



IPB News

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INTERNATIONAL PEACE BUREAU

Working for a world without war

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The **Calendar of Events** is available as a separate document.

IPB has 7 websites!

MAIN SITE: <http://www.ipb.org>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/ipb1910>

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/IntlPeaceBureau>

Global Day of Action on Military Spending : <http://www.demilitarize.org>

+ Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_100733129991763

+ Twitter: <http://twitter.com/#!/globalday412>

'Making Peace' Photo-exhibition <http://www.makingpeace.org>

1- DISARMAMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT

- *In 2005 IPB launched a major new programme, designed to reflect widespread public concern at the rapid rise in global military spending (totaling \$1630 billion in 2010); and the evidence that weapons -- such as small arms, cluster bombs, landmines -- seriously impede sustainable development.*

A. MILITARY SPENDING

Call for Participation

2012 Global Day of Action on Military Spending: April 17

On April 17th, 2012, people all over the world will join together for the second Global Day of Action on Military Spending (GDAMS), co-organized by IPB and the Institute for Policy Studies. Join us to protest against the ever-higher military spending figures: more than \$1.6 billion per year! April 17th is the day on which SIPRI will announce the military spending figures for 2011 – GDAMS actions worldwide are timed to draw attention to the size of those figures. IPB asks you to distribute the [Call for Participation](#) widely.

Rio+20: United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

From June 20th – 22nd, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development will take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. 20 years after the first conference, Rio+20 aims to secure political commitment to sustainable development, assess progress towards internationally agreed commitments and address new and emerging challenges. The Stakeholder Forum [collects information](#) on the progress leading up to Rio+20, as does the [Rio+20 Portal](#). Civil society actors are preparing for a

[Peoples' Summit for Social and Environmental Justice](#) from June 18th – 23rd. A calendar of key dates leading up to the conference is available [here](#).

IPB encourages GDAMS partners to make the link with the Rio+20 issues.

UNITED STATES

U.S. New Defense Strategic Guidance: [Obama's Mission Accomplished Moment?](#)

Jan. 12, 2012 - The U.S. has released the new [Defense Strategic Guidance](#) for 2012. Tom Engelhardt [faults](#) the strategy for failing to recognize that none of the world's most pressing problems can be addressed by military solutions. The American Friends Service Committee [criticizes](#) the document for failing to cut military spending effectively, saying that the U.S. will continue to spend \$2.1 million every minute of every day on the military. The AFSC shows how the U.S. military is set to carry on expanding.

[Danger Waters: Michael T. Klare on Coming Resource Conflicts](#)

Jan. 11, 2012 - In this excellent article, Michael Klare shows how disputes over vital resources will dominate world affairs, and how energy supplies and conflict will be bound tightly together in the future. The struggle to retain resource access is already a vital part of global political strategies, and will continue to be one of the main factors influencing countries' high military spending. Focusing on three hotspots, the Strait of Hormuz, the South China Sea and the Caspian Sea Basin, the article outlines possible future scenarios of the struggle for access.

New Priorities Network: [News and Updates](#)

The [New Priorities Network](#) is an initiative to fund urgently needed jobs and restore vital public services by substantially cutting military spending. It brings together diverse organizations in order to establish ties between movements, build power at the grassroots, organize for the long term and connect the economic pain of today with the 'justice economy' that's possible. It collects articles and provides resources on how to move the money from military spending to human needs.

Robert Pollin and Heidi Garrett-Peltier: **[Study: Defense Spending Is 'Weak Job Engine'](#)**

Nov. 29, 2011 – A [new study](#) about the effects of military and domestic spending on employment finds that defense spending is not a job-creator. In fact, defense spending is not only less effective than other forms of “stimulus,” but also less effective than general consumer spending. The authors find that while \$1 billion spent in the US on the military will generate about 11,200 jobs, the same amount would create 15,100 jobs for household consumption, 16,800 jobs for clean energy, 17,200 jobs for healthcare, and 26,700 jobs for education.

Oscar Arias Sanchez: [Open Letter to the President of Haiti on the Role of Armed Forces](#)

In this open letter of December 9, 2011, Oscar Arias Sanchez, the Nobel laureate and former President of Costa Rica, urges President of Haiti Michel Martelly to focus on social programs rather than reestablish the armed forces that were disbanded on January 6, 1995 by President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. He calls attention to the destructive influence of the military throughout Latin American history, reminding President Martelly that “most armies are enemies of development, enemies of peace and enemies of freedom”. >>>[READ MORE](#)

Martina Weitsch: **[How Arms Companies Have Obtained Public EU Research Funds](#)**

Public EU funds from the European Security Research Programme have been spent on arms companies, in particular two from a non-EU state, Israel. This has occurred despite military research being specifically excluded from the formal R&D framework.

