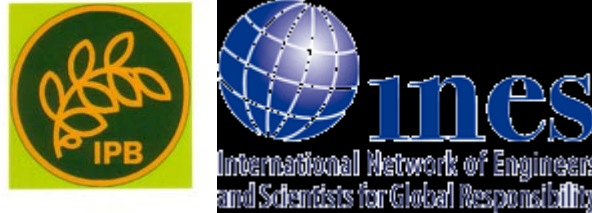


NPT REVIEW CONFERENCE, NEW YORK; MAY 2010
NGO Panel
3:00–6:00 PM, Weds. May 5

NGO Room: Room A. Temporary North Lawn Building

Co-organised by International Peace Bureau (IPB) and International Network of Scientists and Engineers for Global Responsibility (INES)



The misuse of brainpower: the conversion of science and technology for human and environmental needs



What's the problem?

Militarisation is not only an economic and social burden. It is an issue for the future of science, engineering and technology: where do we want our best science brains to be deployed? A huge proportion of the world's research capacity is lost to the civilian sector due to the power of attraction that military projects hold for scientists and experts of every stripe.

"In wealthy countries like the USA, France and the UK, significant military research and development budgets drive a weapons-based, high technology military agenda. In 2003-4, nearly one third of British public funding for research and development (£2.6 billion) was spent by the Ministry of Defence, while 40% of government scientists and technologists work for the MoD". Furthermore: the Ministry of Defence only spends approximately 6% of its budget on conflict prevention."

(Langley, Chris: *Soldiers in the Laboratory: Military involvement in science and technology – and some alternatives*, Scientists for Global Responsibility, UK, 2005)

The nuclear weapons sector in particular is a magnet for physicists and other specialists. The 3 main US labs (Lawrence Livermore, Los Alamos, Sandia) employ thousands of physicists, engineers and other technicians to maintain and expand their operations. In the event of President Obama's disarmament vision being fully implemented, it is true that many of these would be retained to organise dismantlement and disposal programmes. But one of the objectives of any nuclear disarmament policy is to gradually release expertise for civilian sectors.

What should be done ?

The SGR report quoted above has a list of 15 recommendations to government, professional bodies, and individual scientists, for the 'conversion' of this sector - including the following measures:

- Divert a major portion of R & D to wider issues.
- Restrict military involvement with emerging technologies, such as nanotechnology.
- Make defence funding of R & D far more transparent.
- Devote more resources to implementing a more inclusive concept of security, including peacebuilding and non-violent conflict resolution (and also research on sustainable development and climate change challenges)
- Conduct reviews of military agreements with foreign powers.
- Cease all scientific and technical work related to new nuclear weapons.
- Require all research papers and reports to acknowledge military funding where this is the case.

Campaign example: In Spain, a highly successful civil society campaign (organised by IPB member organisation Fundacio per la Pau) has developed a critique of that country's research agenda and has gathered thousands of signatures from scientists for a 'hippocratic oath' by which researchers refuse to undertake military-related work.

Speakers

- **Dave Webb, CND UK, and Global Network against Nuclear Power and Weapons in Space**
- **Jackie Cabasso & Andy Lichterman, Western States Legal Foundation, USA**
- **Subrata Ghoshroy, MIT, USA**

Moderator: Reiner Braun, INES-IALANA-IPB, Germany

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