

The international women's movement has focused on the realities experienced by women and girls, including the power imbalance in the legal, political and social systems within which violence against girls and women flourishes. It is clearly Canadian policy to apply gender equity principles to national and international funding; thus a "gender analysis" of the impact on females – and on males - needs to be done for each and every initiative, whether focused on men or women, whether initiated by men or women. Since the founding of the UN, more than 50 years ago, implementation of women's human rights has been hindered by the myth of "gender neutrality", evident in UN treaties such as its first - the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. In developing new approaches to small arms regulation, we must acknowledge how often laws and policies have a disparate impact on females. Thus, it is necessary to build gender analysis into our proposals from the beginning. The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, adopted by the UN in 1993 as its first major policy statement on this issue, is a valuable tool because it offers a broad definition of violence that includes threats of violence and holds governments responsible for using all possible and adequate means to eliminate acts of violence against women and girls. This includes violence committed by state authorities.

5. Government and NGO Initiatives – UN 2001 Conference

Government Initiatives: Yves Beaulieu, DFAIT, IDA

DFAIT welcomes NGO input. DFAIT has been very active over the past few months in the international forum. They agree with the principals of the OSCE document but can build on it. Outlines activities sponsored by Canadian government.

The second prepcom is scheduled for January 8-20. DFAIT consulted with NGOs December 18, 2000 and with industry representatives November 11, 2000. Embassies abroad constantly need to be briefed and updated in the country of accreditation. DFAIT will bring NGO views to New York in January. It is considering DDR in New York and will support Peggy Mason's UN group. It is important to establish the relevant talking points to be included in the January conference.

Update on IANSA Activities: David Jackman, Associate Representative, Quaker United Nations Office (via teleconference)

IANSA has begun actively planning for the next prepcom (January 8-19) of the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms. There will continue to be problems with NGO access and accreditation but hopefully these things will be settled with the Department of Disarmament Affairs. IANSA will be bringing a number of representatives to the Prepcom from affected countries. IANSA should have a campaign organizer hired by early January and this position will continue until after the Conference itself in July. This next Prepcom session is crucial to moving the conference process ahead. It would be very helpful for NGOs to be present and to convey the breadth of their concerns and the depth of their research on relevant issues. It is hoped that the January Prepcom will initiate a close reading of substantive issues. This will be facilitated by a draft paper from the Chairman on the conference's program of Action.