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## Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence Highlights (Part 3)

Dear IANSA Members and Friends,

We are pleased to share with you our third and final compilation of highlights from the Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence. Local member organizations have worked incredibly hard to make a difference in their communities and beyond. We hope this collection of actions inspires others to take action on ending gun violence.

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### Cameroon

Cameroon Youths and Students Forum for Peace ([CAMYOSFOP](#)), working with other Cameroon Action Network on Small Arms (CANSA) members, organized a press conference for discussions on the role of civil society and the parliament in regulating the illicit trade and trafficking of small arms and light weapons. It included a presentation on Cameroon's progress in implementing the [UN Programme of Action on Small Arms](#) and the [Kinshasa Convention](#), which seeks to eradicate the illicit trade and use of arms in Central Africa. The presentation highlighted how control has tightened over the production, export, import, transit, or re-shipment of small arms at the national and regional levels. Other points of discussion included the importance of women's inclusion in conflict prevention and resolution talks, the government's legislative efforts to curb armed violence, and the work CAMYOSFOP is conducting to help countries achieve the goals set out by the Kinshasa Convention. CANSA also appeared on radio and TV broadcasts to urge the government to follow through on the goals set by the Programme of Action and the Kinshasa Convention.



### South Africa

Gun Free South Africa ([GFSA](#)) organized a dialogue for high school students, creating a safe space for discussions on the students' thoughts and experiences with gun violence. During the dialogue, GFSA also gave a presentation on the impact of gun violence on youth and how the students can become involved in efforts to create safer communities without guns. They also informed the participants on the link between legal and illegal guns, as well as where they could seek help if they suffered from gun violence-related traumas.

GFSA also hosted a training workshop at Wits University for young reporters of the Children's Radio Foundation and the GFSA Youth Team. The workshop focused on how youth can engage in the legislative process to advocate for tighter gun control, whether via written submissions or by presenting their case to MPs in the Parliament.

Finally, GFSA's specialist researcher produced a research document on the history of gun control and violence in South Africa over the last 20 years, covering both the progress achieved through strong firearms legislation and the consequences of poor law enforcement. GFSA plans to distribute the paper to other research institutes.

### Colombia

La Red Nacional de Iniciativas Ciudadanas por la Paz y contra la Guerra ([REDEPAZ](#)) held a series of workshops for young people aimed at fostering a culture of peace and disarmament in Colombia. The first workshop focused on strengthening the communication, listening skills, joint leadership, and brainstorming skills of the participants. It also helped them to recognize that they are vital to society because they can help transform the country through their innovative ideas, grassroots actions, art, and joint advocacy work. The young people expressed their desire to change history by learning from past experiences and contributing to the progress of the country.

As part of the workshop, the participants identified local problems that beset their community and affect their lives: drug use, criminal acts, insecurity caused by armed violence, lack of government support, lack of job opportunities and poor health services. They were encouraged to be proactive and share ideas of possible solutions. Ideas they generated included holding community dialogue sessions, organizing workshops on tolerance, managing recreational spaces, and organizing job fairs. They then related how these solutions could help contribute to disarmament, peacebuilding, and destigmatization of vulnerable communities. Officials from the High Counseling for Victims section of the Bogota Mayor's Office of Bogota joined in this workshop.



REDEPAZ also held a second workshop on Gender and Sexual Diversity. Participants discussed the meaning and construction of gender, and debated what machismo and feminism mean, how far the freedom of each genders reach, and how to avoid making negative connotations about gender. Afterward, on a large piece of fabric, they drew pictures and wrote messages expressing what gender and sexuality mean to them from a viewpoint of respect, tolerance, and equity.

Finally, REDEPAZ held a Human Rights workshop for the youth that emphasized that peace is a fundamental right and it is the responsibility of each person to make this a reality. Participants learned about the legal limits in holding protests, marches, and demonstrations, and about the legal tools they can access in their activities. As a result of these workshops, REDEPAZ concluded that there is a strong need to continue engaging young people in peacebuilding, and that it is necessary to empower youth to achieve real changes in society. They have scheduled more activities with young people for the rest

of the year. See a short video of their workshops [here](#).

## Mali

After a spate of killings of women by firearms, the Association of Women for Peace Initiatives ([AFIP](#)) met with Mali's Minister of Justice to bring attention to the increasing rate of intimate partner violence in the country. AFIP stressed to the Minister the importance of governmental involvement in addressing the problem of intimate partner violence and brought a group of women who shared their experiences and opinions on how to combat gendered violence. The meeting received coverage from BBC News Afrique.



## Guatemala

Instituto de Enseñanza Para el Desarrollo Sostenible ([IEPADES](#)) partnered with schools from three different school zones, to bring together children and local police officers to create three "Murals for Nonviolence" that celebrate youth, peace and disarmament.





