



Global Week of Action Against Small Arms: 22 – 29 May 2006

UN Review Conference (26 June – 7 July 2006)

'It's your world- take action now'.

MENAANSA members took part in the Global Week of Action Against Small Arms with activities in Bahrain, Gaza, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

Bahrain

Students of Rehabilitation Institute for Autism and Related Communication Disorders (RIA) participated actively in Amnesty International's campaign on Control Arms launched by AI Bahrain in the Kingdom one year ago. Nasser Burdestani, the coordinator of Amnesty International (Bahrain) said that all the photos collected from Bahrain The national Million Faces Petition was delivered to the House of Representatives and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 22 May by Amnesty International - Bahrain. Bahrain, with more than 2000 photos became the biggest participant and contributor to the campaign from MENA region.

Gaza

In preparation for UN conference on small weapons, Al Mezan demands halt of the spread and misuse of small weapons in Palestine. In preparation for a UN international conference on small weapons expected in June 2006 and an international campaign launched by Amnesty International, the Middle East and North Africa Network to stop the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (MENAANSA), and Oxfam International, aimed at exerting pressure on governments in order to support a treaty on the weapons trade.

Iraq

Al-Huessinia Town- children were invited to express their feelings on violence through art 500 signatures were collected for the Control Arms Campaign in six provinces (Baghdad, Karbala, Najaf, Babylon, Diwaniya and Kut). 5000 surveys on community perceptions on violence and guns were distributed throughout Karbala. Results to be announced early June.

Jordan

At the Princess Rahma College in the city of Salt, Jordan, 20 students took part in an educational lecture and discussion on SALW misuse. Students discussed cultural and social practices such as honor killings and the use of weapons during marriage celebrations. Students were also informed about the UN PoA. Also a workshop was attended by representatives of 35 civil society organizations, as well as representatives of the Ministry of Interior and of the General Police Department, and by Mr. Fakhri Iskander a representative of the Jordanian Parliament. On the Jordanian level, the participants agreed that legislations and regulations concerning small arms and light weapons should be tightened. They further agreed on the necessity of adapting local regulations to be in line with international standards and laws.

Lebanon

Fadi Abi Allam of the Permanent Peace Movement gave a radio interview for Voice of Lebanon on 23 May. A television interview was held (with Tele Lumiere) on 29 May where gun proliferation, misuse and the upcoming UN Review Conference were discussed.

Finally a workshop was held in Tripoli organized in cooperation with the Center for Middle – Eastern Strategic Studies. The workshop program consisted of three lectures conducted by Dr. Moustapha Adib, the General Manager of The Middle – Eastern Strategic Studies, Mr. Karim El Mufti, the Head of Communication for the International Committee of the Red Cross and Mr. Fadi Abi Allam, President of Permanent Peace Movement. 30 participants represented 20 NGO's interacted and discussed gun proliferation and misuse in Lebanon and agreed to cooperate through a National Network for addressing SALW issues in Lebanon from all of its perspectives.

Ramallah

In a village called Aboud, 30 teachers and university students (male and female representing varied social and religious backgrounds) took part in a workshop organized by the Ramallah Center for Human Rights Studies where they discussed tolerance as a means for achieving community security. The workshop was also attended by the Irish Representative in Ramallah.

Sudan

The Human Security Initiative Organization (HSIO) issued a letter to the Sudanese President urging the signing and ratification of small arms agreements. The HSIO also held a meeting with the police force General Manager to discuss proposed joint activities to control illicit spread of small arms. A meeting was also held with the national focal point committee to discuss and propose the next steps for the national plan of action. A leaflet and two press releases were also issued in the Sudan Vision daily newspaper and Aladdwa on 28th and 25th May, respectively. A forum on small arms agreements and the Sudan commitments was attended by HSIO. The forum also included the participation of focal point members, the joint army force leader of the SPLM, parliament members, journalists and NGOs.

Yemen

SANA'A, May 24 — On the occasion of the World Anti-Light-arms Action Week, the Human Rights Information and Training Center (HRITC) urged the Yemeni government and Parliament to issue a law for the creation of an arms control and monitoring organization. HRITC coordinates the Regional Network for Curbing the Spread of Arms in the Middle East and North Africa.

For more information please visit: <http://www.mena-small-arms.org/RecentProjects.html>

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