

Women's Committee report paras 3.62–3.68 : Violence against Women

NUJ delegate Ann G address to TUC Women's Conference 9 March 2018:

Under paragraph 3.62 of the Women's Committee report which speaks to the high priority on tackling violence against women, the NUJ and USDAW wish to raise the desperate conditions in which women are detained at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre.

And Home Office refusal to acknowledge or act to redress concerns about inadequate provision of medical care or access to legal justice; or that many of the women are victims of trafficking and sexual abuse, living with deep trauma that is exacerbated by immigration detention – which is contrary to Government undertaking.

More than a 100 women, together with some of the men detained in the Yarl's Wood family unit, are now two weeks into hunger strike and peaceful non-cooperation with mechanisms of detention from inside (incl work strike).

The Home Office's immediate response has included threatening them with accelerated removal; for the moment temporarily halted following interventions by Ruth Smeeth MP, shadow home secretary Diane Abbott MP and shadow attorney general Shami Chakrabarti.

Immigration detention is harmful, racist and needs to end.

At barest minimum the conditions of detention should be humane and include proper access to medical care and legal justice.

We ask if Conference and the Women's committee would send a message of solidarity and support our sisters in Yarl's Wood to let them know they are not voiceless, forgotten or ignored.

Hashtags #HungerForFreedom #Yarl'sWood #hungerstrike

Information sources:

<https://twitter.com/hackneyabbott/status/968203263521701888?lang=en-gb>

<https://twitter.com/detainedvoices/status/970050235513831424?s=19>

<https://detainedvoices.com/tag/yarls-wood/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/28/refugees-tories-yarls-wood-hunger-strike>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/yarls-wood-home-office-women-deported-more-quickly-hunger-strike-a8239611.html>

<https://twitter.com/RuthSmeeth/status/970031770220548097>