

Women at Work: Preventing Gun Violence

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Disarming domestic violence: advocacy at the 3rd UN Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms

The United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms (PoA) was agreed in 2001 and reviewed at the Third Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) on small arms, 14-18 July 2008.

The PoA includes a number of measures at the national, regional and global levels, in the areas of legislation, destruction of weapons that are confiscated, seized, or collected, as well as international cooperation and assistance to strengthen the ability of States in identifying and tracing illicit arms and light weapons.

It contains only one reference to gender, in paragraph 6 of the Preamble where States express grave concern about the devastating consequences of the illicit trade in small arms for children “as well as the negative impact on women and the elderly.” Men, who in numerical terms are the largest number of victims and perpetrators of armed violence, are not mentioned at all.

While women continue to be misrepresented as the largest number of victims of armed violence, their diverse disarmament, violence reduction and security related activities are marginalised and receive little or no support.

Women’s security work is usually referred to in passing, and women’s resistance to armed violence is lost. Because the language of ‘vulnerability’ prevails, it remains possible to portray women as being exactly like children and the elderly, hapless victims of prolific weapons, rather than a key resource in combating such violence.

At the 2006 Review Conference on Small Arms it was clear that a large number of States supported the addition of a reference to gender in the PoA, as a paragraph referring to gender and UN SCR 1325 consistently appeared in a number of versions of the draft Outcome Document. However, States were unable to agree on any way forward and the Conference ended without an Outcome Document.

(Continued on pages 4-5)

Shobha Shreshta, SAP Nepal, addressing delegates at the BMS. Photo: IANSA



International Day of Peace

The International Day of Peace provides an opportunity for individuals, organisations and nations to create practical acts of peace on a shared date.

It was established by a UN resolution in 1981 and the first Peace Day was celebrated on 21 September 1982. IANSA women have marked the day in various ways, making links with the Arms Trade Treaty Week of Action, 13-19 September 2008.

Some activities include: On 19 September, women in Fiji held a rally and peace picnic at the Peace Garden in Suva to silently protest against the intolerable conditions under the military government. On 20 September, PhilANSA participated in the 'Light a Ceasefire' campaign for Mindanao. Torches were lit in front of Miriam College, Quezon City in memory of young women such as Tara Santelices, 23 years old, shot dead in a robbery, and Miriam College student Mary Grace Mojica who, along with 3 other relatives, was killed in her home. On 21 September, Centro de Amigos para la Paz, as part of the Costa Rica chapter of the Global March for peace and non-violence, organised a concert in the Plaza de la Cultura in San Jose.

Network News

Argentina: Women campaign for a less violent Santa Fe

On 30 July 2008, the campaign for 'A less violent Santa Fe' held its first forum on 'Women and Disarmament' as part of a series of meetings involving women.

The meeting received support from local government, representatives from various NGOs, community associations, institutions, and women from the suburbs of Santa Fe attended the event.

Speakers included town councilor Adriana Molina and Jose Corral, National vice secretary for Violence Prevention and Security. The main goal of the campaign is to remove as many guns as possible from circulation in Santa Fe.

Councillor Adriana Molina stressed the importance of involving women in the campaign and highlighted the impacts that guns have on women, both legal and illegal, including those held for reasons of security. Members of the campaign began the forum by explaining that a gun in the home can cause harm even when it is not used, that it can be used to threaten and intimidate and further exacerbates the inequalities between men and women.

Amongst the proposals made at the forum, emphasis was placed on the role played by the military to encourage a non-violent culture, and the use of mediation in resolving problems.

Participants added that in addition to strengthening national laws covering purchase, sale and possession of guns, measures should be taken to raise public awareness of the impact of guns and armed violence.

As a result of the forum's success more meetings on women, violence and disarmament were held in and around Santa Fe during August including in the neighbourhood of Alta Verde. Both women and youth were represented and participated in a workshop on the campaign for civilian disarmament, led by the local government.

Participants developed a series of proposals to work alongside the local police, so that the local community could 'regain the feeling of security and therefore decide to begin disarming'. Participants also suggested that arms could be handed in anonymously through the creation of a 'collection point' in the neighbourhood

Participants also suggested the installation of a collection point for guns in the local neighbourhood to enable the anonymous handover of weapons and contribute to the disarmament process. Local civil servants and inhabitants promised to continue working together for the campaign.

