

# Global Action to Prevent War



## *Welcome to Global Action's Spring 2011 Newsletter.*

These past three months have seen an explosion of program activity for GAPW as well as for the UN in general. We have co-created new tools to monitor new disarmament developments at the UN, created new synergy between gender and development practitioners, organized civilian protection workshops in Vienna, consulted on the regulation of the global arms trade with government officials from Germany, Uruguay and other states, created a powerful new social networking tool designed to encourage young practitioners in the security sector, and weighed in directly on the implementation of the UN

resolution on Libya with senior US officials in multiple venues.

We have also continued our partnership development with a diverse range of policy actors, including the Rutgers Center for the Study of Genocide, Conflict Resolution, and Human Rights, the United Nations Youth and Student Association of Austria, the Bonn International Centre for Conversion, the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre in Ottawa, Femmes Africa Solidarité, the UN Office of the Special Adviser on the Prevention of Genocide and many more. We have also been blessed with helpful organizational contacts provided by some new friends of our program, especially Irfan Mughal of Isis Capital and Amber Creighton of AXA Advisors.

While the issues, contexts and partnerships evolve, our core strategy remains consistent: steadfast attentiveness to the needs of diplomats, generosity to program partners, and a commitment to both create and share policy information and advice that is reliable, inspirational and actionable. This is a formula that privileges trust building over branding as well as sharing over demanding. It is what

allows us to consistently have access to and have an impact on situations in ways that belie our small size.

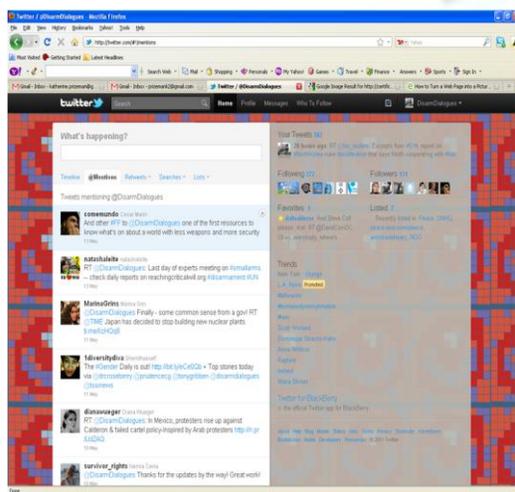


At this point, I am sorry to announce that Jenneth Macan Markar is leaving her position as Director of our Women, Peace and Security program. Effective June 24, she will leave to get married and take up residence in Washington, DC. During her time here, Jenneth has been a major sustaining force with the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. She has participated actively on gender-focused committees (including the UN Women Strategic Planning Group), directed publications and events designed to link and integrate gender perspectives into our other program work on disarmament and civilian

protection, and ushered in a new advisory committee to help direct and provide resources for our program. And, of course, she kept us fully apprised about political and social developments in her native Sri Lanka! Jenneth is arranging now for program work to be handled by Giedre Zavistauskaite of Lithuania with support from our International Coordinator, Katherine Prizeman. We will miss Jenny, but thank her for leaving the program she ran so effectively in good hands.

## **Disarmament Update**

### **Re-Defining Disarmament through Social Media**



In 2011, Katherine Prizeman and Jessica Erdman of Global Action to Prevent War launched “Disarmament Dialogues” via Facebook and Twitter. Through the use of new media, “Disarmament Dialogues” has successfully provided an accessible forum for a range of users to participate in a conversation about all aspects of disarmament and other issues of human security. By providing ‘insider’ information from the UN headquarters in New York from a mélange of sources, users are offered a fresh, new approach to a well-known issue. As an alternative to social media sources with a single agenda view to disarmament, users are able to obtain information on nuclear weapons, small arms and light weapons, current events, negotiations within the United Nations, and linkages to other related issues—such as civil war, human rights, and development.

Through a comprehensive view of disarmament, “Disarmament Dialogues” engages a diverse audience from across the globe, including government officials, UN diplomats, NGO workers, human rights activists, researchers, students, and private sector practitioners. In an audience that ranges from activists in the Arab World to UN

Ambassadors, “Disarmament Dialogues” holds a unique place in the social media community. Real-time interactions with users, as well as question and answer sessions, create an equalizing effect. Users are no longer the recipients of information—they are able to react, re-evaluate, and respond to questions posed by “Disarmament Dialogues,” whether they are freshmen in university or experts on nuclear weapons.

This type of dialogue is integral to the evolution of disarmament in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as the issue is passed down from older experts to a younger generation. With upcoming events such as the Arms Trade Treaty Preparatory Committee in July 2011, there is opportunity for users to have an impact on disarmament debates, discussions, and mechanisms. “Disarmament Dialogues” encourages all users, no matter their backgrounds, to join a conversation that will inevitably continue to develop.

