

Latest events in the Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence: Tuesday 16 June

AFRICA

- Mali: Radio debate calls for end to arms “anarchy”
- Nigeria: ATT discussion on Benue radio
- Liberia: Broadcasting the message despite stormy weather
- Sierra Leone: Urgent call for legal reforms

AMERICAS

- Colombia: Gun amnesty, seminar, toy gun exchange
- Paraguay: Media blitz, and request to the Minister for Women
- USA: Statewide roll-out of Disarming Domestic Violence
- USA: Medics launch innovative campaign

ASIA

- Bangladesh: Wide coverage for campaign launch
- South Korea: AI Korea promotes ATT petition
- Sri Lanka: Survey on guns and domestic violence

EUROPE

- Macedonia: ATT and domestic violence discussed in Skopje
- Serbia: TV interview for Victimology Society
- UK: Students quiz the government on ATT
- UK: Monitoring incidents of guns in domestic violence

AFRICA

Mali

The RJSDAO (West Africa Network of Journalists for Security and Development) discussed the ATT in a radio broadcast on 15 June. The ambassador of Morocco in Mali, Moulaye Idriss, stressed the importance of regulating the trade in small arms. Amadou Foamed Maiga, President of RJSDAO, agreed, saying that weapons should not “circulate anarchically” around the world. “This will allow countries such as the DRC to feel like any other independent country, where people are free, proud and fully-secure.”

Nigeria

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was the topic of a panel discussion on Benue Radio, an English language radio station in Benue State, in central Nigeria. The discussion was arranged by Jireh Foundation.

Liberia

Heavy thunderstorms in Liberia caused the postponement of a media round table discussion, but Liberians United to Expose Hidden Weapons had slots on national radio stations including UN radio, Sky FM, Star radio and Change FM on 15 June. The main focus was an ATT and calls for the government to further support the process.

Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone Action Network on Small Arms (SLANSA) launched a media campaign in Freetown on 15 June. They issued a powerful statement calling for the government to fast-track the Arms, Ammunition and Explosives Act and establish a National Commission on small arms. They also called for government to support a strong ATT during the Open-Ended Working Group in July 2009. Their statement was reported on the national Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) which highlighted an increase in gun incidents as reported by the police.

SLANSA members are also pressing for the government to harmonise gun and domestic violence laws, and for spouses and partners to be consulted before a gun license is granted - an essential measure to protect women.

AMERICAS

Colombia

For the first time, Medellin's week of action was supported by local government, which organised events designed to promote civilian disarmament. Police displayed 55 rifles and ammunition which they had recently seized, and civilians were encouraged to voluntarily hand in their guns. IANSA members from Bogota participated in a seminar on the problems caused by civilian possession of guns, after which the city council extended a ban on carrying guns in the city. Bus and taxi drivers pledged not to carry guns, and children swapped toy guns for other toys. On television, the role of women in disarmament was discussed.

Paraguay

Coordinadora para Asentamientos Espontáneos (Committee for Spontaneous Settlements) started the Week of Action with media outreach to print and broadcast journalists. The group has requested a meeting with the Minister for Women to discuss the aims of the Disarming Domestic Violence campaign.

USA

Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WSCADV) held a mass email mailout and phone round to its 66 member programmes on 16 June to explain the Disarming Domestic Violence campaign. They used research and policy recommendations from the Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review. These stressed the importance of asking domestic violence survivors about the presence of firearms in their homes, and discussing the risks; and asking local law enforcement agencies whether they have a protocol for removing weapons from convicted domestic violence offenders. If not, WSCADV is asking members to consult one of the law enforcement agencies in Washington State that has implemented such a policy.

USA

The Massachusetts-based medical organisation International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) has launched an innovative project to highlight the human suffering caused by gun violence. The "Medical Voices Against Violence" campaign uses real-life stories from its members to educate others about the tragic consequences of gun violence. Among the participants is Ursula, a medical student from Germany, whose contribution is a sombre reflection on the mass shooting near Stuttgart in March. "The local newspaper proudly announces that following the shooting, almost 400 firearms of all kinds and 250 kg of ammunition have been voluntarily handed in so far. I wonder how many more bullets are still stored by my neighbours, leading to a horribly dangerous illusion of security." See the site here <http://ippnw.org/Programs/AFP/MVAV.htm>

ASIA

Bangladesh

The Global Week of Action was launched in Dhaka on 15 June with a press conference at the Dhaka Reporters Unity Auditorium. The conference was covered by two TV channels, two FM radio stations, two English-language and six Bangla daily newspapers.

South Korea

Amnesty International Korea has launched an online petition calling for the US to endorse a strong and comprehensive Arms Trade Treaty. The petition will be sent to the US Embassy in Seoul.
http://www.amnesty.or.kr/d_mem_act/d02.htm?method=boardList&boardid=d02

Sri Lanka

The South Asia Small Arms Network in Sri Lanka launched a mini survey on guns and domestic violence on 16 June as part of the Disarming Domestic Violence Campaign. Questionnaires have been translated into local languages and are being used in three districts: Pollonnaruwa and Anuradhapura from the North Central Province - both on the border with the conflict zone - and Hangeranketha District in a peaceful zone. The results of the survey will be used in media outreach during the week of action. The information from these districts will enable SASANet to identify areas for further research. They hope to extend the research to other districts as part of the international campaign.

EUROPE

Macedonia

On 15 June, Journalists for Children and Women Rights and Protection of Environment in Macedonia held a press conference at the Deputies Club in Skopje. The main theme was the ATT and the need for a government response. Also launched was a report on armed violence and women based on data collected as part of the Disarming Domestic Violence campaign. More than 20 journalists attended.

Serbia

Jasmina Nikolic of the Victimology Society of Serbia support group was interviewed on Belgrade-based television network TV Pink on the morning news programme on 15 June. In her interview, Jasmina highlighted the group's current anti-violence campaign by stressing the correlation between the possession of small arms and the rates of domestic violence abuse.

UK

Student members of Amnesty and Oxfam visited the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 15 June to discuss the ATT. In a lively debate, 150 supporters of the organisations quizzed ministers and diplomats on the process of creating a strong treaty, and made pledges to continue campaigning for stronger arms control.

UK

The Gun Control Network has published a list of recent incidents in the UK in which guns are known to have been used in acts of domestic violence:

<http://www.gun-control-network.org/Domestic%20Incidents.pdf>

We publish information every day about the Week of Action events. Remember to send us your information, photos and media hits!