

Stop Domestic Violence in the Russian Federation!

Women need a safe place to lay their heads.

Background

Amnesty International is concerned that the government of the Russian Federation does not act with due diligence when responding to crimes of violence against women in the family. The Russian Federation has no specific legislation on violence in the family and a very low level of awareness of the state's obligation under international law to protect those under its jurisdiction from violence, including from violence in the family. Mechanisms of protection, like shelters, hotlines, legal and psychological support for victims of violence against women in the family are few.

During this action, Amnesty International wants to bring particular attention to the need for more shelters to the Russian Federation's Minister of Health. We want to send the message that women in Russia need a safe place to lay their heads. To that end, we are encouraging groups to send pillow cases with messages – accompanying regular petitions – to the Minister of Health.

Take action - 3 Levels:

1. Send Appeals online or send a letter or petition to Russia's Minister of Health.
2. Send Pillow Case Petitions.
3. Participate in or organize events for Domestic Violence Awareness Month in your community.

Level 1 – Send Appeals

Online Actions

Check online every week for a new action regarding Domestic Violence in Europe. Each week we will include one new action for you to take. Publicize this action with your group members and with your friends and family.

Write a letter or organize a petition to Minister of Health and Social Development for the Russian Federation. You can download a sample letter and petition from the SVAW Russia page, or write your own letter asking the minister to ensure that:

- money is allocated to help regional and local governments create and support women's shelters, crisis centers and non-governmental organizations working to combat domestic violence
- training on gender-based violence is made compulsory for those who work with victims of violence, including forensic experts, health professionals and social workers.
- legislation is introduced that makes domestic violence a distinct crime and provides for support for the victims of such crimes

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Level 2 – Make Pillow Case Petitions. Add to the Clothesline Project.

Back up your message by gathering pillow cases and asking your group members or people to come to your table to write messages on the pillow cases. Display your pillow case petitions as a supplement to the Clothesline Petition. After you're finished using them in your community send them to AIUSA's Office in Washington DC. We will deliver them to officials.

How to:

1. Gather up some pillow cases – ask members to bring in some extras from home or go thrifting for cases. Plain pillow cases are preferred but not required. Just write more clearly on printed cases.
2. Gather up some permanent markers to write messages on pillow cases
3. Having a meeting, host a table or just take the pillow case to work & ask others to write messages.
4. If you participate in public events display your pillow case petitions as a supplement to The Clothesline Project.
5. Take pictures of your Pillow Case Petition display
6. Send your pillow case petitions to AIUSA's Washington DC Office. We'll deliver them later this year.

SVAW Pillow Case Petition
Amnesty International
600 Pennsylvania Ave NE
5th Floor
Washington, DC 20003

Possible Messages for Pillow Cases

More funding for women's shelters
Remember all women in Russia
Domestic violence hurts families
Please provide shelters for women in Russia
Women deserve a safe place to lay their heads

Level 3 - Participate in DV Awareness Month Events

October 2nd is a "Day of Unity." Many women's organizations across the country are planning public events. Join the efforts of a coalition in your area or organize your own event either on the 2nd or any time during the month. Join efforts already planned in your community or organize your own events.

Some ideas for organizing or participating

- Find events in your state at the Domestic Violence Awareness Month Page <http://dvam.vawnet.org/>
- Offer to table, do a presentation or pass out materials about the global problem of domestic violence and how domestic violence in the US is connected to domestic violence in Europe.
- Display your Pillow Case Petitions as a supplement to the Clothesline Project
- Hold your own vigil to raise awareness.
- Stand on a corner with a clipboard and a petition asking people to sign to defend women in Europe from domestic violence.

The Clothesline Project

The Clothesline Project is a vehicle for women affected by violence to express their emotions by decorating a shirt. They then hang the shirt on a clothesline to be viewed by others as testimony to the problem of violence against women.

www.clotheslineproject.org

More Information

Educate yourself on the issue of domestic violence in the Russian Federation!

For more detailed information on this situation read the Amnesty report: "Russian Federation: Nowhere to turn to – Violence against women in the family." See the "Reports" section at <http://www.amnestyusa.org/women/russia/>