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/disarmamentdialogues](http://www.facebook.com/disarmamentdialogues)

**Twitter:** [@DisarmDialogues](https://twitter.com/DisarmDialogues)

## *Meeting of Government Experts on Small Arms*

*May 9-13, 2011*



The Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts (MGE) on ‘preventing, combating, and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects’ opened Monday under the leadership of the Chair, Ambassador Jim McLay of New Zealand. The MGE lasted through the week and sought to address the serious gaps in implementation, specifically the issues of marking, recordkeeping, and cooperation in tracing, with reference to the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons (UNPoA). The week’s gathering was born of a UN General

Assembly Resolution in 2008 that called for a meeting of national experts to share experiences and best practices. The MGE sought to practically address with vigor the various implementation challenges as they relate specifically to the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) adopted in 2005.

Global Action, along with its partners, provided daily monitoring throughout the week for diplomats and civil society attendees. The daily monitors are available on the Reaching Critical Will website [here](#).

## *2011 Disarmament Commission Comes to a Close*

*April 11, 2011*

The 2011 substantive session of the Disarmament Commission came to a close on April 21, 2011 after three weeks of negotiations. On April 4, the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) opened its 2011 session under the leadership of Ambassador Hamid al-Bayati of Iraq. The Chairman of the UNDC and the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Sergio Duarte offered opening statements for the 2011

session, which was the final session of its three-year issue cycle.



The programme of work spanned three weeks and was composed of three working groups to deliberate on three specific agenda items: recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, elements on a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade, and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. Despite some positive conversations within the working groups, none of the groups were able to reach consensus on

recommendations. As such, there was clear disappointment among many delegations that agreements could not be reached or recommendations adopted.

## ***Women, Peace and Security Update***

### ***Women's Participating as a Development Priority***

***March 2011, Washington, DC***



GAPW is pleased to announce that a co-authored article by Jenneth Macan Markar, Kavitha Suthanthiraraj, and Robert Zuber has been included in InterAction's March edition of its "Monday Developments Magazine."

The article underscores the importance of women's participation for development. Women have long fought for an equal voice in the home, at work and in government. Moreover, most development-related officials, whether from religious organizations, civil society, international NGOs or governments have long recognized the positive benefits of having more women involved in the formation and implementation of security and development policy, helping to address daunting obstacles to full participation caused by major disruptions in the security sector.

But even in dire circumstances, there are strategic opportunities for development and faith based groups to help overcome participation barriers. Over the past decade the critical importance of women's participation in peace processes and policies has been recognized through numerous international institutions, resolutions and state commitments-including UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (SCR 1325), adopted in October 2000. A limited number of states have adopted SCR 1325 National Action Plans, and a set of global indicators to track implementation was formally

approved by the Council on 26 October 2010. Given our view that our responsibilities to the MDGs and implementation of SCR 1325 go hand in hand, development organizations are urged to work more closely with UN agencies, rights-based groups and local/regional women to guarantee participation. In this effort SCR 1325 can both guide and inspire faith based and development organizations in their efforts to promote full participation of women in political, development and peace processes.

The complete article is available [here](#).

### ***Report on Sexual Violence During Armed Conflict in Colombia 2001-2009***

***March 25, 2011***



The U.S. Office on Colombia and the Campaign “Rape and other Violences: Leave my Body Out of the War” coordinated a delegation of Colombian women to New York to present the findings of a recent survey on the magnitude of sexual violence against Colombian women in the context of the armed conflict. The delegation of women had the opportunity to meet with members of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

Subsequently, Global Action was privileged to host the women for an informal discussion of the situation of armed internal conflict in Colombia as the main motor behind violations against women. The report concludes that more than 480,000 Colombian women have suffered some type of

sexual violence between 2002 and 2009 in areas where there is the presence of legal and illegal armed actors. Almost 90% of these crimes are not reported and those that are continue in impunity.

The report in English is available [here](#).

The report in Spanish is available [here](#).

### ***Civilian Protection Update***

#### ***Naval Strategists Reflect on RtoP and UNEPS***

***April 26, 2011, Newport, Rhode Island***



Over the past several years, GAPW has held workshops of varying lengths in diverse global regions that have sought to fully incorporate military leaders and their important perspectives. While the world we envision embraces stronger collective security arrangements

including conflict prevention and resolution capacities, our security policy advocacy has been greatly strengthened through contacts with the skills, discipline and field experiences of military leaders. Moreover, the challenges of preserving and enhancing security in communities and nations require that we engage more diverse constituencies in these issues.

