



16 DAYS of activism against gender violence **NOVEMBER 25 - DECEMBER 10, 2005**

"For the Health of Women, For the Health of the World: No More Violence"

What is the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence Campaign?

The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence is an international campaign originating from the first Women's Global Leadership Institute sponsored by the Centre for Women's Global Leadership in 1991. Participants chose the dates, November 25, International Day Against Violence Against Women and December 10, International Human Rights Day, in order to symbolically link violence against women and human rights and to emphasize that such violence is a violation of human rights. This 16-day period also highlights other significant dates including December 1, which is World AIDS Day, and December 6, which marks the Anniversary of the Montreal Massacre.

The 16 Days Campaign has been used as an organizing strategy by individuals and groups around the world to call for the elimination of all forms of violence against women by:

- raising awareness about gender-based violence as a human rights issue at the local, national, regional and international levels
- strengthening local work around violence against women
- establishing a clear link between local and international work to end violence against women
- providing a forum in which organizers can develop and share new and effective strategies
- demonstrating the solidarity of women around the world organizing against violence against women
- creating tools to pressure governments to implement promises made to eliminate violence against women

Since 1991, approximately 1,700 organizations in 130 countries have participated in the 16 Days Campaign.

The Annual Theme

Every year, the Global Centre composes a Campaign theme in consultation with women's human rights advocates worldwide and then circulates an announcement for the campaign as widely as possible. Over the years, Campaign themes have included:

- "Violence Against Women Violates Human Rights" (1991/1992),
- "Democracy without Women's Human Rights . . . is not Democracy" (1993),



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- "Awareness, Accountability, Action: Violence Against Women Violates Human Rights" (1994),
- "Vienna, Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing: Bringing Women's Human Rights Home" (1995),
- "Demand Women's Human Rights in the Home and in the World" (1997),
- "Building a Culture of Respect for Human Rights" (1998),
- "Fulfilling the Promise of Freedom from Violence" (1999),
- "Celebrating the Tenth Anniversary of the Campaign" (2000),
- "Racism and Sexism: No More Violence" (2001),
- "Creating a Culture That Says 'No' to Violence Against Women" (2002),
- "Violence Against Women Violates Human Rights: Maintaining the Momentum Ten Years After Vienna (1993-2003)", and
- "For the Health of Women, For the Health of the World: No More Violence" (2004).

Violence against women is traumatic to the body, mind, and spirit and can prevent women from being fully active participants at home and in the world. This year's 16 Days campaign theme, as a continuation from 2004, emphasizes the connections between women's human rights, violence against women and women's health, and the detrimental consequences violence against women has on the well-being of the world as a whole.