

Warfare or Welfare? Conference report

Disarmament for Peace, Human Security & Development in 21st Century India

10-12 February 2009, Bangalore, India

Céline Nahory represented IPB at this event – here is her report:

While about 600 arms companies and 30 defense ministers from all over the world were gathering in Bangalore for the Aero India 2009 Exhibition, NGOs held a three-day conference on disarmament for peace, human security and development.

The event, organized by the Control Arms Foundation of India (CAFI), the Foundation for Educational Innovation in India (FEDINA), and Christ University advocated for an arms trade treaty and called for a 10% reduction of military expenditures to be invested instead in social security, health and education.

Read the concept paper of the conference, here:

<http://www.disarmamentconference.org/ConceptNote.pdf>

The event was organized in three parts:

Day 1 (Feb. 10): There was a general introduction about the need for an arms trade treaty and the disarmament to combat poverty campaign, as well as a workshop on weapons and a movie on small arms, etc. Speakers included Father Ambrose Pinto, Binalakshmi Nepram from CAFI, Ravinder Pal Singh formerly with SIPRI, Mita Dutta from FEDINA, Linda Åkerström from SPAS, and Céline Nahory on behalf of IPB and the Global Article 9 Campaign, among others. (*see end of text for websites*)

Day 2 (Feb. 11): This was dedicated to peace vigils, protests and actions against Aero India. There was a press conference as well.

Day 3 (Feb. 12): The last day was a set of presentations by experts. Among the speakers were Ambassador L.C. Jain who used to be active in the Quit India movement during the colonial era, Prof. Sanjay Biswas, a nuclear expert, Ravinder Pal Singh, Duarte Barrreto and Sebastian Devaraj from FEDINA, and Anna Ek from SPAS, among others.

See the full program of the event here:

<http://www.disarmamentconference.org/program.pdf>

Attendance:

During the first two days, the majority of the about 200 participants were FEDINA members – grassroots activists and marginalized groups from the south of the country.

It would have been interesting to have more time for exchange with these fascinating people as part of the program, so as to hear from them what they do at the grassroots level with their own communities. But as most of them do not speak

English, it would have been difficult to organize. (The entire first day of the conference was translated into two local languages, Tamil and Kannada.)

On the third day, the audience was made up of the organizers, students and others. Most of FEDINA members had left.

IPB/Peace Boat presentations:

IPB's statement was read as a way of closing the introductory morning about the need for an arms trade treaty and the D4D campaign. >> [READ FULL TEXT](#)

There was also an opportunity in the afternoon session to present the Global Article 9 Campaign, and to come back to our joint campaign on Disarmament for Development (D4D), along with Freres des Hommes as well. Participants seemed inspired to hear that there is an international movement out there. Several of them may contact you about the *Call for Action* (on military and social spending)

Brochures and Leaflets:

Presented on a table at the entrance of the room, they were all gone in no time!

Outcomes:

A **declaration** focusing on the call for an arms trade treaty, arms trafficking, small arms, and calling for access to social security was adopted, and submitted to India's Prime Minister. The text was signed by representatives of the three sponsoring organizations.

There have also been quite a few **media items**, in the local press as well as in the national one – and even in some newspaper from Ghana !

See for example:

http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Bangalore/Protest_against_arms_trade/articleshow/4096080.cms

[http://week.manoramaonline.com/cgi-](http://week.manoramaonline.com/cgi-bin/MMOnline.dll/portal/ep/contentView.do?contentId=5127652&programId=1073754912&pageTypeld=1073754893&contentType=EDITORIAL)

[bin/MMOnline.dll/portal/ep/contentView.do?contentId=5127652&programId=1073754912&pageTypeld=1073754893&contentType=EDITORIAL](http://week.manoramaonline.com/cgi-bin/MMOnline.dll/portal/ep/contentView.do?contentId=5127652&programId=1073754912&pageTypeld=1073754893&contentType=EDITORIAL)

<http://www.expressbuzz.com/edition/print.aspx?artid=pOA4iOwiDOQ=>

<http://www.modernghana.com/news/202092/1/pride-and-poverty-indias-amazing-blending.html>

Key organisations:

CAFI (CONTROL ARMS FOUNDATION INDIA)

Conference reports at:

http://cafi-online.org/news-detail.php?news_id=159

http://www.cafi-online.org/press-detail.php?pr_id=17

<http://cafi-online.org/dpd.php>

FEDINA (FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATIONAL INNOVATIONS IN ASIA)

<http://www.borda.de/homepages/india/fedina/>

SIPRI (STOCKHOLM INTERNATIONAL PEACE RESEARCH INSTITUTE)
<http://www.sipri.org>

SPAS (SWEDISH PEACE & ARBITRATION SOCIETY)
<http://www.svenskafreds.se/english/>

FDH (FRERES DES HOMMES):
<http://www.fdh.org/Disarmament-to-combat-poverty.html>

GLOBAL ARTICLE 9 CAMPAIGN TO ABOLISH WAR:
<http://www.article-9.org/en/index.html>

Celine Nahory, International Coordinator - Global Article 9 Campaign to Abolish War / Peace Boat (IPB member organisation).

