



New IANSA Public Health Network Announced at UN Meeting on Small Arms

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New York City – Health professionals from around the globe gathered at the United Nations in New York City at the Second Biennial Meeting of States on the Programme of Action (UNPoA) on Small Arms to announce the formation of the new **IANSA Public Health Network**. It is being coordinated by the Nobel Peace Prize-winning International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW). Network members expressed their deep concern about the human suffering caused by the misuse of small arms.

Members of the **Public Health Network** addressed the General Assembly of delegates during the NGO presentation and discussed the need to apply proven health practices to international efforts to reduce deaths, disabilities and injuries related to the misuse of small arms and light weapons. They called for more involvement of health workers in government efforts to prevent injuries and death from small arms, and promote community health. Expanded implementation of the UNPoA must include monitoring of all of these conditions which are critical indicators of the toll being taken.

“We urge the international community to take immediate and concrete steps because guns are bad for health,” said Robert Mtonga MD of IPPNW/Zambia, Medical Field Director for the new Network. Other Network members also commented:

“We call on all member states to include health professionals in the National Commissions, or Focal Points, on small arms established under the UNPoA, and for these representatives to be given an active role in them,” said Syrian physician Ghassan Shahrour MD, coordinator of the Arab Network for Research on Landmines and ERW.

“It is our obligation as physicians and health professionals to ensure that proper resources are allocated to provide the best health services to people,” said Emperatriz Crespin MD, IPPNW/El Salvador. “When these resources are diverted to caring for victims of gun violence, they are not available for important health measures, such as vaccinations, nutrition programs, and combating deadly scourges such as HIV/AIDS,” she concluded.

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International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) is a Nobel Peace Prize-winning global federation of national medical organizations in 58 countries dedicated to research, education, and advocacy relevant to the prevention of nuclear war, and to preventing injuries and death from firearms. IPPNW is a founding member of IANSA. **The International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA)** is the global network of more than 700 civil society organisations working to stop the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons (SALW).

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