



March 20, 2009

IPB ANNUAL CONFERENCE- WASHINGTON, D.C, NOV 13-15, 2009

As the new U.S. administration has revived the hope of peace activists inside and outside the USA, this conference will be a great opportunity to intensify partnerships, share views and lobby decision makers on the theme: *Rolling back militarism: a task for the global movement*. The programme will include a central event and additional activities depending on the wishes of partners and participants. But it is still open so suggestions are welcome. Click [here](#) for more.

DISARMAMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

In 2005 IPB launched a major new programme, designed to reflect widespread public concern at the rapid rise in global military spending (totalling \$1339 billion in 2007); and the evidence that weapons -- such as small arms, cluster bombs, landmines -- seriously impede sustainable development. Post 9-11, the failure of military solutions should be obvious to all. IPB advocates reductions in defence budgets and the adoption of a 'human security' approach. Activities organised in pursuit of these goals include: seminars, publications, website, e-newsletter, exhibitions and a media programme. National and international networks are gradually being developed.

NEWS

France to Re-join Nato Military Command

This week, the French parliament backed President Nicolas Sarkozy's decision to take France fully back into Nato. The policy reverses a 1966 decision by the late President Charles de Gaulle to pull out of Nato's military command. The return to the military command is now expected to become official at Nato's 60th anniversary summit in Strasbourg next month. Sarkozy stated that Nato remains a central element of France's security and defence policies, but stressed that he would not give up the country's independent nuclear deterrent. [Read more](#).

When a Soldier Comes Back From the War

When Los Angeles Times photojournalist Luis Sinco made a photograph of Marine Lance Corporal James Blake Miller, it became an icon of the Iraq War. Now, Sinco and Miller share their stories of how they became connected and their continuing struggle to come to terms with what happened. Miller shares about his nightmares haunted by war, depression, and struggle to adjust to life after the war. [Watch the video](#).

Military Spending

Shrugging off Economic Gloom: Sales on the Rise for One Defence Company

BAE Systems has seen good performance in all its main divisions but particularly that of land and armaments, which makes armoured fighting vehicles widely used in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even in these times of economic crises, the company has witnessed a sharp rise in sales, earnings and dividends for 2008. Ian King, Chief Executive, said: "We are quietly confident about 2009." Not surprising considering that the company's order book rose from £38.6bn to £46.5bn this year. Overall earnings before interest, tax and amortisation climbed by almost a third, from £1.45bn to £1.9bn. Read more [here](#).

Transparency International Calls Attention to Corruption Challenges in Defence Sector

On February 26th, the Chair of Transparency International addressed the NATO conference on "*Building Integrity and Defence Institution Building*". The full text of the speech is available [online](#) and provides a thorough overview of the corruption challenges faced by the defence sector. It also proposes concrete measures needed during times of conflict and peace to curb corruption.

France Considers Reducing A400M Aircraft Order But Military Spending on Rise

France may reduce its order for 50 A400M military transport aircraft which are meant to replace aging fleets of Transall and Hercules military transports. Although unlikely, France and seven other NATO countries have the right to terminate the entire A400M contract from April 1 due to project delays experienced by the European aerospace and defence contractor EADS. Still, France continues to invest in its military, the recent stimulus spending plan earmarks 2.3 billion Euros for defence in 2009. Laurent Collet-Billon, head of France's Direction Generale de l'Armement said that "2009 is going to mark a return to nearly historic levels [of defence spending] such as we haven't seen since the start of the Fifth Republic". [Read more](#)

Nuclear Weapons

Russia To Rearm and Strengthen Strategic Nuclear Forces

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev recently announced that his country will begin a comprehensive large-scale military rearmament from 2011 of which the primary tasks would be to "increase...troop readiness, primarily of strategic nuclear forces". The replacement of older equipment, however, has already begun. The military has stated its intention for 10 new intercontinental ballistic missiles to go into service before the end of the year, each of which will carry at least four nuclear warheads. Explaining the announcement, President Medvedev cited concerns over NATO expansion near Russia's borders, international terrorism, and regional conflicts. Russia will spend about 25 percent of the 1.5 trillion rubles (43 billion) budgeted for weapons to upgrade its nuclear force. Read the [full article](#).

Weapons and their effects

Appeal from the Latin American Conference on Uranium Weapons, San Jose, Costa Rica

The International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons held a 2 day conference in San Jose, Costa Rica March 6-7th where they discussed the science of uranium weapons, international campaigns against uranium weapons, international and domestic law concerning DU, and DU contamination in Latin America. They call on citizens and governments to join them in the pursuit of a uranium weapons treaty that will safeguard the health of civilians living in post-conflict environments and protect the ecosystem from long-term contamination. As a first step towards achieving this goal, we urge states to introduce domestic bans on uranium weapons to create a Uranium Weapon Free Zone across the region. For more information please visit their [website](#).

