time Russia has declared war: we realize that the war has been going on for eight years on the initiative of the Russian Federation and that the war in Donbas is a consequence of the illegal annexation of Crimea. We believe that Russia and its president do not care and have never cared about the fate of the people in Luhansk and Donetsk, and that the recognition of the republics 8 years later was only necessary for the invasion of Ukraine under the guise of liberation purposes.

Feminism as a political force cannot support war, especially war of conquest. Feminism stands for the development of society, for helping those who are vulnerable, for increasing

opportunities and prospects, and advocates for the elimination of violence and peaceful coexistence.

War is violence, poverty, forced migration, broken lives, insecurity and lack of future prospects. It is antithetical to the essence of the feminist movement. War reinforces gender inequality and can set back all human rights achievements by many years. War brings not only physical violence, but also sexualized violence: history shows that during wars, any woman is several times more likely to be raped. For these and many other reasons, feminists in Russia and those who share the values of equality need to speak out strongly against this war launched by our country's leadership.

The current war, as Putin's speech demonstrates, is also being waged under the banner of the so-called "traditional values", which Russia has supposedly decided to propagate to the world, using violence against those who do not agree with them or hold different views. What these "traditional values" consist of is clear to anyone who can think critically: they are based, among other things, on the exploitation of women and the fight against those whose lifestyle, identities and activities go beyond the narrow patriarchal norm. Justifying the occupation of a neighboring state by the desire to bring its distorted norm and demagogic «liberation» to it is another reason why feminists throughout Russia should resist this war with all their might.

Feminists are one of the most active political forces in modern Russia. For a long time, the authorities did not perceive us as a political movement, so we have been temporarily less affected by repressions than others. More than 45 feminist groups are active throughout the country, from Kaliningrad to Vladivostok. We call on feminist groups and individual feminists to join the Feminist Anti-War Resistance and join forces against the war and the government that unleashed it.

There are many of us, and together we can do a lot: for the last 10 years, the feminist movement has been gaining enormous media and cultural power; it is time to turn it into political power. We are the opposition to war, patriarchy, authoritarianism and militarism. We are the future, and we will win.

We later published an addition to the Manifesto.

## **AN ADDITION TO THE MANIFESTO**

In addition to our main manifesto, we are publishing a collective refinement and program gathered from various activists and FAR branches through an open call.

We are feminist and equality-minded people who form networks of resistance and solidarity both within the Russian

Federation and around the world. We consistently oppose the war in Ukraine, any war of occupation and imperialism, and the rule of dictatorial regimes.

### *Whom we support*

- Ukrainian women experiencing war, Ukrainian refugees and migrated women affected by Russian actions; Ukrainian feminists and activists and their political demands;
- Russian feminists opposing the war, Russian women facing increasing levels of gender-based violence and the deterioration of their lives due to the war;
- Political prisoners and activists facing state and police violence and prosecution;
- Citizens facing the economic consequences of war and discrimination for views in the workplace, labor economic protests;
- Women from different nations of Russia, women's decolonial protests;
- Russian families who fight against conscription of their relatives and obligatory military service;
- LGBTQ+community who have faced increased pressure and violence during the war, and other vulnerable groups whose rights and opportunities are affected by the war and crisis (people with disabilities, elderly people, people undergoing medical treatment, single parents);
- Opposition politicians who oppose the war.



*What we stand for and what we fight against*

1. We advocate for the complete withdrawal of Russian troops from the territory of Ukraine and the return of all occupied territories to Ukraine (restoration of the 1991 borders);
2. We advocate for the values of conscious pacifism, within the framework of which we recognize that defense against military aggression cannot be non-violent;
3. We call for the demilitarization of the Russian Federation: all these years, despite the 2014 sanctions, European states have been supplying Russia with weapons, thus making a significant contribution to today's war. All global trade treaties related to Russian arms should be canceled or renegotiated. We are also fighting for internal demilitarization: the production of military equipment should be limited, and all security agencies (police, army, Federal Penitentiary Service, FSS, etc.) should undergo serious reorganization and reforms so as not to threaten not only the outside world, but also our own citizens, who face daily politically motivated violence from security agencies.
4. We insist that funding Russian militarism from the sale of coal, gas and oil should be stopped.

