

'More and more of the world is being sucked into a desolate moral vacuum. This is a space devoid of the most basic human values; a space in which children are slaughtered, raped, and maimed; a space in which children are exploited as soldiers; a space in which children are starved and exposed to extreme brutality.' Graça Machel's seminal report – ['The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children'](#)

– was published and submitted to the United Nations General Assembly in 1996. Look no further for an excellent introduction to the use of arms and their impact on children! Eight years on it is still widely used and referred to by the human rights community.

How can you join in with campaigns against arms?

Small arms are weapons of mass destruction!

Non-governmental organisations in 44 countries participated in the fourth annual coordinated [Week of Action Against Small Arms in July 2004](#) to draw attention to human toll of small arms proliferation and misuse. Many of the events in this year's extended Week of are coordinated with the Control Arms Campaign, the joint Amnesty International - Oxfam - IANSA effort to regulate the arms trade. [Find out more and join the campaign next year!](#)

'An average of US\$22bn a year is spent on arms by countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America - a sum that would otherwise enable those same countries to be on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals of achieving universal primary education (estimated at \$10bn a year) as well as targets for reducing infant and maternal mortality (estimated at \$12bn a year).' (Control Arms 2003)

[Control Arms](#) is a jointly run campaign between Amnesty International, IANSA (International Action on Small Arms) and Oxfam. The group is campaigning for a global Arms Trade Treaty, to bring the trade in weapons under control. As part of this campaign, the Million Faces Petition is hoped to be one of the world's biggest popular movements against the

misuse of arms. It provides a visual stand against the 639 million small arms and light weapons in the world today.

[To add your face to the petition and get involved in the campaign please click here!](#)

Education and awareness are a huge part of the fight against the arms trade and in fact other aspects of war.

Control Arms also encourages people to get involved in other ways in the campaign -

[go to the website to find out more!](#)

[Campaign Against Arms Trade \(CAAT\)](#) works towards the reduction and ultimate abolition of the arms trade. One of their campaigns, 'Paying the Price: Children and the Arms Trade' examines the link between children, the trade in small arms and conflict.

For up to date information on your country's use of small arms, take a look at the [Small Arms Survey](#),

which is published each year. The 2004 version, 'Rights at Risk', provides original research and updated information on small arms production, stockpiles, and trade. In focusing on the links between small arms and the abuse of human rights, this edition explores the impact of arms exports to areas of conflict, the role of weapons in global violence and crime, and the implementation of human rights standards by police forces worldwide.