



## 2012 THEME ANNOUNCEMENT

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE  
16 DÍAS DE ACTIVISMO CONTRA LA VIOLENCIA DE GÉNERO  
16 JOURS D'ACTIVISME CONTRE LA VIOLENCE DE GENRE  
25 NOV - 10 DEC <http://16dayscwgj.rutgers.edu>



### ***From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!***

The 2012 16 Days Campaign will continue with the global theme: ***From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!*** This year's Campaign marks our third year of advocacy on the intersections of gender-based violence and militarism. Based on feedback from participating organizations and individuals, the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL), as the global coordinator of the Campaign, continues to engage with participants to challenge militarism and explore the deep socioeconomic structures that perpetuate gender-based violence.

**Militarism remains a key source of violence for women.** As an ideology that creates a culture of fear, militarism supports the use of violence, aggression, and military interventions for settling disputes and enforcing economic and political interests. **The impacts of militarism run deep, with material, institutional, cultural, and psychological impacts on all of our communities.** It privileges violent forms of masculinity, and presumes that violence is an effective way to solve problems. **Militarism often has grave consequences for the safety and security of our society as a whole, including women, children, and men.** From sexual violence in conflict to the proliferation of toy guns for children, militarism influences how we view women and men, our families, neighbors, public life, and specific countries.<sup>1</sup>

In 2011, five priority areas emanating from the global theme were identified by a global expert group. They are: (i) political violence against women; (ii) the proliferation of small arms and their role in domestic violence; (iii) sexual violence during and post-conflict; (iv) the role of state actors as perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence; and (v) the roles of women, peace, and human rights movements in challenging the links between militarism and violence against women.

Building on feedback from participants during the 2011 Campaign,<sup>2</sup> this year's 16 Days Campaign will highlight three of the five priority areas:

- 1. Violence Perpetrated by State Actors:** Governments and state actors use violence to achieve political goals, employing militaristic ideologies and the need for "state security" to pass off violence and intimidation as "security" measures. Within militarism's culture of violence, individuals in positions of authority believe they can commit crimes with impunity, which is exemplified by high rates of sexual violence within the military, threats by police to women reporting cases of violence or assault, ongoing harassment and intimidation, forced "virginity tests" on female protestors by authorities, and violence against women living and working around military bases. Women's human rights defenders who work on issues related to economic, social, and cultural rights as well as civil and political rights are also targeted. **This lack of state accountability and the failure to bring perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence to justice remains a critical challenge to ending militarism worldwide.**
- 2. Domestic Violence and the Role of Small Arms:** Domestic violence, a longstanding issue around which women's organizations have advocated, continues to be a reality in every country of the world. It is estimated that a majority of women worldwide experience violence by an intimate partner at some point in their lives.<sup>3</sup> This violence becomes even more dangerous when small arms (e.g., guns, machetes, etc.) are present in the home, as they can be used to threaten, injure, and/or kill women and children. **Not only do small arms facilitate violence against women, they also perpetuate a violent form of masculinity.** Regardless of the context (conflict or peace), the presence of guns invariably has the same effect: **more guns mean more danger for women.** Thus, this year we will continue to examine the trade in, and proliferation of, small arms and the role they play in the perpetuation of violence against women generally and domestic violence in particular. While considerable gains have been made, in the forms of legal reforms and services, many women's organizations continue to work on this urgent issue.

**3. Sexual Violence during and after Conflict:** Sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict contexts is used to reinforce gendered and political hierarchies. It is also used as a tactic to drive fear, and to humiliate and punish women, their families, and communities. While there has been more attention to this crime in recent years, **sexual violence remains a major barrier to women's safety and reintegration**, as its effects are physically, psychologically, and socially debilitating. The instability and insecurity that armed conflict brings tend to exacerbate violence against women and make its forms more extreme, widespread, and/or fatal. Even after a 'recognized' conflict ends, sexual violence may continue at high rates in homes and communities when a militarized environment remains. **Many women's organizations have emphasized the artificial separation created by terms like conflict and post-conflict, citing that militarized violence continues for women despite the end of a formal war.**

This year's 16 Days Campaign provides an opportunity to reflect on what we as women's rights activists can do to hold our governments to account and challenge the structures that allow gender-based violence to continue. As always, CWGL encourages activists to utilize the 16 Days Campaign to focus on the issues that are most relevant to the local contexts. Participation in this Campaign not only provides an opportunity for us to advocate against, and raise awareness about, gender-based violence, it also allows us to add our voices to those of women in other countries and regions who refuse to be silent. Gender-based violence is an issue that impacts all of us at multiple levels. Within this context our governments have a responsibility to respond, protect, and prevent.

### **About the 16 Days Campaign**

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is a global campaign dedicated to ending gender-based violence. The Center for Women's Global Leadership is the global coordinator. The start and end dates of the Campaign are November 25<sup>th</sup>, International Day for the Elimination of Gender-Based Violence, and December 10<sup>th</sup>, Human Rights Day. These dates were chosen to emphasize that gender-based violence is a violation of human rights. The Campaign is successful because of the activism of millions of women and tens of thousands of organizations worldwide, who are committed to ending gender-based violence.<sup>4</sup>

### **2012 Take Action Kit Materials**

CWGL is developing the 2012 Take Action Kit, which will contain resources to help you organize your 16 Days Campaign activities. The Kit will be available in multiple languages starting in August. Participants can visit our website (<http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu>) to download Take Action Kit materials or request a hard copy. Be sure to add your events to our online Campaign Calendar! Thank you!

### **How to Stay Connected and Learn More**

- The Official 16 Days Campaign website: <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu>
- Post and search for events on the online Campaign Calendar: <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/campaign-calendar>
- Join the 16 Days listserve: [https://email.rutgers.edu/mailman/listinfo/16days\\_discussion](https://email.rutgers.edu/mailman/listinfo/16days_discussion)
- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/16DaysCampaign>
- Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/16dayscampaign>
- Twitter: [https://twitter.com/#!/CWGL\\_Rutgers](https://twitter.com/#!/CWGL_Rutgers)
- 16 Days Twitter hashtag: #16days
- YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/CWGLRutgers>
- Email us anytime! [16days@cwgl.rutgers.edu](mailto:16days@cwgl.rutgers.edu)

<sup>1</sup> Center for Women's Global Leadership. 2011. "Intersections of Violence Against Women and Militarism Meeting Report." <http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu/resources/publications/gender-based-violence/388-intersections-of-violence-against-women-and-militarism-meeting-report-2011>.

<sup>2</sup> Center for Women's Global Leadership. 2012. "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence: Analytical Summary." <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/previous-years/2011/16-days-analytical-summary-2011>.

<sup>3</sup> World Health Organization. 2005. "WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women: Initial Results on Prevalence, Health Outcomes and Women's Responses." [http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who\\_multicountry\\_study](http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study).

<sup>4</sup> Center for Women's Global Leadership. 2012. "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence: Analytical Summary." <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/previous-years/2011/16-days-analytical-summary-2011>.