

Media Release: Nobel Women Peace Laureates urge Canadian leadership to protect women in armed conflict

--For Immediate Release--
May 26, 2011

(Ottawa) Sexual violence is widespread in armed conflicts around the world, according to a new report published by the Nobel Women's Initiative, and the perpetrators of these war crimes are benefitting from a "culture of impunity."

"War on Women: Time for Action to End Sexual Violence in Conflict" examines studies of sexual violence in five regions of the world, explores the leading causes of such heinous acts, and assesses actions taken by the international community.



The report finds that rape as a weapon of war is a crime occurring "on a massive scale," and is a threat to peace and security. For instance, a recent study published by The American Journal of Public Health revealed that an estimated 1,100 women are raped every day in the conflict-ridden Democratic Republic of Congo - or 48 an hour.



"Waging war on the bodies of women has got to stop," says Jody Williams, the 1997 recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for her work to eliminate landmines. "Like any tactic of war, it can be eliminated."

"War on Women" lauds the efforts of advocates who are challenging the impunity enjoyed by perpetrators, and notes that rulings at international tribunals and the International Criminal Court make these acts prosecutable both as crimes against humanity and as war crimes.

Experts and survivors meeting near Ottawa this week supported the report's key recommendation that governments provide support to investigations and assist in the prosecution of crimes of sexual violence.

They also called on Canada to play a leading role, urging the government to boost funding for the protection of women in war and for the prevention of sexual violence.

The Nobel Women's Initiative was established in 2006 by Nobel Peace Laureates Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi, Wangari Maathai, Rigoberta Menchu Tum, Betty Williams and Mairead Maguire to work together for peace with justice and equality.

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[War on Women: Time for Action to End Sexual Violence in Conflict](http://bit.ly/mEpt7A), Nobel Women's Initiative, 2011 – <http://bit.ly/mEpt7A>

[Conference Blog - Women Forging a New Security: Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict](http://bit.ly/endraper) – <http://bit.ly/endraper>

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