



**Isha Mehmood**  
**2009 Advocacy Project Peace Fellow with the**  
**International Action Network on Small Arms**  
*Project Description*

The Advocacy Project (AP) is a D.C. based non-profit organization that partners with human rights groups around the world to produce social change and help marginalized communities claim their rights. Every year, graduate students are recruited to serve with community-based partners, for a minimum of three months in the field. This summer, I will be working with the Women's Network of the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Nepal has a long history of armed conflict. In 2006, it ended a 10-year civil war that killed more than 13,000 people and displaced between 100,000 and 150,000 others. Women, in particular, are disproportionately affected by the aftermath of armed conflict. They are more likely to become breadwinners when relatives are killed, suffer from the damage caused to important social services during war, and to be displaced from their homes. In addition, the proliferation of small arms has contributed to an increase in armed domestic violence—women are 12 times more likely to be killed during intimate partner violence when a firearm is present in the home.

The Women's Network of the IANSA works to develop a strong network of advocates for women's rights, who are committed to producing social change and curbing armed domestic violence. Its umbrella organization, the IANSA, is a global advocacy campaign against gun violence that seeks to broaden international regulation on small arms and light weapons. Since its formation in 1998, the IANSA has been involved in the United Nations Small Arms Program of Action, helped found the joint Control Arms Campaign with Oxfam and Amnesty International, and has pushed for a global arms trade treaty.

As a Peace Fellow this summer, I will be helping the regional office in Kathmandu with its 'Disarming Domestic Violence' campaign and helping to increase awareness on the small arms trade in South Asia, gender-based violence, and other key issues that the IANSA works on. My tasks will include assisting the organization with its campaign strategies and helping to develop an online presence. This includes, but is not limited to: profiling survivors and stakeholders, maintaining a blog, writing press releases, and producing other types of new media that can be used for advocacy and lobbying, such as short videos and podcasts. The primary goal of the project is to help reduce the number of arms that get into the hands of actual or potential abusers.

- *For more information about this project, please visit <http://advocacynet.org/page/isha>*
- *Follow my blog this summer at <http://advocacynet.org/blogs/>*