As an increasing number of military officials now acknowledge, we must move beyond rigid, military-centric responses to security arrangements in which civilians have a clear stake and accept clear responsibilities. Furthering our efforts to engage military officials and policy analysts on key issues of global security, GAPW recently accepted an invitation to the US Naval War College in Newport, RI to review recent developments on the Responsibility to Protect at the UN. This review included the resolution on Libya, the regionalization of RtoP and the need for more robust implementation tools such as UNEPS.

For two hours, a group of 14 military officers, under the direction of Professor George Oliver, discussed with GAPW the strengths and

limitations of UN-based responses to atrocity crimes, the need for more transparent early warning mechanisms regarding such crimes, prospects for standing, rapid-response peacekeeping capacity, strategies for shifting RtoP implementation burdens to regional powers, and the importance of adhering closely to mandates under UN resolutions on civilian protection so that subsequent resolutions are more likely. Part of our mission is to create opportunities for military and other security-sector constituencies to engage in open, honest dialogue with their civil society counterparts and others about the best ways to preserve and enhance security, including the protection of civilians from the threat of atrocity crimes. The opportunity provided by the Naval War College was enlightening and most appreciated. Our next such opportunity will be in five weeks in Vienna at an event on civilian protection that we have co-organized and which will be hosted by the Austrian National Defense Academy.

***Building Collaborative Capacities  
to Protect Civilians and Prevent  
Atrocity Crimes***

***March 24, 2011, Washington, DC***



On March 24, Global Action led a discussion at the US State Department as part of the inter-agency Genocide and Mass Atrocity Prevention working group. About two dozen representatives from State, Defense, Justice, Health and Human Services and other Federal agencies were in the conference room.

The one hour session was designed primarily to review recommendations from the book “Healing the Wounds: Speech, Identity, & Reconciliation in Rwanda and Beyond” - authored principally by Sheri Rosenberg of Cardozo Law School with support from GAPW - along with other recommendations stemming from our own work with the UN’s Genocide Prevention Office, the International Coalition on the Responsibility to

Protect (R2P), and other key partners. However, the conversation at State quickly turned to Libya and the controversy over the application of a recent Security Council resolution that provided legitimacy for civilian protection activity, specifically in the form of a ‘no fly’ zone. Our position was that Libya represents a legitimate R2P case, but that there are danger signs in the way in which the resolution was interpreted by implementing parties.

GAPW was pleased to have this time with US government officials who face a myriad of challenges in supporting international diplomatic activity while remaining the ‘default’ for military engagement once diplomacy fails. To shift this ‘default,’ we need more robust and reliable, UN-based preventive tools and capacities as well as more ‘good faith’ attention to the limits (and not just the permissions) imposed by UN resolutions.

***Resolving Youth Conflict in  
Ethnically Diverse Rural Settings***

***March 30, 2011, Robeson County,  
North Carolina***



Global Action takes seriously the need to listen to and partner with youth, anti-poverty and conflict prevention professionals in diverse cultural settings. The policies for which we advocate at the UN have direct connections to local problems, opportunities and strategies for change. It is these choices and challenges that give life and context to our own, often abstract, work at the international policy level. On March 30, GAPW was pleased to lead a workshop on ‘youth

violence’ in Robeson County, NC - one of the most ethnically diverse (home to native Lumbee people) and economically challenged counties in the US. Robeson County agencies, especially the Center for Community Action (CCA), are now partnering on a grant with the University of North Carolina Academic Center for Excellence in Youth Violence Prevention to provide interview-based data on countywide youth violence that can help set policy for local schools and civic agencies seeking to roll back rising levels of youth violence.

Our workshop affirmed the value of data gathering, but also explored how the data could be used to build a culture that was context-appropriate and that can more effectively and fairly address youth violence. These tangible collaborations between ordinary citizens, schools, civic agencies and

academic centers are inspiring to behold. They remind us that there are many sound strategies and robust commitments on display far from our own policy bubbles. GAPW will stay in close touch with this project - as well as the Philanthropy of Community and Women’s Project initiatives of CCA - and seek new pathways of mutual engagement and support.



*Global Action to Prevent War (GAPW) is a transnational network dedicated to practical measures for reducing global levels of conflict and to removing the institutional and ideological impediments to preventing armed violence and severe human rights violations.*

*Our Program Statement grounds the goal of conflict prevention in specific integrated phases over a three to four-decade period and demonstrates in a concrete way how we can move from an international system based on conflict and power relations to one grounded in law and multilateral institutions.*

*We highlight and promote integrated security policies in the international community: advances in early warning, the prevention and resolution of armed conflict, post-conflict peace-building, conventional and nuclear disarmament, the implementation of standing, rapid-response peacekeeping to combat genocide and crimes against humanity, and the full participation of women in all peace policies and processes.*