C bomb exports permanently banned in the United States

On March 11, President Obama signed a law that places a permanent ban on nearly all cluster bomb exports from the United States. The legislation states that cluster munitions can be exported only if the receiving country agrees that the munitions will not be used in areas of known civilian presence and if they leave behind less than one percent of their submunitions as duds. The U.S Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Bombs is urging citizens to get involved in another campaign for the Cluster Munitions Civilian Protection Act, which would apply the same one percent rule to the use of cluster munitions by the U.S military. [Read more](#).

Other news

Peace and Music: IPB Welcomes Newest Member, Peachcake

IPB's newest member is not your typical NGO. When Stefan Pruett, John O'Keefe, Mike McHale and Michael Kraft formed the band Peachcake, they did so "in hope of making the world a safer, better, happier place for all the creatures inhabiting it". And they chose to do this by "creating a fun, upbeat, positive message... thus see people smile, laugh, dance, and just plain...feel good! It's all about spreading the understanding, acceptance, and greatness of vibes". Read more about Peachcake and the IPB [here](#) and visit [Peacecake's MySpace page](#).

US Empire of Bases

According to a recent article by Hugh Gusterson, there are over 1000 US military bases on foreign soil, which make up 95% of all military bases any country in the world maintains on any other country's territory. Excluding the bases in Afghanistan and Iraq, the US spends about \$102 billion a year in running its "empire of bases". Gusterson chronicles the negative impacts of bases including the souring of US international relations, prostitution, environmental damage, and petty crime. Read the full article [here](#) or check out Catherine Luty and Cynthia Enloes's book *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle Against U.S. Military Posts* available through [Pluto Press](#).

Coalition for UN Decade of Inter-religious Cooperation for Peace

Recently, a group of forty-five religious, value-based, and interfaith organizations from over five continents agreed to form a coalition to advance a "United Nations Decade for Inter-religious and Intercultural Dialogue, Understanding, and Cooperation for Peace." Coalition members hope that the Sixty-Fourth UN General Assembly will approve a resolution establishing such a decade from 2011-2020 when it convenes in September 2009. On March 10, the president of the UN General Assembly, Miguel D'Escoto Brockmann, called for a "new spirit of solidarity and a powerful injection of moral and ethical values into our business and political lives." Stein Villumstad, deputy secretary general of Religions for Peace, commented that "this is a unique opportunity for religious traditions, so easily hijacked for destructive purposes, to work with the United Nations and jointly mobilize their communities and organizations for urgent and compelling actions for peace". [Read more](#).

Parliament of Catalonia Adopts Resolution on the Human Right to Peace

On February 26, the Commission on Cooperation and Solidarity of the Parliament of Catalonia adopted a resolution on the human right to peace. The Parliament of Catalonia is the first parliament in the world to support the campaign on the human right to peace. All the political parties represented before the Parliament agreed to support the concept of the human right to peace.

Resources

War as Business: The Privatization of Defence Assets and Outsourcing of Military Services

A new book by Armin Krishnan, *War as Business: Technological Change and Military Service Contracting*, is now available from Ashgate Publishers. Krishnan demonstrates the extent to which many military functions and activities have been outsourced in the US and in Europe. The author offers an original theoretical explanation as to why the most modern armed forces throughout the world have come increasingly to rely on private companies for nearly everything they do. Contributing to a better understanding of military privatization and its close connection to technological change, the book explains the complexity of the whole phenomenon and discusses its implications for national and international security. More information can be found [online](#).

Island of Shame: The Secret History of the U.S. Military Base on Diego Garcia

Dr. David Vine's new book, which is set to be released next month, provides a shocking expose of how the United States conspired with Britain to forcibly expel Diego Garcia's indigenous people, the Chagosians and deport them to slums in Mauritius and the Seychelles. The American military base on the island of Diego Garcia is one of the most strategically important and secretive U.S. military installations outside the United States. [Read more](#) about the book or find out more about the situation on the [UK Chagos Support Association website](#).

Debunking Myths About Iran: Stopping War Before it Starts

A number of organizations, including Women Against War and the Campaign Against Sanctions and Military Intervention in Iran (CASMI) are working hard to educate people about Iran and debunk many of the myths which they say circulate in the media and on the lips of politicians. Both organizations oppose any form of military action against Iran, stating that it is important to educate citizens on the consequences of a possible war. On their websites, you can find a number of helpful, quick reference materials including [fact sheets](#), [opportunities for involvement](#), and an easy to read [flier](#).

Newsletters

IPB receives many e-newsletters, both from our members and non-member organisations. Click [here](#) for a list with hyperlinks. Also, to review IPB's past newsletters, please visit [this link](#).

Calendar

Click [here](#) for IPB's international events calendar. For disarmament events, go to the comprehensive Disarmament Calendars of UN and other inter-governmental, grassroots and civil society events in key cities compiled by the [Geneva Forum](#) and by [Reaching Critical Will](#).

Message to IPB members: if you have reports of activities that are relevant to this newsletter please email them to the Secretariat.

To subscribe to or unsubscribe from this newsletter please email: mailbox@ipb.org

New editor: The IPB is pleased to welcome Alicia Dueck (alicia@ipb.org), who will be with us for the next three months

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