

Latest events in the Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence: 23 June

Please visit www.iansa.org/woa to see photos, posters and more information about the Week's events

Add the Week of Action banner to your website! Click here: <http://tinyurl.com/mvcj7f>

UNITED NATIONS

- UN Deputy Secretary-General at conference on domestic violence

AFRICA

- Angola: TV interview
- Burundi: Public radio hears how guns threaten development
- Burundi: Government promises support for ATT
- Cameroon: DDV survey, and heated debate on gun violence
- Cameroon: Activists use survey skills to explore ATT and DDV
- Central African Republic: Conference and rally on gun violence
- Chad: Almost a permanent sense of crisis
- DR Congo: Round-table spotlights refugee problem
- Ghana: Gunmakers support restraint
- Liberia: Strong support for DDV and ATT at symposium
- Nigeria: Women lobby parliamentarians and media
- Somalia: Culture of gun violence confronted in workshops
- South Africa: Film screening success
- Sudan: workshop and rally on domestic violence

AMERICAS

- Argentina: Candlelit protest in Buenos Aires
- Brazil: Giant cake commemorates lost birthdays
- Brazil: Peace convoy rolls on
- Canada: Film launches DDV campaign
- Costa Rica: School visits explain gun dangers
- Dominican Republic: Report on guns and development
- Guatemala: Peace rally by candlelight
- Jamaica: Calls for 'guns off the streets'
- Paraguay: Gun victims mourned
- USA: Florida conference welcomes DDV campaign
- USA: Peace Fellows supporting DDV campaign around the world

ASIA

- India: Village rallies take peace oath
- Nepal: Petition for ATT support
- Nepal: Inventive campaign to highlight of gun violence
- Pakistan: Poster and press coverage
- Philippines: Chant demands peaceful election
- Solomon Islands: Media for PoA meeting

EUROPE

- Belarus: Officials and prisoners discuss approaches to violence
- UK: Disarm Domestic Violence website

MIDDLE EAST

- Iraq: Peacebuilding effort embraces ATT

UNITED NATIONS

Asha-Rose Migiro addressed the Council of Europe's Conference for Ministers of Justice, held in Tromsø, Norway on 18 June. The conference theme was on Breaking the Silence of Domestic Violence. IANSA members were heartened by her inclusion of gun violence in the home when talking about the multiple dimensions of domestic violence and its impact upon women. "They lose their lives to gunshots, beatings, burns and other horrendous forms of abuse" she stated. "This violence is pervasive and its effects are widespread. Not only are individual women victimised, but whole societies suffer major setbacks." In line with the objectives of the Disarm Domestic Violence campaign, Ms Migiro acknowledged the need for a legal framework to help prevent such violence including the development of new laws, the review and better implementation of existing ones, and the need to change attitudes and behaviour.

AFRICA

Angola

Angola 2000's activities in the Week of Action including events in Chinguar (Bie Province) on 18 June and at Baia-Farta (Benguela Province) on 20 June. Cirilo Mbonge was interviewed on the live TV programme Bom Dia Angola (Good Morning Angola) on the national TV channel TPA.

Burundi

Dagropass and Colonie des Pionniers du Développement appeared on Public Radio Africa on 18 June to argue that the proliferation of small arms is hindering development. Abel Ntahombaye said the weapons threatened economic development and peace: "Even the elections in 2010 will be jeopardised by this issue." Jacques Ntibarikure added: "The government of Burundi must make every effort for a strict and effective control of small arms and light weapons by signing the Arms Trade Treaty."

The Burundi Government supported the Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence through the Commission for Civilian Disarmament and Fight against Small Arms (CDCPA) in collaboration with UNDP. At an event on 20 June, Leopold Danzudaze, second vice-president of CDCPA, answered questions about civilian disarmament, which he said was a priority to help consolidate peace and security in Burundi. "In July, Burundi will not fail to support the ATT," he promised.

Cameroon

The Trauma Centre in Cameroon launched the Disarm Domestic Violence campaign on 22 May with a month-long survey about guns in the home, interviewing more than 100 households in Yaounde. On 18 June, the Centre and partner organisations hosted a discussion between members of Yaounde NGOs, police officers, journalists and prison officers, at the Ecumenical Service for Peace. The meeting discussed the illegal uses of small arms, the impact on women, and the use of weapons by minors. Such was the intensity of debate that the meeting lasted more than five hours.

