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GUNS KILL WOMEN AT HOME, TRIGGER GLOBAL PROTEST

San Salvador, El Salvador: Every day in El Salvador, in their own homes, women are dying. Killed by relatives in acts of domestic violence, their deaths have largely been ignored by a government that is focused on urban crime and gangs.

But for 16 days, Salvadoran women are raising their voices with others around the world during the "16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence." Their actions are being supported by the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), a global network of organizations that campaigns against gun violence.

The 16 Days began November 25, the International Day Against Violence Against Women, and will last through December 10, International Human Rights Day.

While the 16 Days address all forms of gender violence, members of the IANSA Women's Network are focusing on gun violence.

"There is a lot of work being done around the world on violence against women, but the aspect of weapons is overlooked," said Sarah Masters, Coordinator of the Women's Network. "Our engagement with campaigns such as the 16 Days is another attempt to raise awareness of the gun issue within the wider women's movement."

To that end, Network members have been busy. In Nigeria, the Women Information Network (WINET) produced two radio programs focusing on gun violence against women and justice for rape victims.

Gun Free South Africa is focusing on the abuse of women on public transportation. On December 9, the group will hold an event where drivers will sign a code of conduct making public transportation a gun-free zone and discouraging the abuse of women.

CEMUJER, a leading Salvadoran women's group, held women's marches through the streets of San Salvador November 25 and 28. CEMUJER is also joining forces with other human rights organizations to present a policy proposal sanctioning all forms of violence against women, especially femicide. As of July 2008, 99 women had been killed this year in El Salvador. More than 80 percent died from gun violence, according to CEMUJER.

"CEMUJER... joins its voice with the hundreds of thousands of women in the world who cry for justice and say, 'No to the Violence Against Women, No to Impunity,'" Alba America Guirola Zelaya, the group's executive director, said in a statement.

CEMUJER and IANSA are partners of The Advocacy Project (AP). The three groups are working together to build an international campaign against armed domestic violence, building on the connections made by women from 15 countries at a major UN conference on small arms in July. The meeting made significant progress towards putting domestic armed violence on the international agenda.

In September, AP sent Peace Fellow [Hannah McKeeth](#) to work with CEMUJER in San Salvador and develop a blueprint for the campaign.

- Read about the [16 Days of Action Against Gender Violence](#)
- Learn more about [CEMUJER](#) or visit their [blog](#)
- Learn more about the [IANSA Women's Network](#)