Peace by piece – steps towards human security

From 24-26 September 2008, IANSA women including Leymah Gbowee, Women, Peace and Security Network Africa – WIPSEN-Africa; Binalakshmi Nepram of the Manipuri Women Gun Survivors Network, and Control Arms Foundation India; and Sarah Masters, WN Coordinator; along with allies from UNIFEM and UNINSTRAW, participated in the Women PeaceMakers Conference 'Crafting Human Security in an Insecure World' at the Joan B Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, San Diego, USA.

This international working conference was organised to explore and address impunity, gender violence and exclusion that continues to obstruct peacebuilding and deny human security.

Ms Gbowee moderated a session on Protecting Civilians in Armed Conflict from Violence, including Sexual Violence: UNSCR 1325 and 1820. She also presented the documentary "Pray the Devil Back to Hell" that chronicles the remarkable story of the courageous Liberian women - mothers, grandmothers, aunts and daughters, both Christian and Muslim - who came together to end a bloody civil war and bring peace to their shattered country.

Ms Nepram led a knowledge building session on women and micro disarmament based on her work and experiences in India. Ms Masters gave a presentation "Being part of the security process – controlling arms" as part of the session on 'Advancing Inclusive Security in Multiple Settings.' Her presentation included concrete recommendations for small arms control in DDR and SSR processes with reference to UN SCR 1325, and explained the need for the development and/or harmonization of both domestic violence and gun laws during post-conflict reconstruction.



Ms Leymah Gbowee, WIPSEN Africa

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Compiled and edited by IANSA Women's Network Coordinator: Sarah Masters

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For more information:

Joan B Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice
<http://peace.sandiego.edu>

Manipuri Women Gun Survivors Network
http://cafi-online.org/report/MWGSN_details.pdf

Pray The Devil Back To Hell
www.praythedevilbacktohell.com

Women Peace and Security Network Africa - WIPSEN Africa
www.wipsen-africa.org

Network News

Burundi: DAGROPASS and the Urgent Action Fund Africa – defending women human rights defenders

Ms Honorate Nizigiyimana, President of DAGROPASS Amagaranikindi in Burundi was one of the speakers at a regional workshop on women's human rights defenders in Africa.

The workshop, organised by Urgent Action Fund (UAF) Africa was held in Nairobi on 1-2 September 2008. Ms Nizigiyimana spoke about how guns threaten women's human rights, and how women activists mobilise in response.

The workshop brought together African women human rights defenders to discuss the risks and threats they face and measures to increase their safety and security, as well as their unique role in shaping social justice in Africa. It provided an opportunity to consider international instruments and protection manuals for human rights defenders and how the defenders can effectively use these tools.

In her speech she explained that in Burundi, a country recovering from over 15 years of war, the population has easy access to guns, particularly through government and rebel groups. Although the country is technically at peace, more than 90% of cases of human rights violations are committed with a gun, and the overall death rate due to guns is not known.

Ms Nizigiyimana gave numerous examples of gun violence in the province of Bubanza, from a grenade being thrown into a wedding party following a family dispute, to the death of a woman on 11 August 2008, who was shot by a soldier following an argument (between them).

She said that women are acutely aware of the inequality caused by guns and the very real effects of this upon themselves, their relatives, friends and neighbours. As a result, some have organised themselves and are becoming involved in local politics and policymaking to change the gender stereotypes that perpetuate violence against women.

Women led campaigns have refuted the myth that a gun equals security, and have called for increased coordination between NGOs, the police and government to regulate and reduce the number of guns in circulation.

International Campaign on Women Human Rights Defenders

www.defendingwomen-defendingrights.org

Urgent Action Fund Africa

www.urgentactionfund-africa.or.ke

UN Security Council Resolution 1820 on Sexual Violence against Civilians in Conflict

On 19 June 2008, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1820 (2008) on Sexual Violence against Civilians in Conflict, after a day-long ministerial-level meeting on "women, peace and security."

1820 calls for the immediate cessation of rape and other forms of sexual violence against civilians in conflict zones and affirms that such acts can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity or a constitutive act with respect to genocide.

