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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

16 DAYS CAMPAIGN LAUNCHES; THOUSANDS DEMAND END TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

New Brunswick, NJ, November 21, 2012 — Thousands of organizations across the globe are demanding an end to violence in their communities as part of the 2012 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign. On November 25, 2012 the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) at Rutgers University will launch the 16 Days Campaign to call for an end to gender-based violence and appeal to governments to respond, protect, and prevent violence against women. Hundreds of events by diverse organizations are planned, including by African Women's Development Fund, UN Women, Women for a Change Buea, and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

The 16 Days Campaign begins on International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (November 25) and ends on International Human Rights Day (December 10), to emphasize that such violence is a human rights violation. This year's Campaign theme, *From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Challenge Militarism and End Violence Against Women!*, highlights the role that militarism plays in perpetuating violence against women and girls.

Against the backdrop of several recent mass shootings in the United States, the Campaign will seek in part to illuminate the relationship between domestic violence and small arms. With nearly 700 million small arms in the hands of private actors today, research shows that having a small arm in the home increases the overall risk of someone being murdered by 41%; for women in particular this risk nearly triples. In addition, a 2005 study by the World Health Organization estimates that at least one in every three women globally will be beaten, raped, or otherwise abused during her lifetime. Violence kills and disables as many women between the ages of 15 and 44 as cancer, and its toll on women's health surpasses that of traffic accidents and malaria combined.

"The pervasiveness of small arms and the violence militarism perpetuates in our communities the world over, challenges all of us to think critically about militarism in our everyday lives, governments' actions undertaken in the name of security, and how we can promote a truly peaceful world," says Dr. Radhika Balakrishnan, Executive Director of CWGL, global coordinator of the 16 Days Campaign.

Many events are planned worldwide to shed light on the impacts of the global arms trade and militarism on communities across the globe and to call for an end to gender-based violence, including:

- Across **Botswana, Lesotho, and Namibia**, Gender Links will engage in dialogue with government councils to monitor national action plans and gender-based violence prevention efforts;
- At Tbilisi State University (**Georgia**), University of Verona (**Italy**), and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (**United Kingdom**), conferences will be held on war and peace, the politics of sexuality, and violence against women, respectively;
- In Port-au-Prince, **Haiti**, a training seminar for over 1,000 women is planned, along with cultural festivals, murals, and student programs on gender-based violence and reproductive health; and
- A blog series on the intersections of gender-based violence and militarism, hosted by the Center for Women's Global Leadership, Rutgers University, **USA** will be launched.

The 16 Days Campaign, in its 22nd year, is a testament to the commitment and struggle of women and men worldwide to cast the spotlight on gender-based violence in all its forms and demand that all of society and government bring an end to this human rights violation. Since 1991, the annual 16 Days Campaign has mobilized more than 4,100 organizations in 172 countries to raise awareness about the pervasiveness of the multiple forms of violence women face. From Angola to Japan, the 16 Days Campaign has grown into a powerful platform to educate the public and governments about violence against women and human rights.

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is an international campaign from the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University. For more information, visit <http://16dayscwgl.rutgers.edu/>.

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