

DAY TEN: 4th DECEMBER :

'Rape as a Weapon of War'

At the end of the war in Kosovo in June 1999, women and girls, as they fled to safety, were dragged by Serbian police, paramilitaries or soldiers from the columns of refugees fleeing Kosovo and raped, sometimes repeatedly, before they were sent on their journey. In the aftermath of war, another phase of enforced disappearances, murders and rapes began as the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) embarked on revenge attacks against Kosovo Serb and Romani civilians. Many survivors have never even spoken about what happened to them. Some, counselled by NGOs, are able to talk about their experience but few have spoken publicly about what they endured. They have been silenced by the deeply entrenched social stigma, which still overshadows wartime rape.

<https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/EUR7075582017ENGLISH.PDF>

Question

What is my reaction to this horrific true story?

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Global Facts

- A 2019 U.N. report on sexual violence in conflict found that rape is used as a strategy of war in 15 countries around the world, mostly in Africa and the Middle East. Democratic Republic of the Congo topped the list and while the country has been in crisis, it has been described as "the rape capital of the world." (*Organisation for World Peace, May 2020*)
- Rape in conflict often focuses on young girls. In some conflicts, up to 80% of rape victims are children, some as young as six months old. (*Human Rights Watch - Boko Haram Violence against Women and Girls in Northeast Nigeria 2014*).

Pope Francis met with the 2018 Nobel Peace Prize winner Nadia Murad, a survivor of ISIS enslavement and an advocate for human rights **especially among** persecuted Iraqi minorities.

Murad, who first met Pope Francis at a weekly general audience in 2017, returned to the Vatican for a private audience with him after receiving the Nobel prize. She won this for her "efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict."

<https://catholicherald.co.uk/news/2018/12/21/pope-francis-meets-nobel-peace-prize-winner-nadia-murad/>

Rape and sexual violence is used as a deliberate weapon of war in the same way that guns and tanks are, to terrorise civilian populations, to humiliate, scar and destroy whole ethnic groups or religious or political opponents, cheaply, silently and devastatingly.

William Hague, UK Foreign Secretary (2012)

CEDAW

(Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women)

Adopted 1979 with the aim of:

- ✓ Ending violence against women
- ✓ Achieving gender equality during peace and war

Suggest you read the Convention during the **16 Days** www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/

UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs)

SDG 16 Target 16.2: 'End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.'

UNHCR 16. a: 'Strengthen relevant national institutions, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime.'

http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/Metadata_16.a.1_3_March2016.pdf

ACTION

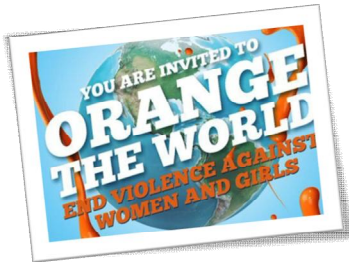
- **Support** any campaign to eliminate weapons of war.
- **Befriend** an asylum seeker from a conflict zone who may have suffered greatly.
- **Read:** <http://www.stoprapenow.org/take-action/>
<https://nobelwomensinitiative.org/>

Prepared by 'Future We Need' (FWN) a faith-based group with members from the Columbans, Franciscans, Josephites, Mercy, Presentation and Salesians.

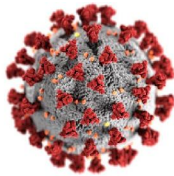
(Updated 2020)

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

is a systematic and widespread human rights violation. It cuts across age, socio-economic, educational and geographic boundaries.



www.google.ie - freeimages



BEFORE

THE CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC

243 million women and girls, aged 15-49, experienced sexual and/or physical violence by an intimate partner in the past year.

SINCE THE PANDEMIC

violence against women, especially domestic violence, has increased dramatically.

EXACERBATING FACTORS INCLUDE

security, health and money worries, cramped living conditions, isolation with abusers, deserted public spaces, limited access to support services.

In some countries, resources and efforts have been diverted from responses to violence against women for immediate COVID-19 relief.

(unwomen.org)

In the words of a former UN peacekeeping commander, **"it is now more dangerous to be a woman than a soldier in modern conflict."** *(Summit Report: End Sexual Violence in Conflict - Global Summit, London 2014)*

WATCH: Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Psd5-lGABSY>

SEE <https://www.nrc.no/shorthand/stories/rape-as-a-weapon-of-war/index.html>

<https://norwegianscitechnews.com/2019/01/when-rape-becomes-a-weapon-in-war/>



of Activism Against Gender Violence...

DAY 10...

4th

December

RAPE AS A WEAPON OF WAR



2020 UNiTE Campaign Theme:

"Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect!"