

10 Recommendations from Civil Society to Reduce Armed Violence¹

Implementing the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence & Development in the Americas

VICTIMS & SURVIVORS

- We call upon States to develop gender-sensitive services for gun violence survivors, families, and communities, and strengthen responsiveness of health, security and justice systems, ensuring victims have access to justice and long-term rehabilitation and care.
- We urge the diplomats and political leaders to recognize the impact of gun violence on survivors, their family members and the communities. Efforts should include support for capacity building of a new generation of advocacy leaders among the survivors of armed violence, and to include them in decision making.

TOOLS OF VIOLENCE

- We recognise the critical need to implement the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons; to ratify and implement the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials; and we call upon States to sign and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty.
- We encourage government and non-government stakeholders to increase regional coordination and collaboration to reduce the impact of firearms by identifying knowledge gaps and generating evidence of the dynamics of arms trafficking to inform better regulations.

GENDER

- We call on all States to implement the full Women, Peace & Security agenda via national to regional policies or action plans, underlining the importance of meaningful participation of women in all levels of decision-making processes, mechanisms and institutions that relate to peace and security. Gender perspectives should be incorporated in policies and programs, including efforts to transform negative forms of masculinities which perpetuate structural inequalities for women within public institutions, particularly the security sector.
- We call on all States to ensure the full protection of women's human rights and the prevention of all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, including femicide, and to recognise the situation of women indirectly affected by armed violence.

¹Civil society attendees of the **Global Alliance on Armed Violence (GAAV)** and **Action on Armed Violence (AOAV)** Preparatory Meeting (27 April) for the Geneva Declaration Regional Review Conference for the Americas collectively devised these ten recommendations to reduce armed violence in the region and worldwide.

MEASURING & MONITORING ARMED VIOLENCE

- We call on actors in the region to harmonize the collection of national data and ensure public accessibility of the data, alongside appropriate training and sharing of best practice.
- We highlight the need for increased data disaggregation by sex, age, mean used to commit violence, geographic location, motivation for the crime, and nationality or/and ethnicity across research and data systems to measure the impacts of violence on women, men, children and all communities particularly affected by armed violence.

ARMED VIOLENCE & DEVELOPMENT (POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA)

- We call on states in the region to advance commitments within the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals framework (Goals, Targets & Indicators) with targets to strengthen the rule of law.
- Specific targets to reduce the impact and incidences of violence under a goal for *peaceful and non-violent societies* should also be considered. This should include, but not be limited to, the below targets:
 - Reduce by x% the number of violent deaths and injuries per 100,000; and
 - Reduce by x% bribery, corruption and impunity.

EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Testimonies on the impact of gun violence on survivors, families, communities and health systems:

“I lived with my mother and my younger sister and brother; my salary was the main income for our family. Now that I’m not working, my mother has gone out to work, but she doesn’t earn as much as I did. So it’s a big change economically for our family. Since my mother has to work, my aunt is going to be my career. She has two small children at home and a 16 year old daughter at school. As my aunt will be looking after me, her daughter will have to look after the little ones.”

“Many patients live in remote places where it may be a four-or five-hour hour walk to the road where the bus comes. Those patients can’t travel to the hospital, so they end up just staying at home. Even those who live in the capital may have no transport to get to the hospital. Someone who is paralysed can’t come on the bus, and there is no one to drive them, but the taxi fare to the hospital can be more than a family earns in a day. So they end up staying home, then they get pressure sores and infections, and end up coming back to the hospital in an ambulance, and being admitted for perhaps a month.”

Source: C. Buchanan (Ed.), *Gun Violence, Disability and Recovery* (Sydney: Surviving Gun Violence Project, 2014)

- Of the 7.12 billion people in the world today, it is estimated that 1.5 billion of them live in states that experience high levels of violence.
OECD (2013) *Building Peaceful Societies and Effective States: Putting Peace at the Heart of the Post-2015 Agenda*, OECD Briefing note, p 1.
- By 2030 it is estimated the majority of the world’s poorest will live in countries and regions affected by chronic violence and political instability
Institute for Economics and Peace (2011), pp. 6, 18, 25.
- Between 1994 and 2006 Latin America exported weapons for a total amount of USD 1.497 million and imported weapons for a total amount of USD 2.347 million.
Fleitas, D., Asociación para Políticas Públicas, *El tráfico de Armas en Latinoamérica*, 2009
<http://www.app.org.ar/wp-content/uploads/2011/04/El-trafico-de-armas-en-latinoamerica.pdf>
- The majority of the policies and programmes that contribute to comprehensive violence prevention at national and regional level do not have monitoring and evaluation systems that comprehensive measure impacts.
AOAV interview with Robert Muggah, Igarapé Institute, on the *Citizen Security Database*,
<http://aoav.org.uk/2014/shedding-light-responses-insecurity-armed-violence>
- The total amount of global military expenditure is equivalent to over 24 years of foreign aid required to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.
Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, 3rd Global Day of Action on Military Spending, Gdams, 2013 <http://www.wilpfinternational.org/3rd-global-day-of-action-on-military-spending-gdams-2013>
- Men are the majority of victims of armed violence; women are directly and indirectly affected by violence as well. Indirect effects on women are manifested in the multiple burden they carry by taking care of the wounded, attending to economic needs of families, etc.

Barr, C and Masters, S. (2011). *Why Women: Effective Engagement for Small Arms Control*.
UK: IANSA

- Violence against women is rooted in discrimination and inequality, making it challenging to address. Men and women who have not had opportunities to question gender roles, attitudes and beliefs, cannot change them.

See more at: <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/increasing-knowledge-and-awareness#sthash.NmCW7yOR.dpuf>