5. We fight against gender-based violence and discrimination in all its shapes and forms, be it domestic or sexualized violence. We fight for a law on domestic violence, we fight for the repeal of discriminatory laws on so-called “LGBT propaganda”. A society that is tolerant of domestic violence, a society that labels some families acceptable and others not, is also more tolerant of militaristic violence: all violence is connected, and we as feminists are aware of this. War starts at home. We also fight for reproductive justice for all: every woman should have the right to have a child as well as an affordable and safe abortion, maternal and parental labor should have decent state support, access to contraception should not be hindered or restricted. Demographic problems should not be solved by banning abortion or controlling other people’s bodies, but by sustainable social policies and raising living standards. For this, war must stop immediately.
6. We fight for decent working conditions for all and for respect for the labor rights of citizens. Since the beginning of the war, the number of dismissed, downsized and unemployed is steadily increasing, while the employers are utilizing their power and pressure to punish workers for their anti-war stance. The first to suffer from the reduction of labor laws are women and so-called national minorities, migrant workers. We support the work of independent trade unions and strikes.

7. We fight against Putin's dictatorship in Russia. We believe impeachment and trial of all officials involved in this war is necessary. We also advocate for the abolition of conservative amendments to the constitution, as well as the abolition of censorship and dissolution of the institution of state propaganda, for freedom of speech and freedom of assembly. We oppose the monopoly of the state on the information field and on the sphere of culture and education.
8. We support an exchange of prisoners - all for all, the return to Ukraine of all Ukrainian children and orphans who were involuntarily taken to the Russian Federation, and an international trial of all war criminals. We are in favor of reparations to Ukraine for the damage caused. The money that the Russian Federation is currently spending on the continuation of this war should be used for the reconstruction of Ukraine.
9. We oppose discrimination against all ethnicities and peoples of Russia on the territory of Russia. We stand against forced Russification and neglect of local history and context. Russia needs decolonization: at the level of education, culture and collective memory, we must learn and understand our present and past, the history of crimes against different peoples during the Tsarist and Soviet times (deportations, repression, imprisonment, extermination of people on the basis of nationality, destruction of foreign

cultures and languages). Equality of all languages and cultures, ensuring security for all nationalities on the territory of the Russian Federation and liberation of Russia itself from Russian fascism and Nazism is a priority task for our common future.

*Our goals for the near-term anti-war campaign are the following*

1. To attract new groups of supporters: go beyond the activist bubble. We need to find strategies to reach out to people directly affected by the war, people who have lost loved ones, people trying to bring their families back from the front, people who want to become conscientious objectors.
2. To promote the agenda of refusal of military service and support our common work with human rights defenders to widely disseminate information on how to avoid military service, how not to go to military training camps, how to get into alternative civilian service.
3. To develop the helping and supporting function of the anti-war movement. In the absence of assistance from the state, we can help more people who are facing a difficult material situation because of the war, as well as support prisoners of war and activists in the Russian Federation

facing persecution. Also, our helping function should target groups both inside the Russian Federation - such as Ukrainian citizens taken from the occupied territories, and outside the Russian Federation - such as Ukrainian refugees. We will continue to provide legal and psychological counseling for all those who need it.

4. To overcome information blockade in the Russian Federation: continue developing as an anti-war media outlet by publishing anti-war newspapers, leaflets and stickers, covering new social networks, bypassing bans, publishing anti-war news and finding access to different audiences. Our movement strives to be an anti-war agitator among other goals.
5. To practice a more conscious and sustainable approach to collective street actions: formulate the pragmatics of actions, involve more different people in the discussions, preparation and implementation. It is important to divide actions into those done by activists outside Russia and those done by activists who remain in Russia. We want activists from Russia to have more direct influence on actions outside Russia. As before, everyone can propose an action and its format, but it is important to make the selection criteria more transparent - what is accepted for distribution and what is not.