1820 also calls for effective steps to prevent and respond to acts of sexual violence as a way of contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security – including urging Member States to comply with their obligations for prosecuting the perpetrators of sexual violence, ensuring that all victims of sexual violence, particularly women and girls, have equal protection under the law and equal access to justice, and ending impunity for sexual violence as part of a comprehensive approach to seeking sustainable peace, justice, truth, and national reconciliation.



Photo: www.thegreatestsilence.org - VDay

In its analysis of 1820, WILPF has concluded that, "While this resolution is not perfect and while it alone does not constitute effective action to end sexual violence, it is an important and welcome step ... We must remain vigilant in ensuring that implementation of SCR 1325 continues and that SCR 1820 is implemented in ways that include women and that place the well-being of survivors at the centre of all efforts."

SCR 1820

www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/sc9364.doc.htm

WILPF analysis on SCR 1820

www.peacewomen.org/un/sc/Open_Debates/Sexual_Violence08/PW_1820_Analysis.pdf

Disarming domestic violence: advocacy at the 3rd UN BMS on Small Arms (Continued from page 1)

We maintained momentum and raised concerns about armed violence against women and armed domestic violence. Rita Santos, from the Economic and Social Council in Portugal, commented that men keep guns at home for hunting and use them to intimidate their partners.

Dr Mirjana Dokmanovic, a leading researcher from Serbia, described a "culture of guns" in post-war Serbia. Widad Akrawi of Defend International said that in the Middle East, guns are increasingly used by family members against women in honour killings. Other women from Brazil and Jamaica said that in their contexts many women gravitate toward gun-toting men for a sense of protection.

During the week we held a very well attended side event, 'The danger within: Disarming domestic violence' to raise some of the issues included in our position paper.



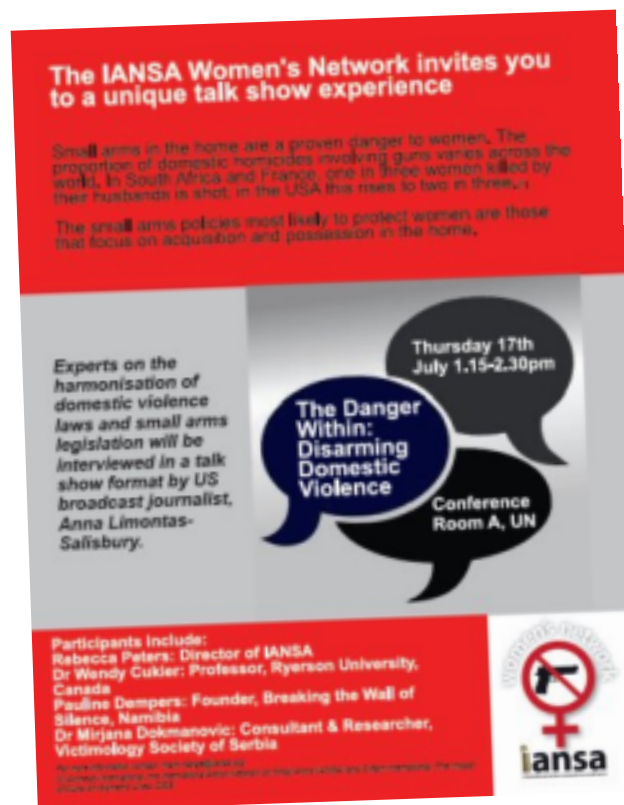
Poems from women survivors of gun violence in El Salvador - part of the clothesline exhibition. Photo: Lucie Carenza

Alba Zelaya, Director of Cemujer in El Salvador, cited shocking statistics. So far this year, 99 women have been killed in her country, and more than 80 percent of these died from gun violence.

WN member Marie Claire Faray Kele gave a formal presentation to delegates on guns and both domestic and sexual violence. In her speech, Marie Claire, who is also a WILPF member, made reference to armed sexual violence against women in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).



Marie Claire Faray Kele preparing for her speech. Photo: César Marin



Experts on the harmonisation of domestic violence laws and small arms legislation were interviewed in a talk show format by a US broadcast journalist. We highlighted the efforts of Australia, Canada, South Africa, and Trinidad and Tobago, four countries that have harmonised domestic violence and firearms laws.