Justine Kwachu, Executive Director of Women in Alternative Action Cameroon (WAA) met a disarmament expert at the Ministry of External Relations on 13 June to discuss Cameroon's involvement in the ATT process, and the UNIDIR-organised Dakar meeting which took place in April. WAA Cameroon also met with religious leaders to explain the ATT, and participated in radio programmes with TBC and Satellite FM interviewing young people about gun violence. Justine met the publishers of the Post, Eden, The Guardian Post, Vanguard, and The Sun and briefed them on Cameroon's involvement in the ATT process, the work of IANSA, and the Global Week of Action. On 20 June WAA Cameroon led a workshop with leaders of women's groups. Commissioner Rita Nji spoke about the Disarm Domestic Violence campaign.

Between 14-18 June, WAA Cameroon led a training session for 25 young people on survey techniques. The training included guidance on how to approach the authorities on small arms topics. Participants in the course then used questionnaires to explore the effect of guns on women, and explain the Disarm Domestic Violence campaign.

Central African Republic

NGO Femmes de Paix autour du Monde worked in partnership with UNDP to organise a conference and rally highlighting the dangers of gun use. This was supported by a press release and poster campaign.

Chad

Céline Larmadji, interim coordinator of the Committee of Appeal for Peace and Reconciliation, told a press conference on 20 June that around two million small arms were circulating in Chad. She said the almost permanent sense of crisis in the country had promoted the circulation of small arms at all levels of the population; in the markets, in the streets and at schools.

Media: www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Africa.htm#Cha

DR Congo

The VIP Hotel in Goma was the venue for the round-table organised by ASVOCO with national and international civil society to discuss gun violence in the province of North Kivu. ASVOCO President Mwenetabatende DufinaTabu said the meeting showed how firearms caused people to flee their communities and exacerbated the refugee problem.

Ghana

Local blacksmiths supported the need for stronger regulation on craft production of small arms, in a radio broadcast on Citi FM on 17 June. The broadcast was arranged by Emmanuel Sowatey of the National Peace Council. Citi FM is in English, but Emmanuel was also interviewed about gun violence by the Akan-language radio stations Ash FM (19 June) and Kessben FM (20 June).

Liberia

Barbara Ketter, the Gender Officer with Youth for Community Academic & Development Services (YOCADS) urged campaigners to lobby the Liberian parliament to protect women against gun violence in the home, at a symposium in Monrovia on 20 June. The meeting organised by Liberians United to Expose Hidden Weapons (LUEHW) discussed the Disarm Domestic Violence campaign and the Arms Trade Treaty. Swedish researcher Viktor E. Bengtsson gave an international perspective on an ATT. He called for a treaty that would legalise the prosecution of violators whether or not their home countries ratified the ATT. Mr Bengtsson also called on Liberian campaigners to lobby the US government. The symposium drafted a letter to Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in support of a strong ATT.

Nigeria

Activists from the CAFSO-Women's Rights Action Group visited the parliament of Oyo State in south-western Nigeria to lobby its members and ask them to support tough legislation to reduce gun violence. The activists met with representatives from the House Committee on Security and Strategy, the House Committee on Women's Affairs, Human Rights and Good Governance, and the House Committee on Information and Orientation. The group was also successful in meeting with a major national newspaper, The Nigerian Tribune, to discuss the media's role in highlighting and eradicating gun violence.

Somalia

Somali Women Education Campaigners (SWEC) discussed the problems of small arms in live hour-long radio and TV programmes with SIMBA radio and Universal TV on 16 and 17 June. Speakers included NGO members, academics and artists. All of those who phoned in called for measures to stop the flow of small arms into Somalia. The programmes were also broadcast by Peace Voice Radio. On 18 June, university professors and school teachers discussed the impact of gun violence on educational opportunities during a workshop held by SWEC. On 19 and 20 June SWEC held three hour sessions in internally displaced people (IDP) camps to raise awareness of gun violence. The IDPs reported on their experiences of gun violence, and acknowledged that most guns are used by young people and are widely available at popular shopping areas and markets. They were interviewed by Peace Voice Radio, Simba Radio and Universal TV about their experiences.

South Africa

The Ceasefire Campaign screened the ARTE/Amnesty documentary Arms, Dealing and National Interests and Michael Moore's film Bowling For Columbine in Johannesburg. A discussion on guns and domestic violence happened, and materials for the Disarm Domestic Violence campaign were distributed.

