

**December 11
2000**

Public Hearing on Crimes Against Women in Recent Wars and Conflicts

Synopsis of Testimonies

Sierra Leone

Betsy Gbonu Coker is 42 years old, a widow with five children and a Sierra Leonean by nationality. When her township was attacked by rebel forces in December 1999, she managed to escape into the bush with her children where they remained for 3 days without food. On the fourth day, she was raped by 10 masked men who swore their allegiance to rebel leader Foday Sanko. Afterward, they left her bleeding and helpless and separated from her children...

Vietnam

Truong Thi Ngoc Lam is the third child in eleven-sibling family. She was born in 1941 and got married at the age of 22. After giving birth four times, only one child lived past infancy. Her son, Pham Duong Lam now 31, is deformed and has the mental capacity of a small child. Her husband suffers from numerous health problems related to dioxin poisoning. He served as a medical officer during the period of the war in Vietnam when the U.S. army most frequently used 'Agent Orange'...

Bangladesh

Ferdausi Priyobarshini was 22 years old in 1971 and was working as a receptionist at a jute mill Southwest Bangladesh when war broke out in the struggle for Bangladesh's independence from Pakistan. She was the sole supporter of her mother and 3 children. Ferdausi was gang-raped twice and sexually assaulted on numerous occasions by men on both sides of the conflict...

Colombia

Flor Silvestre is 34 years old and is from a village near Barranca, the location of intensive fighting between the military, paramilitaries and guerrilla forces. She and her family have been displaced several times from their homes and she has lost four members of her family, either at the hands of government or guerrilla actors...

Mexico

Sara Santiz Gomez is 25 years old and is an indigenous woman from a small village in the state of Chiapas. Her native language is Tzeltal and she does not understand very much Spanish. On 8

August 1999, she went to a state-run Hospital to give birth to her child. The doctor performed a cesarean operation under the pretext that it was medically necessary. Later, when she went to another hospital run by the nuns because she was experiencing severe health problems, she discovered she had been sterilized by the doctor at the state-run hospital...

Okinawa

Matsuda Takako was a junior in high school when she was raped by three U.S. military personnel. She did not report the rape to the police because she feared the harassment and humiliation she would be forced to endure. She moved to the mainland after finishing high school to get away from everything that reminded her of the ordeal...

Burma

Naw Dah Mu is 41 years old and lives in a refugee camp. In July 1999, 60 SPDC soldiers looted her house and took away her husband. They took her and her two children separately in the forest with them. The soldiers abandoned them in the forest without anything to eat. They found other villagers and learned from them that her husband had been tortured, mutilated and then killed. When she finally came to the refugee camp, she waited in the reception place for three months before being registered by UNHCR...

Algeria

One year after the assassination of her husband at a fake road block, 'X' was abducted by a group of 20 armed men led by one of her young neighbors who had joined the Islamic Armed Groups. They took her to a camp where she recognized many youngsters who had lived in her neighborhood. They tortured her sons. They tied her hands and feet and beat and kicked her for 15 hours. Later they raped her in turn, shouting at her "you should be ashamed". After some days they freed her. Some of her torturers and rapists are back in town and have been granted amnesty by the President...