



## Making the links between violence against women and militarism

Feminist researcher, writer and activist Cynthia Cockburn<sup>(1)</sup> will visit Scotland this week to take part in a series of events to mark this year's 16 Days of Action against Violence against Women<sup>(2)</sup>. At the invitation of Engender<sup>(3)</sup>, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)<sup>(4)</sup> and the Scottish Parliament's cross party group on male violence against women and children,<sup>(5)</sup> she will be guest speaker at the cross party meeting to be held in the parliament on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December. In a talk titled 'Male violence against women: Links between peace and war' Cynthia will argue that the acceptance of violence against women in our everyday lives is a predisposing factor which makes men much more accepting of the idea of war and violence as a means to settle disputes – the militarization of masculinity. The following day she will head to Glasgow to appear at the invitation of Engender at a public meeting to be held in the STUC office in Woodlands Road<sup>(6)</sup>.

Making reference to women's activism around the world, she details the work of the women of Okinawa who campaign against the American military on the Island and women in Uganda who are using the International Action Network on Small Arms and Light Weapons (IANSA) in their Disarm Domestic Violence campaign to challenge gender relations in the Karamoja region. Cockburn will tell audiences, "There's a strong link between violence against women and military violence. On an individual level research is showing how gun ownership contributes to the sense of self of men and boys, how it's part of a certain construction of masculine identity. In particular a gun is felt to promise access to and control over women. While at state level, massive national arsenals are motivated in part by the state's need to demonstrate a virile posture in international relations. What has to change, if the world is to be rid of guns, is men – or more precisely the idea of masculinity that requires men to be disposed to the use of force to assert his power over women and other men."

**END**

### Notes to Editors:

- (1) Cynthia Cockburn is a feminist researcher and writer working at the intersection of gender studies and peace/conflict studies. See [www.cynthiacockburn.org/about.html](http://www.cynthiacockburn.org/about.html)

- (2) 16 Days of Action to eliminate violence against women is a global campaign to raise awareness of violence against women with events running from 25<sup>th</sup> Nov – 10<sup>th</sup> Dec each year
- (3) Engender works to make visible the impact of sexism on women and on Scotland's social, economic and political development. See [www.engender.org.uk](http://www.engender.org.uk)
- (4) WILPF is an International ngo with 35 National Sections and a recently re-established branch in Scotland. It holds consultative status with the UN and works towards world peace through the abolition of the use of violence as a means of resolving conflict and the inclusion of women in negotiations on conflict. See [www.wilpfinternational.org](http://www.wilpfinternational.org)
- (5) The Scottish Parliament Cross Party Group on Men's Violence Against Women and Children will meet on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 5.30 in the Scottish Parliament. Please contact [dave.smith@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:dave.smith@scottish.parliament.uk) if you would like to attend
- (6) Please contact [info@engender.or.uk](mailto:info@engender.or.uk) if you would like to attend the talk by Cynthia at the STUC Office, Woodlands Road, Glasgow, 10am on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December

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**Cynthia Cockburn**