The side event showed that in many countries, the small arms policies most likely to protect women are those that focus on acquisition and possession in the home. Participants included Rebecca Peters, Director of IANSA; Dr Wendy Cukier, Professor, Ryerson University, Canada; Pauline Dempers, co-founder, Breaking the Wall of Silence, Namibia; and Dr Mirjana Dokmanovic, Consultant and Researcher, Victimology Society of Serbia.



From left to right: Mirjana Dokmanovic, Pauline Dempers, Rebecca Peters, Wendy Cukier and Anna Limontas-Salisbury. Photo: Lucie Carenza

Special Focus: Special Focus: IANSA women at the 3rd Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) on Small Arms

We also developed a 'Clothesline Exhibition' - a visual display of women's clothing from around the world that represent women and girls affected by gun violence. The clothes were hung on a clothesline to be viewed by others in the form of a mobile exhibition as testimony to the impact of gun violence on women.

Each piece of clothing included a note with details of women who were killed, testimonies from survivors and facts related to armed violence against women. This drew a lot of attention and many people commented on how powerful it was.

As a result of our efforts – past and present - gender was specifically mentioned by States such as Australia and Canada, and in the statement of Brazil on behalf of the countries of MERCOSUR.

Australia also raised the need to link with SCR 1325 and SCR 1820, a recommendation that WN members were actively calling for and lobbying around. In addition, we are delighted that the final Outcome Document refers to both gender and civilian possession of weapons, both legally and illegally held, as well as victim assistance:

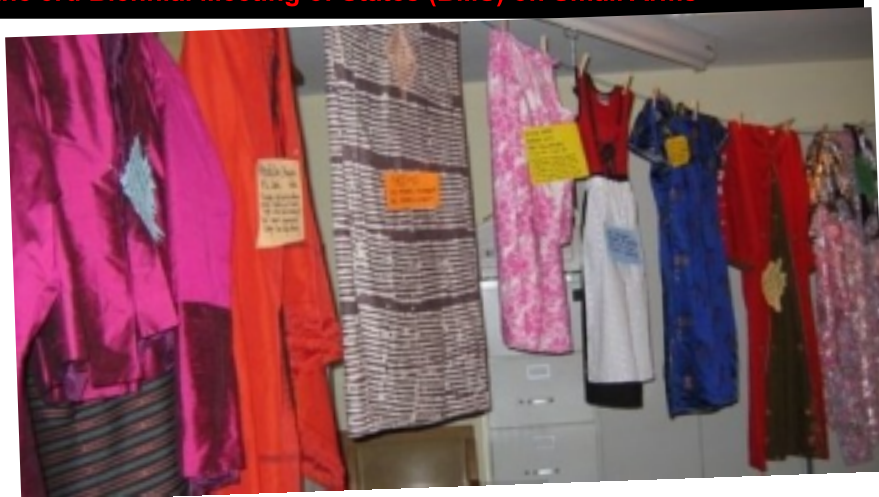
Section IV.

28 (g) Civilian possession of small arms and light weapons

(n) Gender perspectives

(p) Victim assistance

Plans are already underway to build on our work to date, and begin preparations for the next BMS. We hope to further strengthen our positions and be more involved in the preparatory process for the next meeting, as well as in the general UN small arms process.



The Clothesline exhibition. Photo: Lucie Carenza

For further information, see:

IANSA Women's Network Position Paper: Preventing gun violence against women in the home

www.iansa.org/un/documents/PreventingarmedDV.pdf

Statement of the IANSA Women's Network to the Third Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms

www.iansa.org/women/documents/WN-BMS08-statement.pdf

Presentation: The impact of small arms on women in Central Africa Marie-Claire Faray Kele

www.iansa.org/un/documents/MarieClaireFarayENG.pdf

The BMS 2008 Outcome Document

<http://disarmament.un.org/cab/bms3/1BMS3Pages/Draft%20Way%20Forward/L3Rev1-E.pdf>



Many thanks to all of you who gave your time and energy to BMS preparations and activities. Special thanks go to Lucie Carenza, Linda Machata, Emily Alexander, Folade Mutota, and Anna Limontas-Salisbury. We also extend our gratitude to Jessie Schwartz, Jennifer Scott and Iain Guest of the Advocacy Project.