Sudan

Women Development Group (WDG) in Khartoum held a two-day workshop on gun violence in the home on 16-17 June. On 19 June, WDG, in association with Sawa Sawa Women Association, Women Relationship,

and Ekawia Association led a peace march to the Council of Ministers. They presented a paper on the work of IANSA, SSANSA and the Disarm Domestic Violence campaign, to the Acting Governor, the Minister of Local Government and Law Enforcement, and various other Ministers and Government Advisors. In her address to the crowd, Mary Rose Mariano, the Minister of Social Development, spoke about the impact of guns on women and gave examples of recent incidents where women had been killed by their husbands, including a local staff member of UNMIS.

AMERICAS

Argentina

Amnesty International Argentina and the National Disarmament Network (Red Argentina para el Desarme) held a candlelit event on 20 June at Plaza Moreno in Buenos Aires. Representatives from 10 NGOs lit more than 300 candles to remember gun violence victims. Activists also distributed flyers and information about the proliferation and misuse of small arms in Argentina. The event was organised in coordination with CLAVE (Latin American Coalition for Violence Prevention). AI sent a letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs asking him to participate in the next ATT meeting in New York. AI also sent a letter to US President Obama urging him to support the ATT.

Report: www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Americas.htm#Arg2

Brazil

A giant artificial birthday cake with candles on top was displayed at Plaza da Sé in São Paulo in remembrance of those who have died as a result of gun violence. Sou da Paz activists spread the word about Brazil's high toll of gun-deaths in an event which ran simultaneously with others organised by CLAVE in Latin America. Several newspapers and the agencies Terra and Agencia Brasil covered the event.

Photo and media: http://www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Americas.htm#Brazil

The National Convoy on Disarmament continued its progress around Brazil visiting Goiânia, Palmas and Maceió. According to Gabriela de Carvalho Dutra of Viva Rio, the focus of the Convoy is the implementation of the national gun control policy and public mobilisation for the first National Conference on Public Security, to be held in August 2009. The Convoy has visited 12 cities so far, with good media coverage and strong attendance by government officials, religious groups, local NGOs and academics.

Canada

The Disarm Domestic Violence Campaign was launched in Guelph, Ontario, with the screening of the documentary, 'Devil's Bargain: A Journey into the Small Arms Trade'. The event was organised by Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis, Project Ploughshares and the Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children.

Photo and media: www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Americas.htm#Can

Costa Rica

Fundacion Arias visited three high schools in San Jose to explain the threat posed by small arms. This followed increasing concern in Costa Rica about students bringing guns to school. Fundacion Arias also wrote to parliamentarians asking them to amend the national firearms law and to regulate arms transfers.

Dominican Republic

1,679 were shot dead during 2008 in Dominican Republic, a country of 9.7 million people, according to a report about development and armed violence released during the Week of Action in Santo Domingo by ICED (Caribbean Institute for Lawful States) and FUNCEJI (Community of Hope and International Justice Foundation). Both organisations issued press releases about the impact of gun violence on social and economical development, which were picked up by the newspapers 7 Dias and Clave Digital.

Media: http://www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Americas.htm#Dom

Guatemala

Young people gathered at Plaza de la Constitucion (Guatemala City) on 20 June and marched to Plaza San Sebastian where they lit candles to remember gun violence victims. Participants read poems and rock groups sang songs rejecting violence. The event was coordinated by IEPADES and CLAVE.

Jamaica

Presentations on gun violence were given at a town hall meeting with residents of Jones Town, one of the most gun-affected neighbourhoods of St Andrews. Gangs in the community had been engaged in long-running conflict with the nearby Torrington park neighbourhood. The event was jointly hosted by the Kingston and St. Andrew Action Forum (KSAAF) and UNDP Jamaica, and allowed participants to discuss ways to reverse Jamaica's legacy of gun violence.

Paraguay

A remembrance service for Paraguay's victims of gun violence was held in Panteon de los Heroes Square in Asuncion on 20 June. A total of 835 candles were lit in memory of the 835 people who have been killed by guns since the start of 2008. Activists demanded that government strengthen gun laws and take action to control illicit arms transfers. A petition in support of a strong ATT was circulated; it will be sent to the Paraguayan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Children drew and wrote peace messages and adults were given badges and flyers with statistics and information about armed violence. The event was organised by Amnesty International Paraguay and CEJ (Judicial Study Centre) in collaboration with CAES, the Violence Prevention Committee and CLAVE (Latin American Coalition for Violence Prevention). There was extensive media coverage.