6. To develop effective mechanisms for redistributing resources from activists outside the Russian Federation to activists staying in the Russian Federation.
7. To develop safer, more transparent and horizontal regulations for all those who want to be part of FAR and are willing to be in partial communication with all areas of work.
8. To create sustainable anti-war communities throughout Russia in the form of groups. To make the practices of GGAC – groups for the growth of anti-war consciousness – recognizable and widespread. Anti-war communities can then turn into anti-war cells.
9. To support existing regional anti-war initiatives.
10. To develop a campaign for reproductive justice: to openly educate citizens on how the conservative and militaristic agenda negatively affects the living standards of children and women in our country, their safety and, as a consequence, the demographic situation as a whole. To highlight the ineffective work of the Russian Federation's social policy in supporting childhood and motherhood.
11. To support international cooperation: conduct global transnational anti-war actions in collaboration with global anti-war movements.

### 3. STRUCTURE OF THE MOVEMENT: BRANCHES, CELLS, WORKING GROUPS

Members of FAR can be roughly divided into activists, volunteers and coordinators: however, one person can simultaneously take one or two or even three of these positions.

*Volunteers* are involved with a specific skill, such as writing, editing, proofreading, translations, design or helping refugees in the Russian Federation.

*Activists* participate in FAR street actions, initiate activist projects, disseminate counter-propaganda, participate in local cells in the Russian Federation or abroad.

*Coordinators* are involved in the overall organization/coordination of different working groups and/or FAR branches. These people have regular tasks, and as a result more commitments, more involvement and responsibility, including compliance with stricter security regulations, as they have access to sensitive information. Coordinator employment in FAR is in fact a day-to-day job, part-time for some and full-time for others. The coordinators interact with each other on a daily basis on common organizational tasks, and each coordinator also supervises one of the FAR work areas (volunteers,

refugee assistance, psycho-branch, security, SMM, design, newspaper, international direction or some special projects, such as an exhibition or event organization).

If a FAR activist or volunteer wants to join the coordination of one of the existing FAR branches or propose the launch of a new one, they can make such a request in one of the working chats where other coordinators are present.

FAR is a cellular and decentralized structure. Cells are offline associations of FAR members in different cities, both in Russia and abroad. Cells in Russia exist anonymously and are usually very small groups of people who know each other well, as the high risk of repression does not allow organizing cells inside Russia in any other manner.

### *FAR branches and areas of work*

Over the two years of our existence we have formed the following public directions of work:

- organization of street actions (anti-war actions, rallies, pickets) + guerrilla resistance in urban space (distribution of anti-war leaflets, stickers, graffiti, anti-war paper newspaper)



- digital resistance and FAR anti-war media: Telegram channel, Twitter, Instagram, Youtube and Facebook of Feminist Anti-War Resistance now function as a full-fledged anti-war media project aimed at expanding the number of supporters of the anti-war movement, informing people, countering propaganda and breaking the information blockade organized by the Kremlin. On our social networks we publish news, useful information, instructions and guides, create viral content, conduct online flash mobs, anti-war and online civic campaigns, cover the cases of political prisoners, collect feedback, consult and communicate with people through anonymous Telegram bots, and cooperate with other media projects to reach out beyond our core audience.
- projects aimed at strengthening and building activist and civic communities in Russia: our priority for 2024 is to help anti-war Russians who have remained in Russia and feel isolated. We organize working groups with Russian activists, groups to overcome isolation, and groups to promote anti-war consciousness;
- assistance to Ukrainians taken to Russia: we regularly publish collections of donations for humanitarian aid to Ukrainian refugees as a part of the “Generous Tuesday”

project. We also distribute leaflets with important information on how to leave Russia, how not to become a victim of trafficking, how to get help from human rights organizations;

- psychological branch: our psycho branch coordinates the work of a hotline for free psychological assistance to anti-military activists and all politically active citizens willing to turn to us for help. The branch also hosts regular psychological support groups for people affected by forced mobilization, LGBTQ+ support groups as well as any kinds of reactive support groups (one-time meetings in reaction to any war-related news, tragedies etc). Psychological branch also publishes educational materials in the form of info-cards, leaflets, brochures etc, engages in creation of podcasts and hosts workshops and master-classes for the public and our partner organizations. The specialists and coordinators of the branch also provide facilitation services to any activist organizations willing to solve their inner problems and conflicts.
- Support for mothers and wives of mobilized persons and people threatened by mobilization: we spread information about support organizations and tools to protect their rights, organize psychological support groups, and connect them with journalists;