Just some of the many IANSA women at the BMS, July 2008.

Announcements

SCR 1325 National Action Plans: Some perspectives

On the 8th anniversary of SCR 1325 (31 October 2008) WN members Rita Santos, Silvia Roque and Tatiana Moura of the the Centre for Social Studies (CES) at the University of Coimbra share their perspectives on a wider interpretation of the Resolution.

The threats and insecurities experienced by women, particularly in relation to armed violence, have the same roots whether a country is in conflict or at peace. However, these underlying causes are often forgotten or silenced in countries that are considered to be in peace.

It is of utmost importance to ensure that States regarded as peaceful do not only interpret SCR 1325 through what they can do for other States, or make other States comply. They should also strive to reflect upon the meaning and translation of 1325 in relation to their own context and the continuum of violence and more broadly interpret the Resolution.

In practice, this would mean re-thinking intervention, and adapting 1325 to formal peace scenarios. Possible responses would not lead to military intervention but would require the analysis of armed violence, prevention and responses in other intervention sectors, and involve disarmament campaigns, more inclusive public security policies and the preparation and implementation of effective programmes on domestic violence.

Annual national reports on the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms (PoA) should include sex-disaggregated data, and information on legislation and policies to address the impact of armed violence on women and girls.

States should use 1325 to support research by think tanks and civil society organisations; invest in the development of effective policies, strategies and legislation to prevent armed violence; and protect victims, particularly women and girls.

Operationalisation at inter-ministerial level and sector policies

The operationalisation of 1325 presupposes multi-level action and articulation between different sectors: security (peacekeeping missions, security system reform), justice (both transitional and post-conflict, as well as regular justice); and development (economic, social and cultural cooperation between States).

It is necessary that the countries formally at peace put in place an effective strategy of information sharing and labour division between the multiple governmental actors involved. Additionally, it is essential to create and use spaces for dialogue on these issues with civil society.

It is especially important to invest in the training of military forces engaged in peacekeeping, and humanitarian and development aid personnel on gender, particularly the gendered dimensions of violence, as well as the training of gender experts on conflict and war analysis.

Another entry point for the implementation of 1325 is through the design of inclusive DDR and SSR policies that pay attention to gender issues. This would address the variety of roles that are held by women and men in contemporary conflicts, as well as the different ways in which they are affected.

The integration of gender perspectives should be included in development aid and peacebuilding policies, including in DDR and SSR processes. These processes, although essential, are often not comprehensively implemented and do not adequately respond to gender based violence. In fact, the perpetuation of violence in peacetime, particularly in the urban and domestic spheres, is not addressed by these processes. In this context, access to justice and human rights should be given particular attention, namely through support to victims of violence.

It is also important to promote the development of adequate policies, strategies and legislation to prevent armed violence, including armed domestic violence.

IANSA becomes a member of Gender Action for Peace and Security – GAPS UK

We are delighted to announce that IANSA is a new member of Gender Action for Peace and Security UK (GAPS).

Established in May 2006, GAPS promotes, supports and monitors the inclusion of a gender perspective in security and peace building policies and the fulfillment of commitments made in UN Security Council Resolution 1325, European Parliament resolution 2000/2025 and related instruments on women, peace and security. GAPS co-ordinates the Associate Parliamentary Group (APG) on Women, Peace and Security, the official parliamentary forum in the UK for the discussion and critical analysis of issues relating to Security Council Resolution 1325.

IANSA recognises that the implementation of SCR 1325 is vital tool for the prevention of armed conflict and the inclusion of gender in the discourse on peace and security. Although small arms are not specifically mentioned in the Resolution, 1325 connects the inter-related issues of small arms violence with women's peace and security.

The WN will make concrete contributions to GAPS in areas linked to security sector reform, including: legislation to include gun ownership, registration and safe storage scheme for military and police firearm stocks; and gender and small arms education and training for the police and military.

