

“Make it Binding: Include Gender-Based Violence in the Arms Trade Treaty”

Joint Oral Statement for the 57th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women on Elimination and Prevention of all Forms of Violence Against Women and Girls

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Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Passionists International; Parliamentarians for Global Action (PGA); The International Peace Bureau; Center for Women's Global Leadership; International Association of Lawyers; Against Nuclear Arms; Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries; Edmund Rice International; Global Justice Center; VIVAT International; Loretto Community; World Young Women's Christian Association; Femmes Africa Solidarité and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW).

**Speaker:** *Annie Matundu Mbambi, President of WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) Democratic Republic of Congo Section.*

I am Annie Matundu Mbambi from Democratic Republic of Congo and I am speaking today on behalf of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom and 14 other organisations. Militarization and the arms trade contribute to the legitimatization and continuation of

Emboldened by weapons, power and status, many State and non-State actors perpetrate gender-based violence with impunity. In addition to perpetuating violence, weapons are

We have six key recommendations today.

- We call on Member States to *negotiate and agree on a strong Arms Trade Treaty that includes legally-binding gender provisions*. There must be an obligation in the criteria section of the Treaty requiring States to deny an international transfer of conventional arms where there is a substantial risk that the arms under consideration are likely to be used to perpetrate or facilitate acts of gender-based violence, including rape and other forms of sexual violence. In short, the current draft Treaty text must be strengthened. The current draft text is not strong enough.
- Secondly, we demand States to *reflect the gendered reality and the gendered impacts of arms in the work and outcome document of the 57th Commission on the Status of Women*. We demand States to include a reference to arms in the outcome document of this CSW.
- Thirdly, we call for a *reduction in military spending* and expenditure on weapons, to shift resources to equality, development and environmental sustainability. Our work as civil society, as women's groups, must be better resourced now not tomorrow.