



GLOBAL ACTION TO PREVENT WAR

A COALITION-BUILDING EFFORT TO STOP WAR, GENOCIDE,
AND INTERNAL ARMED CONFLICT

866 UN Plaza , Suite 4050
New York, NY 10017

www.globalactionpw.org
coordinator@globalactionpw.org

phone: 212-818-1815
fax: 212-818-1857

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Dag Hammarskjöld Professor of
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Director

Global Action to Prevent War Project for a UN Emergency Peace Service 2009-2010 Regional Consultations Rationale and Background

Since 2007, Global Action to Prevent War and Sydney's Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies have been conducting interviews with non-government agencies, government officials, think-tanks and civil society leaders from Africa, Southeast Asia, Latin America, North America and Europe. The research focuses on improving civilian protection and the normative (responsibility to protect) and practical (standing peacekeeping capacity) tools needed to achieve this goal.

The findings have been used in a report, researched and written by GAPW called 'Standing for Change in Peacekeeping Operations'. The report seeks to explore understand regional attitudes towards UN standing peacekeeping; the challenges and opportunities for standing UN peacekeeping capacity; the viability of regional peacekeeping operations; the need for civilian protection in conflict zones; and prospects for building sufficient political will to fully implement R2P and develop new, last-resort, standing peacekeeping tools.

The findings have also been used to engage government and civil society leaders in South Africa, Japan, the Philippines and especially in Indonesia and Brazil regarding government responsibility to implement R2P and make a compelling case for effective and culturally sensitive civilian protection strategies. The next workshop in this series will be in Cameroon in February 2010.

The need for timely, effective and responsive peacekeeping to protect civilians led GAPW with a group of international experts to develop a proposal for a UN Emergency Peace Service. Developed as a last-resort, 'third-pillar' response, UNEPS would be a standing, gender and service-integrated, complementary capacity, under a unified command structure, that can respond rapidly and effectively to outbreaks of atrocity crimes that have not been solved through robust diplomatic means. UNEPS is intended as a 'first-in, first-out' service that works in tandem with existing UN and regional peacekeeping operations. Its individually-recruited personnel would receive the highest levels of training, including respect for human rights and sensitivity to gender perspectives and cultural differences. For more details visit www.globalactionpw.org

It is crucial for the UNEPS proposal (and other proposed prevention, civilian protection and standing capacity initiatives) to reflect the political, cultural and religious concerns and perspectives of diverse global regions. Our workshop series represents an important opportunity to give voice to R2P and civilian protection concerns, opportunities and challenges with government officials and civil society leaders in diverse global regions.