Events

International Seminar: Inequality and conflicts: a gender perspective

1-2 October 2008: University of Guadalajara, Mexico
www.udg.mx

Justice for Women Forum

6-8 October 2008: Kampala, Uganda
Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice is hosting this meeting for women rights and peace activists from Uganda, the DRC, Darfur and Central African Republic. A small number of advocates from around the world, partners, allies and donors will also participate and contribute.
www.iccwomen.org

UN General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament and International Security

6 October - 4 November 2008: New York, USA (This will include the UN Security Council Open Debate on 1325)
www.reachingcriticalwill.org/political/1com/1com08.html

Women in Armed Conflict: International Civilian Peace-keeping and Peace-building Training Program (IPT)

12-24 October 2008: Austrian Study Centre for Peace & Conflict Resolution (ASPR)
www.aspr.ac.at

Mothering, Violence, Militarism, War, and Social Justice

23-26 October 2008: Association for Research on Mothering (ARM): York University, Toronto, Canada
www.yorku.ca/arm/conference.html

Violence and Small Arms: the Portuguese case

30-31 October 2008: University of Coimbra, Centre for Social Studies, Portugal
www.ces.uc.pt

Anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325

31 October 2008: International

First International Conference on Survivors of Rape - A multi disciplinary approach

14-15 November 2008: Aarhus, Denmark
Participants will present research on the mental and physical consequences of rape, on different models of treatment of survivors of rape, and the work of the police and the legal system. The organisers hope that it will lead to answers to ensure that rape survivors are offered the best forms of care and support – medically, psychologically as well as judicially.
www.voldtaegt.dk/conference2008.php

AWID International Forum on Women's Rights and Development – The Power of Movements

14-17 November 2008: Cape Town, South Africa
www.awid.org

16 days of activism against gender violence

25 November - 10 December 2008
This year's campaign is dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It will build on, celebrate and honour the declaration, and will make demands to advance women's human rights.
www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/16days

Beyond Firewood: exploring alternative fuels and energy technologies in humanitarian settings

11-12 December 2008: New Delhi, India
The conference will bring together developers, practitioners, and users of alternative fuels, energy technologies, and physical protection strategies appropriate for use in humanitarian settings from all over the world.
www.fuelnetwork.org/conference

Resources

Community of Practice (CoP) on Gender Training

UN-INSTRAW
The CoP will promote dialogue and analysis of gender training, identification of achievements and challenges, and reflection on how gender training can be strengthened as a component of gender mainstreaming and sustainable development.
www.un-instraw.org/en/community-of-practice/general/pagina-introduccion-cop.html

Justice for Women: Seeking Accountability for Sexual Crimes in Post-Conflict Situations

Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior (FRIDE), 2008
Experts focused on the International Criminal Court, women's participation in judicial processes and case studies from Rwanda, DRC and Sudan/Darfur. This report includes proposals that respond to the challenges in achieving justice for women.
www.fride.org/download/CR_Justice_for_Women_ENG_jul08.pdf

Reflections on Guns, Fighters and Armed Violence in Peace Processes

Buchanan, C. (ed.), 2008, *Negotiating Disarmament Viewpoints Volume 1, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue*
This book provides first-hand observations on the negotiation of security issues in the El Salvador peace process and mediation in Aceh, Indonesia.
www.hdcentre.org/files/Report%201%20Apr08.pdf

Small Arms and Light Weapons: Selected UN Documents

Office for Disarmament Affairs, 2008
Includes documents which have covered new ground in the last 12-18 months.
http://disarmament.un.org/ddapublications/SALW/Small_Arms_2008-full.pdf

SSR and the demand for small arms and light weapons

Donald, D. & Olonisakin, F. (2007), *Project Ploughshares briefing 01/07*
This paper analyses the cyclical nature of security sectors and violent conflict, and suggests measures to improve accountability and reduce the demand for SALW.

www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/Briefings/brf017.html

Stop Violence Against Women Website - (STOPVAV)

Provides women's rights advocates with information and advocacy tools with focus on domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual assault, and trafficking in women.
www.stopvaw.org/Stop_Violence_Against_Women.html

Uganda: Poverty, Wars and Alcohol Perpetuate Domestic Violence

Uganda Law Reform Commission
This report finds that armed conflict is a major reason for the high incidence of domestic violence in Ugandan communities. It also notes that the attitudes of judges and judicial officers to domestic violence often leads to perpetrators being treated leniently.
www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=79259

WOMEN'S NETWORK



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International Action Network on Small Arms

We are grateful to the Government of Norway for its support.