Media and photo: www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Americas.htm#par

USA

The Advocacy Project, a partner of IANSA, is supporting the Disarm Domestic Violence campaign by sending Peace Fellows to eight IANSA member organisations – in Argentina, Canada, Colombia, El Salvador, Nepal, Namibia, Portugal, Serbia, and Uganda. The Fellows are collecting information and documenting the stories of survivors of gun violence in the home. Read more at:

<http://advocacynet.org/resource/1253>

Over 50 delegates attended a lively Disarm Domestic Violence conference organised by the Nova Southeastern University Department of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, on 18 June. The event, held in the Alvin Sherman Library-Art Gallery, attracted representatives from the American Association of University Women, NSU Chapter; Public Education Officers; legal officers; law enforcement officers; students (both university and high school), professors; and members of the local community. Outreach activities included the collection of signatures for a petition urging Florida State to strengthen its gun laws to prevent domestic violence abusers from accessing guns.

ASIA

India

The Rural Development and Youth Training Institute continued organising rallies against gun violence and misuse of small arms in the villages of Mandargar and Jaspura and Damodarpura in the Kota District, Rajasthan. Over 600 people took an oath that they will not use any guns or weapons in their community. RDYTI also hosted puppet shows, theatre performances, workshops, village meetings and youth Leadership training camps.

Nepal

Amnesty International Nepal collected over 1500 signatures calling for the Foreign minister to support the process for a strong ATT. Signatures were collected in five areas of the country. A candlelit rally was held in Banepa on 17 June to raise awareness about gun violence.

Photo: www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Asia.htm#Nep

Student members of the medical anti-war group IPPNW ran a media campaign, publishing 10 letters highlighting the effects of gun violence in several newspapers. They also ran a writing competition in schools, for which students interviewed gunshot victims in hospital. A poster and leaflet campaign also took place.

Pakistan

Blue Veins, a women's group based in the North West Frontier Province, produced a poster linking the themes of the dangers of guns in the home and community. They also received widespread media coverage

throughout the week including Daily Surkhab, Daily Subah, Daily Nawe Waqt, Daily Pakistan, Daily Jinnah, Daily Express, Daily Khabrain, The Daily Awam un Nass, Daily sheyaq, Daily Wahdat. Daily Jihad, and Daily Khabroona.

Poster: www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Asia.htm#Pak

Philippines

Campaigners urged politicians to renounce “guns, goons or gold” during the 2010 election campaign. PhilANSA made this call at the Election Commission in Manila on 23 June. Previous elections have been marred by gun violence involving political parties and their supporters. National media covered the protest, including GMA TV News.

Media: http://www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Asia.htm#phi

Solomon Islands

The national newspaper Solomon Star reported that the government would be attending the Pacific regional seminar on the UN Programme of Action on small arms, held 22-23 June in Sydney (Australia).

Media: www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/Asia.htm#SI

EUROPE

Belarus

The National Civil Society Advisory Council met with prisoners awaiting the death penalty in Prison #8, Zhodino, on 17 June. They discussed ways to break the cycle of violence, including reducing access to guns and abolishing the death penalty. IANSA member SCAF is part of the Advisory Council, which is chaired by the Head of Presidential Administration. The Head of the OSCE Office in Minsk participated. The discussion received widespread media coverage.

UK

The IANSA Women’s Network has launched a new website with a dedicated section on the Disarm Domestic Violence campaign. Find out more at:

http://www.iansa-women.org/disarm_dv

MIDDLE EAST

Iraq

Three different sections of the community were involved in seminars on armed violence organised by the Iraqi Organisation for Rehabilitation of Society and Environment in Karbala, central Iraq. On 17 June, the participants were sheiks and other community leaders who agreed to work with the organisation to reduce gun violence. On 21 June Peace Corps and other peace groups took part, and on 23 June academics were involved. Throughout the week, the organisation hand-delivered information on their activities to the media in Karbala. Participants in the seminars committed to creating a forum for peacebuilding in Karbala, which will develop projects to reduce the supply and demand for small arms, including urging the government to support an Arms Trade Treaty.

Photo: http://www.iansa.org/campaigns_events/WoA2009/mena.htm#Ira

Please tell us about the events in your countries as soon as possible so we can broadcast them to the network!