

DID YOU KNOW THAT?

- More women aged 15 - 44 world wide are killed or injured from gender based violence than cancer, traffic injuries or malaria?
- 1 out of every 3 women has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in her lifetime?
- 70% of female murder victims are killed by their male partners?
- Two million girls are at risk of female genital mutilation each year?
- For women, both peace and war are times of discrimination and violence?
- Violence is a central feature of militarization and increased violence leads to increased levels of gender-based violence against women?
- Instability and armed conflict lead to an increase in all forms of violence, including genocide, rape and sexual violence?
- Interpersonal violence remains high even after the cessation of hostilities, in part because violence has become more socially acceptable and the availability of weapons?
- Women's rights are human rights?

Natalie was 12 years old when her village in the Democratic Republic of Congo was attacked. *"I saw how many soldiers raped my sisters and my mother. I was scared and I thought that if I joined the army I would be protected. I wanted to defend myself...I was only 12 years old, but I was frequently beaten and raped during the night by the other soldiers. When I was just 14 I had a baby. I don't even know who his father is. I ran away...I have nowhere to go and no food to give to the baby".*

"Fariba" is from Afghanistan. She was eight when she was given in marriage to a 48-year-old man. Fariba was reported to have suffered sexual abuse by the husband. A relative approached government officials and Fariba was removed from her husband's home and placed in an orphanage. No criminal charges have been brought against the girl's father or her husband and a divorce has not been granted.

Claudia Judith Urias Berthaud a 14 year old secondary school student vanished on 9 March 2003 in the city of Chihuahua, Mexico. Although she has been reported missing and her mother constantly distributes leaflets with her photograph, her daughter has not reappeared. The family insist the authorities' response has been inadequate.

Malika Umazheva, was murdered on 29 November 2002 by masked men in uniforms in the village of Alkhan-Kala, near Grozny, Chechnya. The men entered her house, claiming to be looking for "Islamic extremists", and took her to a shed where she was shot. Malika Umazheva was an outspoken critic of raids by Russian forces in her village and had had several confrontations with Russian federal officers in the months before her death. She had also reportedly been threatened by Russian forces. The Russian authorities claimed that Chechen fighters had killed her, but unofficial sources allege that she was murdered by Russian soldiers in an act of retaliation: relatives report that the killers spoke unaccented Russian and left the scene in military vehicles

Cherifa Bouteiba, a 20-year-old woman from Algeria, was abducted by armed men on 2 June 2001. She was forced to walk into the mountains where she was repeatedly raped by several men over a two-day period. On the third day she was able to escape. She had been pregnant at the time of her abduction and subsequently miscarried. Her husband divorced her on the grounds that she had soiled his honour. Cherifa Bouteiba fears her assailants may come back for her one

day. She believes some of the men who assaulted her gave themselves up to the authorities in 2002 and were granted immunity from prosecution. She says she hides behind her veil, hoping she will not be recognized, since she has seen some of her attackers walking freely in the area where she lives.

JOIN AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S CAMPAIGN TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- On 8 March 2004, International Women's Day, Amnesty International will launch its global Stop Violence Against Women campaign.
- We will bring the energy and determination of our 1.8 million members from all over the world to join those leading brave and inspiring campaigns against this violence.
- We will bring the power and persuasion of the human rights framework to the ongoing worldwide campaigns to end violence against women.
- We will explore the relationship between violence against women and poverty, discrimination and militarization.
- We will highlight the responsibility of the state, the community and individuals for taking action to end violence against women.
- We will call on leaders, organizations and individuals to make a public pledge: I will not commit acts of violence against women; I will not tolerate such acts; and I will not rest until violence against women has been eradicated – it's in our hands.

IN YOUR COLLEGE, WORKPLACE, HOME OR COMMUNITY YOU CAN

- Speak out against violence against women, listen to women and believe them.
- Condemn violence against woman wherever you see it.
- Confront those in authority where you see evidence that they fail to prevent, punish and redress violence against women.
- Challenge religious, social and cultural attitudes and stereotypes which diminish women's humanity.
- Promote women's equal access to political power, decision-making and resources.
- Support women in efforts to organize themselves to stop the violence.
- Join Amnesty International's campaign to Stop Violence Against Women.
- Go to Amnesty International's website and find out what Amnesty International is doing in your country. www.amnesty.org

Amnesty International is a worldwide movement of people who campaign for internationally recognized human rights to be respected and protected.

Amnesty International's vision is of a world in which every person enjoys all of the human rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards. In pursuit of this vision, Amnesty International's mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination, within the context of its work to promote all human rights.

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