

[HUMAN RIGHTS](#) | GLOBAL ISSUES

# Opinion: 2022 was the year of women



Astrid Prange  
Commentary

12/26/2022

They fought war crimes, protested religious dictatorship and decided elections. Without the efforts of women, 2022 would have been an even more distressing year.



Women in many parts of the world stood up to injustice in 2022, such as here in Iran Image: UGC

Russian President Vladimir Putin may continue to wage war in Ukraine, and the ayatollahs in Iran may be putting their regime critics to death — but amid such strife, this year, women waged their own war against these oppressors.

In Iran, women led the uprising against the mullahs after the death of [Jina Mahsa Amini](#) on September 16. Images of Iranian women cutting their hair and removing their hijabs awed people around the world. Their revolt for women's rights grew into a [nationwide movement](#) against the regime in Tehran, with millions now demanding their freedom and an end to clerical rule.

In Brazil, it was the female electorate in particular that ensured that misogynist and violence-mongering President [Jair Bolsonaro](#) was voted out of office in October. The man who called COVID-19 a "little flu" and regretted that during the military dictatorship critics were "tortured and not killed" must leave the presidential palace on January 1. With campaigns such as "[#EleNao](#)" ("not him"), Brazilian women helped former President [Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva](#), who had already governed the country from 2003 to 2011, to [a narrow electoral victory](#).

tinal investigation into the case, there is a “high possibility” that the reporter from the Arabic-language broadcaster Al Jazeera “was accidentally hit by IDF gunfire that v

ADVERTISEMENT



## Documenting war crimes

In [Ukraine](#), courageous women are also fighting Russian bombs and war crimes alongside President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. [Nobel Peace Prize](#) laureate Oleksandra Matviichuk, founder of The Center for Civil Liberties, wants to bring atrocities in Ukraine, Syria, Mali and Georgia to an international criminal court.

The human rights organization, founded by the lawyer in 2007, was the first to document war crimes committed by the Russian army in Crimea, Donetsk and Luhansk. It was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2022 for its work.

Then there is the admirable work of pediatrician Irina Kondratova, who became widely known when former football star David Beckham gave her control of his Instagram account. Through her eyes, millions saw how the staff at a perinatal center in Kharkiv risked their lives to care for pregnant women as well as newborns and their mothers in a hospital basement amid Russian bombardment.

At the EU level, Ursula von der Leyen has stubbornly coordinated numerous [sanctions packages](#) against Russia's politicians, army and banks. Despite their divergent interests, the European Commission president has succeeded in rallying the member states to support Ukraine in its fight against Putin's invasion.

## Images of hope

The list could go on. All of these women have succeeded in ensuring that amid so much turmoil, images of hope will still characterize this year. Like the photo of [Iranian climber Elnaz Rekabi](#) competing without a headscarf for the first time at a major competition in Seoul in 2022. It was seen around the world, as were the images and videos shared by millions on social media of women worldwide cutting their hair in solidarity with the movement in Iran.

And then there were the photos of babies being born in a cellar as Ukraine was under bombardment, bringing their parents a moment of joy in the midst of war.

Without this concentrated force of resistance, this will to live and desire for freedom, 2022 would have been a sad, even devastating year. Women have stood up to warmongers, torturers, dictators and soldiers. They have ensured that hope for a better life is stronger than despair over war, violence and death.

*This article originally appeared in German.*

Send us your feedback 

ADVERTISEMENT

### RELATED TOPICS

- [Nobel Prize](#)
- [Brazil election](#)
- [Nobel Peace Prize](#)
- [Jina Mahsa Amini](#)
- [Iran protests](#)
- [Jair Bolsonaro](#)
- [War in Ukraine](#)

### DW'S TOP STORY

We use cookies to improve our service for you. You can find more information in our data protection policy.

[More info](#)

OK

# Ukraine updates: Fighting goes on despite Russian cease-fire

POLITICS | 5 hours ago

Life returns to shelled-out district of Kharkiv

CONFLICTS | 21 hours ago

What type of armored vehicles are being sent to Ukraine?

POLITICS | 8 hours ago

Saving lives on lines

CONFLICTS | 2 hours ago 

## MORE STORIES FROM DW

AFRICA

### [Confronting Western portrayals of Africa](#)

SOCIETY | 9 hours ago | 02:58 min

We use cookies to improve our service for you. You can find more information in our data protection policy.

[More info](#) **OK**



SOCIETY | 01/06/2023 | 02:52 min

POLITICS | 12 hours ago



EUROPE

MIDDLE EAST

[Hungary: Will Orban weather the storms of 2023?](#)

POLITICS | 2 hours ago

[More from Europe](#) >

[Has UN aid to Syria become political football?](#)

POLITICS | 12 hours ago

[More from Middle East](#) >

NORTH AMERICA

LATIN AMERICA

[US rights groups welcome expanded access to abortion pill](#)

HEALTH | 10 hours ago

[More from North America](#) >

■◀ [Dozens killed in arrest of El Chapo's son](#)

CONFLICTS | 8 hours ago | 02:04 min

[More from Latin America](#) >

[Go to homepage](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

ABOUT DW

Who we are

Press

DW Global Media Forum

DW OFFERS

Learn German

DW Akademie

We use cookies to improve our service for you. You can find more information in our data protection policy.

[More info](#)

OK

FOLLOW US ON