

Study challenges assumptions on wartime sexual violence

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A new study by the Simon Fraser University-based Human Security Report Project (HSRP), released today at the United Nations headquarters in New York, finds that there is no compelling evidence to support a host of widely held beliefs regarding wartime sexual violence.

The study, presented by HSRP director Andrew Mack, disputes the common [assumption](#) that conflict-related [sexual violence](#) is on the rise, and argues that the experience of a small number of [countries](#) afflicted by extreme levels of sexual violence is not the norm for all war-affected countries. Key findings include:

- In more than half of the years in which countries around the world experienced conflict between 2000-2009, levels of reported conflict-related sexual violence were low to negligible.
- There is no evidence to support frequent claims that rape as a "weapon of war" is widespread, nor that its incidence has been growing.
- Domestic sexual violence victimizes far more women in war-affected countries than does the conflict-related sexual violence that is perpetrated by combatants.
- Recent studies show that male victims and female perpetrators may be more numerous than generally believed.
- The study also finds that the mainstream view of the impact of war on children's education as highly damaging is incorrect, and that [educational outcomes](#) in war-affected countries improve

over time despite fighting, even in regions most affected by war.

More information: The complete study is available online at www.hsrgroup.org and will soon be available in print.

Provided by Simon Fraser University

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