

**INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN  
ALLIANCE INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES**

**Equal Rights - Equal Responsibilities  
Droits Égaux - Responsabilités Égales**

**IAW ACTION SHEET - April 2009**



To Alliance members and friends,

In January you received an Action Sheet about the Taliban preventing girls from receiving education and burning schools. President Rosy Weiss took our letter to CSW. It was signed by some 41 NGOs and sent to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Pakistan Government on 19 March 2009.

Meanwhile you have probably been hearing a lot more news coming out of Pakistan and may have seen the latest horrifying video of a young woman being publicly flogged by the Taliban.

The statement on page 2 has already been circulated by Rosy at UN level.

**As an Alliance supporter you are strongly urged to spread this message far and wide within your country – to your Governments: national, regional and local; to the media; to other NGOs; to individual friends and family and all your other contacts.**

These atrocities must be widely publicised and condemned around the world in order to prove how outraged people are about the blatant flouting of human rights, particularly for women and girls.

By really concerted and ongoing efforts **we can make a difference**. Our silence only sanctions ongoing atrocities.

Please advise Secretary-General Lene Pind [iawsec@womenalliance.org](mailto:iawsec@womenalliance.org) of any action that you are taking.

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*You can find this IAW Action Sheet also on the IAW website: <http://www.womenalliance.org>*

## **PUBLIC FLOGGING OF YOUNG WOMAN IN THE SWAT VALLEY, PAKISTAN : STATEMENT CONDEMNING BLATANT ACTIONS AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS**

During CSW 53 the International Alliance of Women gained wide support for a letter which expressed alarm at actions by the Taliban in the Swat District of Pakistan to instil its extremist interpretation of Sharia law that “*education for girls is against Islamic teachings*” and to destroy schools and intimidate schoolgirls and their parents. This letter, addressed to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Government of Pakistan, was sent on 19 March 2009.

Now, less than a month later, a horrifying video is circulating on the Internet and being shown by various media of a public flogging of a young woman. A Taliban spokesman, Muslim Khan, claimed responsibility for the flogging. "She came out of her house with a man who was not her husband, so we must punish her. There are boundaries you cannot cross," he said. He also defended the Taliban's right to thrash women shoppers who were inappropriately dressed, *saying it was permitted under Islamic law*.

There is some question as to whether the flogging took place before or following the signing of a controversial peace deal under which the provincial government ceded control of the Swat Valley's judicial system to the militant Taliban. This is immaterial. Regardless of when it took place, this type of action should be internationally condemned.

Too often something like this becomes just a 24 hour news grab and then forgotten. The old media adage that *Yesterday's news is dead* is only too true of this and many other ‘news stories’. Yet the barbaric practices continue unchecked, not just in full public view but in many countries behind ‘closed doors’ with tacit acceptance, if not approval, based on traditional/cultural/religious practices that were in force generations earlier.

The International Alliance of Women calls on you to condemn these practices generally and without reservation.

Rosy Weiss  
President  
International Alliance of Women