

**USCMA Resolution  
International Violence Against Women Act (HR 4594, S 2982)  
2010 Annual Meeting  
Albuquerque, NM**

**Let it be resolved that:**

The U.S. Catholic Mission Association joins the Africa Faith & Justice Network in support of the International Violence Against Women Act (HR 4594, S 2982).

The International Violence Against Women Act (H.R. 4594, S.2982) or I-VAWA for short, was introduced by Senators John Kerry, Barbara Boxer, Susan Collins, and Olympia Snowe; and by Representatives Bill Delahunt and Ted Poe earlier in 2010. This bill would empower the US government, through its foreign assistance and in collaboration with the international community, to pursue effective remedies to violence against women worldwide.

While fighting impunity for acts of sexual violence, I-VAWA would also direct the US, through its support of local organizations, to empower women in politics, economy, education, human rights promotion, and participation in peace building.

As of September 2010 there are 122 members of the House of Representatives and 32 in the Senate who have co-sponsored this bill. We need many more co-sponsors of this bill.

**Rationale:**

Whereas we are a community of organizations and individuals, informed by Catholic Social Teaching, dedicated to educating and advocating for responsible U.S. relations with other countries, members of the US Catholic Mission Association in conjunction with the Africa Faith and Justice Network have long been interested in seeing our elected officials support peace building, human rights, and social justice on the continents of Africa, Asia and South/Central America.

Whereas we support U.S. economic and political policies that will benefit these people, facilitate an end to armed conflict, and promote sustainable development,

Whereas there continues to be incidents such as the recent atrocities in Luvungi in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) where from July 29<sup>th</sup> to August 4<sup>th</sup> many women were raped by armed militants identified as Mai Mai Cheka Cheka and the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), demonstrating once again that rape is being used as a weapon of war in many parts of our world,

Whereas by forming the Office for Global Women's Issues within the Department of State, calling for ambitious and accountable country-specific programming, and requiring the integration of women's issues into all aspects of US foreign policy, the International Violence Against Women Act (I-VAWA) will demonstrate to the world that the US doing its part for women,

Whereas while fighting impunity for acts of sexual violence, I-VAWA would also direct the US, through its support of local organizations, to empower women in politics, economy, education, human rights promotion, and participation in peacebuilding,

**Suggested Action:**

*We ask members of the USCMA to contact their Senators and Members of Congress to co-sponsor the **International Violence Against Women Act (H.R. 4594, S.2982)** immediately and also to ask that sufficient funding be assured and made available to USAID to effectively implement the strategy outlined as required by the bill.*