



# 2014 THEME ANNOUNCEMENT

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED 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 Gender-Based Violence!

Positioning the 16 Days Campaign from November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) and December 10 (Human Rights Day) rightfully stresses that gender-based violence is an international human rights violation. In the lead up to, and during, the 16 days of activism, participants will highlight the systemic nature of gender-based violence and militarism which encourages inequality and discrimination and prioritizes weapons spending over funding for quality education and healthcare and safe public spaces. The culture of militarism builds on and protects systems of power by controlling dissent and using violence to settle economic, political and social disputes. Militarism draws on and perpetuates patriarchal models of political, economic, and social domination of people by a small number of elites and privileges violent masculinity as acceptable behavior. The 16 Days Campaign focus on the intersections of gender-based violence and militarism is an effort to work toward a more equitable and peaceful world.

The intersectionality of age, class, gender, geographic location, race/ethnicity, religious affiliation, sexual orientation among other categories of analysis inform the ways in which women experience and respond to violence, inequality, and discrimination. They also affect the ways in which communities and the States respond since States' relations with the people are mediated in part through the above categories.

### Take Action to End GBV and Militarism!

Integral to a world free of gender-based violence where all are able to experience freedom from fear and want is, in part, the recognition of the indivisibility of human rights, and that women's rights are human rights. Within the contexts of the intersections of gender-based violence, militarism, and economic and social rights, and being mindful of the work of campaigners worldwide, the 16 Days Campaign has identified three priority areas for the 2014 Campaign:

## 1 Violence Perpetrated by State Actors

Despite the due diligence principle requiring State responsibility to respect, protect, and promote human rights, State actors often act with impunity as transgressors of human rights norms and/or often fail to deliver justice against perpetrators of violence, especially when conducted against socially and economically marginalized groups. Bolstered by their powerful positions, State and non-State actors use violence and the threat of violence to achieve social, economic and political control over individuals and communities. Frequently, this violence specifically targets women and in particular human rights defenders (WHRDs) other protestors and dissenters as a way to silence through fear. WHRDs are targets of both State and non-State actors and face physical and sexual violence because of who they are and what they do. In addition, the lack of accountability and regulation of transnational corporations (TNCs), including in the extractive industry, and private military companies, empowers them with the power to exploit and violate the human rights of workers, indigenous communities, and local populations, including human rights defenders.

### What can be done?

- Document and publicize instances of violations against human rights defenders, journalists, indigenous and marginalized groups.
- Engage with members of your community and with policymakers who are willing to listen and who work at the local, national, international and other influential levels to make ending gender-based violence a priority and success marker for national development.
- Strengthen and support the work of Women Human Rights Defenders and demand accountability from State and non-State perpetrators of violence through national, regional, and international mechanisms.

## 2 Proliferation of Small Arms in Cases of Intimate Partner Violence

Domestic and intimate partner violence (IPV) is a violation of human rights that affects every society, culture, and community worldwide. IPV flourishes because of economic dependence, gendered social norms, and inadequate and gender blind policies. Economic independence and transformative shifts that eliminate the current social acceptance of gender inequality and violence is necessary for an end to domestic and intimate partner violence. The presence of small arms, such as guns increases the risk of

murder by 41%, but in domestic and IPV situations for women the risk becomes even greater (272%). Not surprisingly, experts estimate that approximately 900 million small arms are in the global market, with women three to four times more likely to be victims of threats and deaths compared to men. The use of and the proliferation of small arms is an extension of normalization of violence, violent masculinity, and militarism. To curb these rates of violence, action must go beyond lip-service, legislation, or reform and toward focused implementation of prevention, protection, justice, and services for survivors.

### What can be done?

- Support disarmament of perpetrators of intimate partner violence and stronger regulation of small arms. Work with your communities and policymakers to require stronger background checks, gun storage, and linking the occurrence of intimate partner violence with removal of guns from homes.
- Encourage conversation on intimate partner violence with family, friends, and community members in order to remove stigma, protect, and support those who report it.
- Advocate for improved training and response by local law enforcement that adequately addresses intimate partner violence.

## 3 Sexual Violence During and After Conflict

Belligerents and opportunists in conflict climates commit acts of violence directed especially against women and girls as a way to instill fear, threaten, or weaken the opposing side and to reap from what they see as “spoils of war”. Various forms of sexual violence are violations of human rights and human dignity and are used to fuel conflict between ethnic and ideological groups and by international power holders as the basis of interventions and occupations. Sexual violence is gendered and carries social stigma, forcing women and girls into perpetually insecure lives with inadequate services and support from family, community, and/or health and justice providers. The onus to protect and prevent sexual violence is forced upon women or their families and communities, while the act is often condoned as a reality both of “peace” and of war and instability across the conflict spectrum. Militarism feeds attitudes that support impunity for perpetrators and allows the legal justice system to be lax about investigation, prosecution, and punishment of crimes of sexual violence. Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes must also address women and girls forced into sexual slavery and combat, and prevention, protection, and justice mechanisms must involve women’s experiences.

### What can be done?

- Build local and international awareness by writing and speaking on the occurrence and stigma of sexual violence or use your skills to heighten the sense of urgency around sexual violence in your community.
- Encourage policymakers to make addressing the crime of sexual violence in conflict a priority and to support local, national, and international prevention, protection, and justice mechanisms and women’s leadership in peace processes.
- Work with men and boys who believe in gender equality to end gender-based violence in conflict and work together to involve more of their peers in ending gender-based and sexual violence.

### Join the 16 Days Campaign!

The 16 Days Campaign is open to participants engaging in action on these issues in ways that are relevant to their specific context. Participants know best on what and with whom they can engage – whether their governments or communities – to challenge and change in positive terms the structures which perpetuate gender-based violence. Use of the hashtag #16Days when tweeting is encouraged!

### Get Connected!

- 16 Days Campaign: <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu>
- Email: [16days@cwgl.rutgers.edu](mailto:16days@cwgl.rutgers.edu)
- Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/16DaysCampaign>
- Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/16dayscampaign>
- Join the 16 Days Listserv:  
[https://email.rutgers.edu/mailman/listinfo/16days\\_discussion](https://email.rutgers.edu/mailman/listinfo/16days_discussion)
- International Campaign Calendar:  
<http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/campaign-calendar>
- Tumblr: <http://cwgl.tumblr.com>
- Twitter: @16DaysCampaign

### Request a Take Action Kit!

The Center for Women’s Global Leadership has developed materials for the 2014 Take Action Kit (TAK), which contain resources to help support activities during the 16 Days Campaign. By August, CWGL will make these materials available in hard copy in English, French, and Spanish, and other languages online only. Participants can visit our website (<http://16days.cwgl.rutgers.edu>) to download the TAK materials or to request a hard copy when they are available.

### About the 16 Days Campaign

For the past twenty-three years, the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign has been dedicated to advocacy and coordination of work in support of ending gender-based violence at the local and international levels. The dates, November 25 (International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) and December 10 (Human Rights Day), were chosen to emphasize the links between ending gender-based violence and human rights values and highlight that gender-based violence is an international human rights violation. The 16 Days Campaign is used as an organizing strategy to call for the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence by individuals and groups throughout the world. Since its founding in 1991, the Center for Women’s Global Leadership has been the global coordinator of the 16 Days Campaign.