

## **IPPNW Raises a Public Health Voice and Highlights the Human Face of Suffering at the United Nations Review Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons, New York City, June/July 2006**

IPPNW leaders Drs. Robert Mtonga, Zambia, Dra. Emperatriz Crespin, El Salvador, Christin Ormhaug, Norway, Nic Marsh, Norway (also a member of the official Norwegian delegation), Dr. Ilkka Taipale, Finland (also a member of the official Finland delegation), and Maria Valenti, Central Office "Aiming for Prevention" program coordinator, actively participated at the UN Review Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RevCon) in New York City, June 2006. They attended to ensure that the health aspects of gun violence are considered during the UN PoA deliberations and in the finalization of the official outcome document of the Review Conference, and also to represent the leadership of the International Action Network on Small Arms' (IANSA) Public Health Network that is coordinated by IPPNW. Action-oriented research, called for in the UN PoA, was a central theme of their discussions with delegates and attendees.

IPPNW's "Aiming for Prevention" program emphasizes a public health approach to armed violence, and has been instrumental in highlighting the human face of suffering via our "One Bullet Stories" originally developed several years ago Dr. Walter Odhiambo and other leaders of IPPNW Kenya. New campaign materials that illustrate how "Every Bullet Tells a Story of Injury and Suffering" that were distributed at the RevCon can be found on the IPPNW web site at <http://www.ippnw.org/SmallArmsMaterials.html>.

IPPNW members spoke on health issues at a variety of forums held at the RevCon.

Dra. Crespin addressed the need for more research as well as public health resources to care for victims of gun violence during the panel organized by IANSA member the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue on Wednesday, June 28th entitled "Survivor's of Gun Violence: Policy Issues." She also presented a health perspective at the official NGO presentation to all delegates conducted on Friday June 30th. Dr. Mtonga spoke on Thursday June 29th on connections between development, health and armed violence on the panel "Development and Small Arms: Priorities for the Review Conference and After" organized by IANSA member the Quaker UN Office.

IPPNW representatives held meetings throughout the RevCon with government delegates, UN agency officials and other NGOs to help them understand how important health is to development and peace, and to discuss ongoing IPPNW work in this area including our multinational injury pilot study. IPPNW helped influence inclusion of such information in country statements. For example, the Kenyan delegation cited research conducted by IPPNW Kenya physicians and recently presented in South Africa on the cost of hospitalization and treatment of gun violence victims. In another example, Dr. Mtonga worked with the Zambian delegation to help craft its official statement. Dr. Mtonga has been appointed to the newly created National Commission on Small Arms in Zambia.