



global lead advice
& support service

Run by



The Lead Education and Abatement Design Group
Working to eliminate childhood and foetal lead poisoning
by the year 2012 and to protect the environment from lead
ABN 25 819 463 114

MEDIA RELEASE - Wednesday 12 May 2010

Campaigners in over 100 countries call for a “Bullet-Proof” Arms Trade Treaty

Australian Health Promotion Charity, The LEAD Group, today joined civil society organisations in over 100 countries urging governments to work together to create a “bullet-proof” Arms Trade Treaty.

The appeal is part of a Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence, taking place between 10-16 May. Campaigners are calling for better regulation of the global arms trade to stop weapons being used to fuel conflict, crime and poverty, or to commit grave human rights abuses. With states due to begin negotiations in July for the world’s first treaty on conventional arms, now is the time to demand states take decisive action to curb gun violence.

The LEAD Group runs a global information and support service for lead poisoned people, and today sent letters to the Australian Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd and to the world-wide members of The LEAD Group’s Lodged Lead Shot or Bullet Support Group asking them to send letters to their national governments, as well as the embassies of the permanent members of the UN Security Council - also the world’s largest arms exporters - urging them to develop a Treaty text closing key loopholes in the regulation of the global arms trade.

The members of the Support Group carry in their bodies the results of the irresponsible arms trade around the world – fragments of lead bullets or shot which can lead to severe lead poisoning if the fragments move to the fluid surrounding their joints. As with all aspects of lead management, Prevention really is the only Cure.

Elizabeth O’Brien, President of The LEAD Group said, “Every minute, one person dies as a result of armed violence. Thousands more each day are injured, brutally repressed, traumatised or forced to flee their homes. Now is the time to show governments what kind of treaty people really need.”

“*Killer Facts*”, a new Amnesty International briefing in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), outlines the human cost of armed violence, poverty and human rights violations fuelled by the irresponsible arms trade:

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- At least 250,000 people have been killed each year, and hundreds of thousands more injured, many of them at-risk of life-long lead poisoning from lodged bullets, in 128 armed conflicts since 1989.
- Even in countries not experiencing war, there are an estimated 300,000 armed killings each year, from criminal violence to violence against women and killings by state security forces.
- About 60% of human rights violations documented by Amnesty International have involved the use of small arms and light weapons.
- At the end of 2008, 26 million people were internally displaced due to armed conflict. Families are torn apart and millions of men, women and children live in fear.
- In 2008, the top six source countries of refugees were locations of armed conflict.

“Governments must stamp out the irresponsible arms trade” said Ms O’Brien “There are international agreements to regulate the global trade of hundreds of products, from bananas to dinosaur bones - but not guns and bullets.”

The Control Arms campaign, launched in 2003, has finally persuaded governments to start negotiations for a global Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). A UN Conference will be held in 2012 and the first meeting will take place in July 2010. Campaigners are pushing for the Treaty to:

- Control all types of weapons, equipment and ammunition and their parts, and all those involved in their export, import and transfer
- End the secrecy and corruption in the global arms trade
- Be enforced and policed, and hold governments to account.

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