- evacuation of activists from Russia: since 2023, in collaboration with relevant NGOs and human rights organizations we have been helping to organize emergency relocation of those whose life, health and freedom are threatened by criminal prosecution and repression;
- decolonial branch: it is important for us to work together with national anti-war initiatives, with autochthonous people living in a particular region, with all those who have first-hand knowledge of Russia's imperial ambitions. We cover the economic, environmental and political dependence of the regions on the center;
- Antifund project: a joint project with the organizations Antiwar Sick Leave and AntiJob to provide free legal assistance to workers whose labor rights have been violated because of their anti-war stance or mobilization;
- Communication and public relations: public presence and joint work with human rights organizations, representatives of different countries and activist initiatives in the framework of joint anti-war initiatives, working groups, conferences, forums, round tables, etc.;

- Methodological work: together with experts we develop guides, instructions and manuals on anti-propaganda teaching, safer organization of underground communities, cyber security, etc;
- International branch: we currently have about 25 FAR cells around the world: FAR Czech Republic, FAR France, FAR Italy, FAR Spain, FAR Netherlands, FAR Berlin, FAR North Westfalia, FAR Korea, FAR Brazil, FAR Vilnius, FAR Sweden, FAR USA, FAR Yerevan, FAR Serbia, FAR Düsseldorf, FAR Lithuania, FAR London, FAR Oxford, FAR Tallinn, FAR Hamburg, FAR Russia (in different cities). The cells work as a network of help, advocacy and political solidarity.

#### 4. DECISION MAKING SYSTEM AND PRACTICES OF HORIZONTALITY

By horizontality we mean the rejection of vertical, hierarchical models of work and interaction.

It is impossible to realize 100% horizontality in our “vertically” organized world and society - there are always external uncontrollable factors and they influence the imbalance of social capital, power, responsibilities and opportunities. Implementation of horizontality in practice is not a one-time action, but rather a separate area of work in itself.

Therefore, we often have to learn horizontality, develop its mechanisms, rearrange our behavior patterns, get used to it, and overcome obstacles and inconveniences. Horizontality is a process!

We have a number of tools for reconciling some key things, making crucial decisions and discussing disputable situations: regular calls of coordinators and activists of different FAR working groups, telegram-bots, and a number of other tools.

We have an anonymous FAR chat in Element messenger and anonymous calls on Jitsi for any discussions, complaints and

suggestions. Another important instrument is a special body elected every 3 months by lot - the Anticrisis Committee. The AC consists of 3 randomly selected coordinators who can be contacted in case of conflicts and tensions in the team. The AC together with the specialists from FAR psycho branch helps facilitate conflicts and proposes solutions.

*Leadership and horizontality.* Horizontality does not contradict leadership, but it implies non-toxic and anti-authoritarian leadership, which is when leadership qualities are used for the benefit of all participants in the movement and for the common cause, and not for gaining power and privileges over other participants. We are interested in ensuring that all participants in FAR have the opportunity and space to develop and demonstrate their leadership skills, if they so desire.

### *Decision-making in FAR*

The basic principle of decision-making in FAR is consensus. FAR working groups, branches and cells are decentralized and have the right to make independent decisions within their groups, as long as these decisions do not contradict the Manifesto.

All common decisions and strategic tasks have been solved by consensus until recently. However recently FAR has been confronted with the fact that we have no understanding of what to do if the consensus cannot be reached. Therefore, several coordinators are now working on a draft decision-making regulation for such cases

*Important:* all FAS participants, regardless of their role, can express any questions, criticism, suggestions, ideas, discussions, and initiative. For this purpose there are:

- general chat rooms where all this can be discussed;
- regular calls where we discuss current affairs;
- sessions where we discuss the strategy of our movement.

## 5. OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

*Here we list some of the results of Feminist Anti-War Resistance's work during two years of full-scale invasion.*

In December 2022, we initiated a fundraising campaign for a large industrial generator for a Ukrainian hospital. Through FAR cells, we raised 8.5 thousand euros. The generator was delivered to the hospital.

