



APRIL 12, 2011

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

IPB SUMMARY REPORT

What we did:

1. **Public action at the Place des Nations** (in front of the UN, with 2 famous disarmament monuments, the Landmines Chair and the Twisted Cannon)

a) Big banner saying: TAKE ACTION ON MILITARY SPENDING: END WARS - FUND HUMAN NEEDS!

b) Symbolic installation to show the vast disparity between global military spending and what is needed for the MDGs - using 160 boxes each representing \$10bn, and 30 boxes for the MDGs

(see 2 photos attached)

Organised by IPB and the Group for Switzerland without an Army/GSSA. The action shows what you can do with a smallish group (approx 30 people)!

2. **Lunchtime seminar** near the UN, with participation from diplomats (incl. US and German Ambassadors), NGOs, students, others. The room was full.

Speakers:

- Elisabeth Sköns (SIPRI) - presented the 2010 military spending statistics and some useful historical references;
- Beatrice Fihn (WILPF Intl/Reaching Critical Will) commented on the disconnect between military and human security, and stressed the importance of linking up work done on disarmament with the human rights system;
- Colin Archer (IPB) explained about the worldwide civil society campaign and introduced some strategic ideas, projects and publications.

3. **Evening discussion meeting** with the Swiss Burma Association on militarisation in Burma, incl. screening of the Democratic Voice of Burma TV documentary '*Burma's Nuclear Ambitions*' (43min) which features chilling testimony from a whistleblower/defector from the Burmese military.

<http://www.dvb.no/burmas-nuclear-ambitions/>

Partnerships: Our event involved working closely with SIPRI, GSSA, WILPF and ASB. IPB has worked with them all before, but the GDAMS action was helpful in cementing the relationships.

Media coverage: was not as good as hoped, but we did get:

- An interview with Lemman Bleu TV (in French, 11mins 50 into the clip):

<http://www.lemanbleu.ch/vod/le-journal-12042011>

- The mass circulation paper '20 Minutes' carried an item with a photo of the 'boxes' installation. (ATTACHED cutting)

A photo gallery is under construction.

More work on this aspect next year!

Special outcomes: One interesting idea raised in the lunchtime seminar was to organise an 'Article 26 committee' to explore ways to encourage states to live up to their commitments under UN Charter Article 26 (see:

<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/political/article26/background.html>)

Another proposal put forward for IPB work is to develop a special focus on the private sector/privatisation aspect, to complement the focus on government spending.

Follow up plans: we hope to be able to start the Geneva planning process earlier next year and to engage more VIPs, political personalities etc.

Meanwhile IPB will be heavily engaged -- together with our co-organisers at IPS -- in promoting dialogue with governments and mobilising civil society actors all over the world, so that the issue of military spending vs. development/social justice becomes a mainstream political issue!

Colin Archer, Secretary-General

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The International Peace Bureau is dedicated to the vision of a World Without War. We are a Nobel Peace Laureate (1910), and over the years 13 of our officers have been recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize. Our 320 member organisations in 70 countries, and individual members, form a global network which brings together expertise and campaigning experience in a common cause. IPB has United Nations Consultative Status since 1977 and is the Secretariat for the NGO Committee for Disarmament (Geneva). Our main programme centres on *Sustainable Disarmament for Sustainable Development*. We welcome your participation.

+ Now on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/ipb1910>

+ on Twitter too: <http://twitter.com/IntlPeaceBureau>

Current project: *Global Day of Action on Military Spending, 12 April 2011*: <http://www.demilitarize.org>