

## Why RAW?

Violence against women during conflict has reached epidemic proportions. Civilians, and especially women, have become the primary targets of armed groups and rape is increasingly being used as a weapon of war. Women human rights defenders are being persecuted, imprisoned and killed for speaking out on behalf of the victims. Violence against women and girls in conflict is "one of history's great silences", as the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women called it.

Â

### RAW Facts:

- 80% of the world's refugees are women and children. (UNHCR 2001)
- In 85% of the conflict zones, trafficking of women and girls was reported. (Save the Children, 2003)
- By 1993, the Zenica Centre for the Registration of War and Genocide Crime in Bosnia&Herzegovina had documented 40,000 cases of war-related rape.
- Of a sample of Rwandan women surveyed in 1999, 39% reported being raped during the 1994 genocide, and 72% said they knew someone who had been raped.
- An estimated 23,200 to 45,600 Kosovar Albanian women are believed to have been raped between August 1998 and August 1999, the height of the conflict with Serbia.
- Every two days in Colombia, a woman dies from "political" causes - murder by armed groups, disappearances, illness caused by displacement and malnutrition.

### RAW's Current Work

Â

### Anna Politkovskaya Award

RAW in WAR presents the annual Anna Politkovskaya Award for women human rights defenders from war and conflict in the world, who stand for the victims often at a great personal risk.

7th October marks the anniversary of the murder in 2006 of Anna Politkovskaya, the campaigning Russian journalist and outspoken government critic, who exposed the brutal treatment of civilians in Chechnya at the hands of both the Russian forces and the Moscow-supported Chechen officials. No closer to having her assassin brought to justice, years on, the

Russian authorities remain reluctant and show no political will to identify who ordered the killing and to see justice done.

To mark the anniversary of Anna Politkovskaya's murder and to honour Anna and other women like her in the world, RAW in WAR (Reach All Women in WAR) annually presents the Anna Politkovskaya Award to a woman human rights defender from a conflict zone in the world who, like Anna, stands up for the victims of this conflict, often at great personal risk. Anna lived a life of courage and truth-telling in the face of grave danger.

Its first recipient was Natalia Estemirova (Chechen Republic/Russian Federation) in 2007. Other winners include Malalai Joya (Afghanistan) in 2008; Leila Alikarami on behalf of the One Million Signatures Campaign for Equality (Iran) in 2009; Dr Halima Bashir (Darfur/Sudan) in 2010; Razan Zaitouneh (Syria) in 2011 and Marie Colvin (USA) in 2012.

^

#### Natalia Estemirova Scholarship

After the murder in July 2009 of Natalia Estemirova, a courageous human rights defender and journalist from Chechnya (the Russian Federation), RAW in WAR initiated a scholarship in her name, to commence in 2012. Natalia was the first recipient of RAW's Anna Politkovskaya Award. To honour her memory and to continue her work, the one-year scholarship at City University is designed to empower young women human rights defenders and journalists from a war or conflict zone to continue their quest for truth and justice. The aim is to provide the scholarship recipients with the tools, skills and experience to continue their work.

For further information on the Scholarship please visit the website .

^

#### RAW's Chechnya Project

Since 1999, nearly a million Chechens have been displaced and more than 100,000 killed. Forced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, torture and rape are continuing with impunity. Women victims have been particularly vulnerable. Every fifth woman in Chechnya is a widow. Women applicants to the European Court of Human Rights have suffered persecution by the authorities. Most women are unemployed and survive in harsh living conditions. Women also led peace activism in Chechnya during the war. A number of Chechen women activists were detained and tortured by Russian and pro-Moscow Chechen forces; some lost their lives.

The Chechen organization, "Women's Dignity", founded in 2002 by human rights advocate, Libkan Bazaeva, runs a Women's Rehabilitation Centre in Grozny. This was the first women's centre to open in Chechnya. In 2004, more than 1000 women sought advice and help in the Centre. However, women who suffered rape and other torture while in detention have not been treated. Shame and fear of further violence prevented women from seeking medical or psychological help upon release. The Women's Centre has limited capacity to treat these women, with only one gynaecologist, one lawyer, one psychologist and a physical therapist on staff.

- RAW has resourced & trained 5 Chechen women psychotherapist to join the Centre.
- RAW will increase the number of lawyers on staff & provide legal training to staff and women survivors on seeking justice and obtaining redress.

Â

Â For more information on the work of RAW in WAR please contact: [info@rawinwar.org](mailto:info@rawinwar.org)