In May 2023, we were awarded the Aachen Peace Prize. After a public vote, we divided the cash equivalent of our prize between two initiatives: the Ukrainian initiative Martynka, which helps women, and the Russian initiative Vyvozhuk, which evacuates those persecuted for their anti-war stance.

On June 23, 2022, we gave a presentation in Geneva at the 50th Human Rights Session and described the repression faced by vulnerable groups in Russia for any dissent or taking an anti-war stance.

In a year and a half, we have helped 53 volunteer initiatives to help Ukrainian refugees and deported Ukrainians: every Tuesday we organize public fundraising support for one initiative. Thanks to our posts, we managed to raise more than 2 million rubles (about 20 thousand euros).



Since the first weeks of the full-scale war in Ukraine, an activist from the Czech FAR cell has organized Biblio.tečka, a library in Prague where Ukrainian refugees can borrow books for free. It now has 400 readers and 3,000 books (including in Ukrainian).

FAR activists are involved in investigating Russian war crimes as well as in organizing the evacuation of politically persecuted people from Russia. For security reasons, we cannot report on this in detail yet, but we hope that one day we will be able to elaborate on the dangerous and invisible work of this kind.

On Mother's Day in November 2022, we initiated a petition and an open anti-war letter from mothers of Russian mobilized and conscript soldiers.

In the petition, mothers and other relatives of mobilized and conscripted soldiers call on the Russian government to withdraw its troops from Ukraine and end the war. The petition collected more than 110,000 signatures and generated a huge public response. A spokesman for the Russian President was forced to comment on our petition. After the letter was published, FAR was recognized by the Ministry of Justice as a foreign agent movement.

After the explosion of the hydroelectric power plant and the flooding in Kakhovka, our cells collected 5,600 euros for the Rescue missions. We also gathered more than 1,600 signatures (including those of 16 international organizations) under an open letter calling on large international organizations to send aid to the Russian-occupied flooded left bank. We sent this letter to 7 different organizations and got confirmation that one of them, the Disaster Emergency Committee, sent volunteers from the organizations it supports. We launched the Ecocide in Ukraine project [ecocideinukraine.org](https://ecocideinukraine.org), where we collected links to documents on the environmental consequences of the dam explosion and flooding, supported with quotes from experts and made a letter and petition builder that people used to write letters and petitions to local authorities and eco-organizations demanding international coverage, attention and assistance. We managed to collect more than a thousand signatures on a petition to international organizations, which we subsequently lobbied in Greenpeace UK. Later this Greenpeace branch issued two detailed reports using our information as well.

Our psychological branch and hotline provided free consultations to more than 2,500 people, including both Russians who suffered for their anti-war stance and Ukrainians from the Russian-occupied territories.

FAR activists actively participated in the development of the text of the first report on human rights in the Russian Federation for the Human Rights Council, UN. The report described in detail the repression of Russian citizens and new repressive bills. Thanks to the report, the international community was able to learn in detail about the problems faced by Russians protesting in their country.

In a year and a half, we have published 31 issues of the underground anti-war samizdat newspaper “Zhenskaya Pravda” (Women’s Truth), which our activists and supporters print out for their mothers and grandmothers or distribute in Russian cities. The newspaper contains a lot of useful counter-propagandist information for Russian women, including contacts of helping organizations.

We organized an international exhibition dedicated to Russian women who have suffered for their anti-war stance. Many of these women are in prison or have been tortured, searched and pressured for their political opinion. Within the framework of the exhibition we raised money for political prisoners and organized solidarity evenings - discussions, evenings of letters to political prisoners and others. The exhibition was presented in two districts of Paris with the support of the Paris Municipality and will travel to other cities and countries. We were able to tell the stories of 17 Russian women and exhibit their portraits.

## **TEXT OF THE FAR SPEECH FOR THE AACHEN PEACE PRIZE ON SEPTEMBER 1, 2023**

First we would like to thank the Aachen Peace Prize committee for the award and for expressing their invaluable support and solidarity with our activists. We are honored to receive this award together with the Human Rights Defenders Fund (Israel), who are fighting for the rights of women activists under constant threat from their government.

Today we do not show our faces because being here is not only an honor, but also a great privilege and responsibility. Most of our colleagues are in Russia and cannot reveal their faces and names without the risk of being imprisoned or tortured by Russian security forces.