IEPADES also organized a meeting on the topic of gun destruction with police officials, representatives from the public prosecutor's office, the National Institute of Forensic Scientists, and the General Arms Control Office. During the meeting, it was decided that the Public Prosecution office would coordinate efforts to develop an arms destruction protocol for Guatemala. All parties also agreed to maintain ongoing communications on how to achieve a regular and systematic destruction of guns in the country.



### Democratic Republic of the Congo

Reseau des Femmes en Action pour le Developpement Social ([REFEADES](#)) encouraged women and children in the Fizi territory to contribute to the fight against gun violence by denouncing any illicit small arms kept in their houses. REFEADES also partnered with schools to educate students on the negative impact of armed violence.



UCOPASUKI hosted a debate with local communities, where the participants discussed the impact of SALW in the Uvira, Fizi, and Mwenga territories, where violence frequently breaks out between tribal militias and armed groups. UCOPASUKI also briefed the local residents on the Global Week of Action and the Programme of Action and distributed the IANSA Quick Guide. Moreover, UCOPASUKI translated into Kiswahili information regarding the PoA, UN meetings on small arms, and SDG 16.4 for the local community to improve their access to this information. In addition to hosting a debate, the organization appeared on the OKAPI Radio to discuss how the local communities can help confront the challenges of armed violence in the region.



## Canada

The [Coalition for Gun Control](#) launched a [new campaign](#) in its latest effort to show Toronto residents the urgency of comprehensive gun control. [The website](#) uses the geo-location and data from the Toronto Police shooting and homicide database to show users how close their current location – or one they enter into the map, such as their home or place of work – has been to a shooting. The site encourages people to share their result and urges them to contact their local member of parliament and express their concern about gun violence. The site provides the distance in metres, as well as tools to share the info on social channels to rally support.

The Coalition for Gun Control's most recent campaigns have been national and localized. They have been focusing on raising awareness about the impact of gun violence, and motivating citizens to engage with all levels of government to share their voices against gun violence. "Our problem is not just the well-resourced and aggressive gun lobby," says Wendy Cukier, president of the Coalition for Gun Control. "Our problem is that while the majority of Canadians support stronger gun control, they do not do anything about it. I have heard far too many people tell me that they never thought about gun control until someone they loved was caught in the crossfire."

To turn the campaign into a wider grassroots movement, The Coalition for Gun Control aims to make the website and the technology behind it available to other cities, both in Canada and around the world.

## Georgia

[Cultural-Humanitarian Fund 'Sukhumi'](#) held a youth workshop in Kutaisi, Western Georgia. The organization introduced the participants to the Global Week of Action and showed them how they could help secure peace and stability within the youth communities, informing them about examples of initiatives other countries have taken to reduce gun violence.



The organization also met with local government representatives from the Vani and Bagdati Municipalities of the Imereti region. During the meeting, the organization informed the government officials about the Week of Action and emphasized the importance of instituting stricter laws that limit access to firearms.



Founded in 1997, the Cultural-Humanitarian Fund 'Sukhumi' works to empower women to assert their voices in discussions about decreasing armed violence in Georgia. The organization was founded by four internally displaced women who were forced to flee Abkhazia during armed conflicts in 1992-1993.

## Nepal

Women for Peace and Democracy ([WPD-Nepal](#)) held a poetry competition to highlight the impact illicit use of small arms and light weapons has on families and communities. Eight contestants from four different schools recited poems on the theme of "Rise up for Humanity: Control the Guns" in front of teachers, students, WPD-Nepal staff, and Ms. Ranju Gautam, a lecturer at Himalaya College who served as the judge. Below is the poem of the first place winner, Manu Paudel.

*Weapons were produced for the security and prosperity  
And we promised to use it responsibly  
Unfortunately, human became the victims of guns  
Turned into weapons of mass destruction*

*How can you be so cruel and kill lives of innocents?  
Why you call deaths of your people?  
Why not respect human lives?  
Why can't you see the pain?*

*What is stopping you to see the suffering?*

*See what is happening to this world*

*There is misusing of guns*

*Man made innovations; is killing the innocents*

*Due to greed, ego and anger*

*Have become enemy to one another*

*Why are we not being able to control guns?*

*Why people carrying illegal guns not punished?*

*It is because "under the table" (corruption) work*



## El Salvador

Fundación de Estudios para la Aplicación del Derecho ([FESPAD](#)) asked El Salvador citizens what they would rather have in society instead of firearms. While many answered they wanted peace and improved education, others called for job security, musical instruments, and one young girl responded she would like skates instead of guns in society.



Thank you to everyone who participated in and supported the 2019 Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence!

Sincerely,

IANSA

United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation

# UNSCAR



**Regulate weaponry – develop community**

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