The Wear Orange campaign is a grassroots movement that began after the shooting death of 15-year old Hadiya Pendleton in 2013 in the American city of Chicago. A bright and talented teenager, Hadiya had sung at the second inauguration of President Barack Obama just two weeks earlier. Her family members and friends initiated the Wear Orange campaign on June 2—Hadiya’s birthday—to remember her, to raise awareness of the suffering of ordinary people caused by gun violence, and to call for an end to it. The campaign message is simple: we need a safe future free from gun violence.

The campaign quickly spread to other cities throughout the United States and grows larger every year. IANSA has taken the campaign to the United Nations and to other countries around the world, helping to transform it into a global movement.

This 2017 photo report features IANSA members and friends explaining why they Wear Orange and participate in the campaign.
Brazil has one of the world’s highest homicide rates, with more than 50,000 people dying from gun violence every year. More than half are young men under the age of 30. The widespread availability of guns in the country—most of them domestically produced and some trafficked from neighboring countries—is one major factor in the country’s high rates of gun violence.

Instituto Sou da Paz works to reduce levels of violence in Brazil by putting into practice public policies for security and violence prevention that are efficient and guided by the values of democracy, social justice and human rights. Starting with analyses to gain a deeper knowledge of the dynamics of violence, Sou da Paz defends and implements a systemic public safety model—one that includes actions to prevent incidents as well as recommendations to public safety and criminal justice systems to respond to these cases. Currently, Sou da Paz prioritizes the reduction of two forms of violence—robberies and homicides.
GUATEMALA

Over the last decade, 82 percent of homicides in Guatemala were linked to firearms. This is almost double the global average of 42 percent, and above even Central America’s high average of 70 percent. Poverty, high unemployment and a lack of justice have pushed young people to join gangs and commit crimes. The movement of drugs and guns through the country exacerbates the problem. Guatemala is an important corridor for the drug traffic that goes north to the United States, while guns are trafficked south from the United States.

Developing countries with high rates of gun violence tend to provide the least support for survivors. Transitions Foundation of Guatemala was co-founded by a survivor of gun violence whose spinal cord injury left him paralyzed for life. The organization advocates for gun violence prevention and the rights and social inclusion of Guatemalans with disabilities, as well as providing mobility equipment and opportunities for independent living that promote human dignity.

What is humanium metal?
There are hundreds of millions of illegal firearms in the world. As a result, someone is shot every minute. Armed violence is a global epidemic that hits developing countries especially hard. Humanium is a new material made of recycled metal from gun destruction programs. The metal is melted and molded into units, which are then made available for commercial production.
In the Philippines, extrajudicial killings are a significant gun violence issue that cannot be overlooked. The illegal execution and forced disappearances have brought many unlawful deaths in the Philippines, usually through shootings.

Moreover, many people in the Philippines have been internally displaced due to armed conflict between the government and religious, ethnic, or clan-affiliated non-state rebel groups. At least 70,000 people were displaced in the Philippines during 2014, largely concentrated in Mindanao and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao. According to the Department of Justice, the Philippine government provided over 1000 shotguns for use by civilians in selected townships in Mindanao, in addition to the estimated 60,000 unlicensed firearms possessed by civilians—causing disruptive gun violence among the civilians and the displaced.

Through youth camps, teacher trainings, peace walks, exhibitions, media outreach and other activities, the Center for Peace Education-Miriam College in the Philippines raises awareness throughout various sectors of the causes and effects of gun violence to increase the number of supporters working against gun proliferation and violence.
The 2015/16 National Murder Study in South Africa revealed that 16 people were shot and killed every day in the country, just under 6,000 people a year. This is a significant reduction in gun deaths, from 1998, when 12,298 people were shot and killed, averaging 34 people a day. One reason for the decline in gun deaths is South Africa’s Firearms Control Act (2000). Research published in the American Journal of Public Health (2014) shows that over 4,500 lives were saved in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Pretoria from 2001 to 2005 because of the Firearms Control Act.

Formed in 1995, Gun Free South Africa has worked tirelessly to strengthen firearms legislation, carry out research on gun violence, hold public awareness campaigns about the issue, ensure that survivors of domestic violence are aware of their rights, and create gun free zones in communities.

The Catholic Justice and Peace of Johannesburg in South Africa also promotes the reduction in gun violence through advocacy and actions for social transformation in collaboration with the government and other civil society organizations. To contribute to more justice in local communities, the Catholic Justice and Peace of Johannesburg is currently focusing on the development and implementation of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and spreading the awareness of factors that contribute to the incidents of gender-based violence in local communities in South Africa.