We are receiving this award while there is a war going on and our state is bombing Ukraine every day, while the Ukrainian army and civilians are heroically resisting this unprovoked aggression.

We receive this award while our fellow women continue their struggle in Russia - our movement exists because of their courage and resistance to the Russian regime.

War is a continuation of patriarchal violence, one of its extreme manifestations, which always affects the most vulnerable and unprotected.

War means millions of people forced to leave their homes, thousands of Ukrainian women wounded, killed and tortured by the Russian military. Forcibly displaced to Russia, Ukrainians live in inhumane conditions, with no support from anyone but their relatives and volunteers, and are under constant pressure from the Russian state. Thousands of Ukrainian civilians are being held captive by the Russian military and nothing is known about their fate. Thousands of Ukrainian children have been kidnapped by Russia.

We often repeat: “War begins at home”. Domestic violence, violence against women, children and the elderly – all of this violence has been encouraged and nurtured by the Russian state for years. It has long ago spilled out of our homes and transcended national borders. All kinds of violence are connected - and they must all be stopped. War begins at home and it must end at home. Because it feeds on violence within our society. That is why feminism is an inseparable part of the resistance to war.

Women in Russia are already facing violence at the hands of soldiers returning from war. Many prisoners who served time in prison for violent crimes have been mobilized, have already returned from the war and are walking free, having received pardons and medals for all their war crimes. Russia is increasingly adopting discriminatory laws that violate human rights. In particular, laws that make life unbearable for LG-BTQ+ people in Russia such as the new law prohibiting

gender affirmative procedures and changing the gender marker on documents. Thousands of indigenous people continue to live under Russian occupation, and those who try to fight for their rights face systematic repression. Peace is not limited to a ceasefire. We want peace not only without overt military violence, but also without structural violence. Such a peace also requires the full inclusion of representatives of vulnerable groups in any pre-negotiation processes and peacemaking. Such a peace requires active struggle and cannot be fooled by a mere ceasefire.

We call ourselves the Feminist Anti-War Resistance, however we are keenly aware that “anti-war” is not about privileged pacifism, but about recognizing the right of the injured party to self-defense. Ukrainian women cannot say “no to war” when the war that has already come to their home. They cannot say “this is not our war”. They are forced to defend themselves and their homes and loved ones – often at the cost of their lives.

We want to be understood correctly: “anti-war” in our case is not the idle waiting for an abstract peace to come when one side runs out of resources. “Anti-war” is a daily resistance to the aggressor and his military and imperial ambitions. Resistance including thousands of women, queer people, activists and feminists. And this award belongs to them.

As long as Putin and this regime exist in Russia, there will be no peace. As long as people and territories are under occupation, there will be no peace. There can be no peace when political prisoners are imprisoned and activists who have fled the country cannot return home safely. Such “peace” does not take into account the rights of vast numbers of vulnerable people. We want peace, but we want a just peace, without occupied territories, without slavery and torture, without prisons and exploitation, without dictatorships, without silencing violence in any form.

*We would like to dedicate this award to Russian women and LGBTQ+ people who have been prosecuted for their anti-war actions, identity and views, who are in pre-trial detention centers and prisons. Activists who have survived searches and torture, faced violence for anti-war agitation and for helping Ukrainians. These are not only activists of our movement – these are thousands of stories of resistance to Russian fascism, stories of schoolgirls and pensioners alike. We dedicate this award to Maria Ponomarenko, Sasha Skochilenko, Natalia Filonova, Tatiana Savinkina, Marina Novikova, Victoria Petrova, Masha Moskalyova and all those whom we are unable to name today for safety reasons.*

We will donate the cash equivalent of this prize to a Ukrainian feminist organization and to a Russian initiative helping political prisoners. We express our support and solidarity to Ukrainians in their struggle for freedom. Thank you.

## 6. QUOTES OF OUR PARTICIPANTS

“As a Russian coordinator, I take part in all important decisions of FAR, including the preparation of actions. But Russian activists are forced to remain anonymous: FAR has already been recognized as a “foreign agent” and some members of the movement have administrative and criminal cases opened against them.

It is important for me to know that my voice is heard. The weight of our word is the same as that of the coordinators across the border - and this support is very valuable to me. Especially when I am surrounded by arrests and searches. Knowing that you can influence something keeps you from going crazy. Remember: not all activists left Russia. My decision to stay in the country was a conscious one, and some people just don't have the opportunity to leave. And we are not going to give up or agree with this criminal war.

We are resistance.  
You are resistance.”

“We often say: “War begins at home”. Domestic violence, violence against women, children and the elderly – all of this violence, encouraged and nurtured for years by the



Russian state. It has long since spilled out of our homes and transcended state boundaries. All kinds of violence are connected - and all of them must stop. War begins at home and it must end at home. Because it feeds on violence within our societies. Feminism is therefore an inseparable part of resistance to war”.

“I am inspired when I see women around the world getting together thanks to FAR,” Berlin-based activist Olga shared with DW. - One group raised money for Ukraine. Another group in another country helped Ukrainian refugees, found food, housing, helped with bureaucracy or logistics, helped with children. Activists in Russia spread the truth about the war, preventing people from living in a completely clean space, untainted by blood, which is what Moscow and St. Petersburg are now clearly striving for. A third group invented and began recording “Empire of Violence” videos in which decolonial activists speak in their native languages about racism, the history of genocide and systemic violence against indigenous peoples in Russia. A fourth group organized an anti-war demonstration. A fifth organized a psychological support service. The sixth, seventh, eighth - there are many such groups. It makes us realize that together we can do a lot”.

“We can’t know what will happen next, and we can’t know if choosing hope will lead to change. What we do know is that it can help us move forward. Small actions by large numbers of people over a long period of time will sooner or later lead to change. This is a vision we can hold on to, and it breaks the status quo much better than despair. It is also resistance, albeit very small, the one that happens on the individual level, but it is sustainable and meaningful.

I may never see the results of my work, but I choose hope, which keeps me going, no matter what. Little by little, we will change the world so that the next generation can go even further.”

“Now we have about 70 public activists doing a lot of work around the world - advocacy work, international reports by our researchers on the situation of women and queer people in the Russian Federation, cooperation with evacuation agencies, assistance to refugees and displaced persons, fundraising for Ukrainian and Russian human rights organizations, information retrieval – investigative hard work related to war crimes (I can only outline it in general terms so far), organizing temporary shelters in their countries and cities, letter nights to political prisoners, providing psychological support, and much, much more. Most of any anti-war activism is an iceberg, many

things can not be disclosed for safety reasons, so most of our work remains, unfortunately, invisible. For many people, we are feminist anti-war media, creators of high-profile actions, creators of agitation - nothing more. But this is really the most superficial level. At all sorts of closed activist events, when we show our presentation about 20 areas of work, many people are genuinely surprised that we do ALL of that”.

“No one taught us how to do everything we do. It’s very hard and it would be better if we never knew how to do it. But I am thankful that I am going through these terrible times shoulder to shoulder with you, anonymous and open-faced, tired and desperate, funny and sometimes completely crazy. May we have the opportunity at least sometimes to praise ourselves and realize how much we have done practically without resources, just because of our skills and the fact that we care. May we have the strength to keep it all and multiply it.”

“I’ve been told that activism always involves the most resourceful, the ones who are doing well in life, but that’s not true. Those who have seen and experienced pain and suffering are usually the first to fight. We know how scary the world is, how cruel it is and how much violence there is

in it, but we are not ready to leave the world in this state. We do not want to and will not turn our backs on the problems. We are different yet we have come together because of this violence that is committed every day. Not to be indifferent, to think of ways to help when there are no resources, is a skill that we develop every day in resistance. Each of us is unique and significant. And in that uniqueness there is a beauty that is beyond words.”

## 7. HOW TO HELP US AND HOW TO CONTACT US

If you would like to create your own FAR cell/branch, cooperate with us or support (financially or otherwise) one of our initiatives, you can write to us:

email: *contact@femagainstar.org*

anonymous Telegram bot: *@femagainstar\_bot*

### *Our Social Media*

#### Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/feministantiwarresistance>



#### Instagram

[https://instagram.com/fem\\_antiwar\\_resistance?igshid=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==](https://instagram.com/fem_antiwar_resistance?igshid=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==)