“I Wear Orange to express my support for ending gun violence”
UGANDA

Uganda has, by far, the highest rate of gun violence in East Africa. Between 2010 and 2014 there were 34,512 recorded armed crimes in Uganda, 33 percent more than neighboring Burundi, the second-ranked for armed crimes in the region. In Rwanda, during that same time frame, there were only 421 recorded armed crimes. Illegal firearms are plentiful, and many Ugandans worry that daily life is unsafe, especially with armed crime on the rise in the country.

Isis-WICCE supports women’s leadership in East Africa, amplifies their voices, and deepens their activism in recreating peace. They envision a world in which women can live in peace, and hold numerous campaigns, trainings, workshops and projects toward this end.

What is the “Silence the Guns” initiative?

In global relations, the stigma of a ‘continent at war with itself’ had long been attached to Africa. The continent has hosted, and continues to be home to, a number of deadly conflicts that jeopardize human, national and international security and defy efforts to resolve them. This as well as other concerns, prompted the African Union to take steps to stem conflict and address cases of relapse into violence in some parts of Africa. To this end, African leaders resolved "not to bequeath the burden of conflicts to the next generation of Africans and undertake to end all wars in Africa by 2020--thereby "silencing the guns."

"I wear orange in support of the African Union Agenda 2063 aspiration to silence all guns by 2020"
-Helen Kezie-Nwoha
Gun violence in the United States is 25 times higher than rates in other developed countries. On average, 93 Americans lose their lives to gun violence per day, and for every death, two others are left injured. Fifty women on average are shot to death per month on average by their intimate partner, and 7 children and teens are killed each day. Black men are 14 times more likely to be shot and killed by guns than white men.

Americans Against Gun Violence (AAGV) was founded to encourage Americans to take urgent action to stop this epidemic through building a critical mass of concerned and committed individuals and an effective infrastructure through debating. It supports steps toward reducing gun violence in the U.S. such as expanding background checks and banning assault weapons, and advocates for the adoption of stringent regulations on firearms.

The Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy provides research, analysis, and strategies for disarmament and peace with a focus primarily on security, disarmament, women and peace-building issues. Our purpose is to draw attention to the interconnected human and environmental challenges that have become most urgent for humanity’s survival. Their mission is to draw attention to the interconnected human and environmental challenges that have become most urgent for humanity’s survival, including small arms and light weapons.

Every year, Moms Demand Action and Everytown For Gun Safety team up to organize a Wear Orange walk across the Brooklyn Bridge that brings together hundreds of people from a wide range of civil society organizations, including IANSA and Nonviolence International. It also provides a platform for family members and friends to remember their loved ones lost to gun violence.
Defend International works to confront combat human rights violations, spread awareness among policy makers and the general public, and to build up the capacity of civil society organizations by providing them with a platform to actively participate in peace-building negotiations and processes, among other issues. In addition, Defend International places a high priority on the ratification of human rights instruments and international agreements.

A co-founder of Defend International, Dr Widad Akrawi works to save lives and alleviate different forms of hardship and suffering. This includes advocating against gender-based violence and promoting peace, security, and equality for marginalized communities on a global scale.

Internationally, firearms have a devastating impact on the lives of youth people—in the United States alone gunfire is becoming the leading cause of death of young people aged 15-24. With an estimated one billion guns in the world and millions more added annually, the proliferation of small arms continues to fuel conflict, crime, suicide, and sexual violence, and hinder the development of communities; all of which negatively impact the lives and futures of young people. Moreover, firearm injuries too often leave young people permanently incapacitated; restricting their mobility, employment, and other opportunities.

The IANSA Youth Ambassador program gives young people a chance to participate in efforts to end the proliferation and misuse of small arms. Youth from China, the United States, Liberia, Australia, Taiwan, the UK and France have participated so far.
Germany and Ireland are two countries that not only fully support international agreements that aim to curb the proliferation and misuse of small arms, they are also strong supporters of civil society efforts to reduce gun violence. In 2017, representatives of both countries participated in the Wear Orange campaign. The Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations as well as several other German missions created “Hashtag Wear Orange” events, while government officials in Ireland promoted the campaign as well as the Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence initiated by IANSA. This government support for civil society initiatives helps to build support for a goal that needs partnerships across many sectors to succeed—keeping people safe.

The Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations (below) as well as several other German missions created “Hashtag Wear Orange” events, while government officials in Ireland (left) promoted the campaign as well as the Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence initiated by IANSA.