UNITED STATES

Annie Snider: [Fuel Costs in Spotlight as Military Faces Steep Budget Cuts](#)

Nov. 29, 2011 –With roughly \$1 trillion in defense spending cuts expected over the next decade after the failed debt deal, the discussion of what to cut in the military budget has already started. The military's fuel bill, which reached \$15 billion last year, looks to be a likely target. Restructuring transport of soldiers and military equipment, alternative fuels, and re-engineering of equipment are comparatively easy, but 'the Pentagon will be on the hook for major fuel costs unless it can fundamentally change the way it uses energy'.

CANADA

Steven Staples, Ceasefire: [Inside the pro-War Lobby's Secret Funding Deal with Harper](#)

Nov. 22, 2011 - A pro-war advocacy group made up of retired military generals, called the Conference of Defense Associations, aggressively lobbies MPs to continue with record-high war spending. This pro-war lobby is lavished with funding from Prime Minister Harper's Department of National Defense: it is guaranteed a half-million dollars over five years and given direct access to the highest levels in the Department of National Defense. [Ceasefire](#) works tirelessly to counterbalance the pro-war lobby, doing much-needed research, speaking to MPs, and working with journalists.

Terry Jones, The Guardian: [Who Is Paying for the War Drums?](#)

Dec. 6, 2011 – In the 14th century, soldiers 'laid-off' with the treaty of Brétigny in 1360 simply formed themselves into freelance armies, aptly called "free companies", that proceeded around Europe pillaging, killing and raping. Cities paid these companies off to avoid ransacking, turning warfare into a profitable business. More than 650 years later, private security companies are still making millions out of war. Just like the taxpayers of medieval Italian city-states, we are having our money siphoned off into the business of war. And now the same war drums, encouraged by the storming of the British embassy last week, are beating for an attack on Iran.

SWAZILAND

[Opposition to Military Spending Grows](#)

Nov. 29, 2011 - 2011 has seen unprecedented public protests against the rule of sub-Saharan Africa's last absolute monarch, King Mswati III, sparked by an economic crisis that has led to severe cuts in social services in a country with the world's highest HIV/AIDS prevalence. Parliament has passed a US\$8 million supplementary budget for the army, provoking a rare public reaction in questioning the role or even the need for an army in view of the deepening economic crisis.

SWITZERLAND

[Swiss Air Force to Buy Swedish Jets](#)

Dec. 1, 2011 - Switzerland has chosen the Gripen fighter jet manufactured by Sweden's Saab group to replace the Air Force's existing fleet at a cost of SFr 3.1 billion (\$3.4 billion). The decision, based on the recommendation of Defense Minister Ueli Maurer, was controversially received in the press. [One article](#) (French) presents several much cheaper alternatives, such as upgrading older aircraft or investing in radar systems. The Group for Switzerland without an Army (GSoA) and the Greens say they [would launch an initiative](#) (signature collection) calling for a moratorium on the purchase.

CANADA

Kenneth Epps, Project Ploughshares: [The F-35: What Goes Up Must Come Down](#)

In light of the economic crisis, it is reasonable to ask whether big military spenders should cut back on their defense programs. It should be obvious, therefore, that the project planned to be the most expensive equipment purchase in history will come under additional scrutiny. The F-35 Joint Strike Fighter, a U.S.-developed combat aircraft that several Western states want to procure over the next decade or so, is grossly over budget, years behind schedule, and unlikely to deliver on many claims including, ironically, benefits to the economy.

B. IMPACTS OF WEAPONS ON DEVELOPMENT

International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL): [One Million More Mines to Be Destroyed as Finland Becomes 159th Nation to Join Landmine Ban](#)

Jan. 12, 2012 - Finland has become the latest nation to join the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, depositing its instrument of accession at the United Nations in New York on Monday 9 January 2012. ICBL "warmly welcomes Finland to join the majority of countries to have completely banished these indiscriminate weapons". Finland will now destroy its stockpile of more than one million antipersonnel mines within four years, as required by the treaty.

Tom Miles: [U.S. Defeated in Bid on Cluster Bomb Accord](#)

Nov 25, 2011 - Opponents of the proposed cluster bomb accord under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons achieved a victory on Nov. 25th, when the U.S.-led push to regulate, rather than ban, cluster munitions failed after 50 countries led by Norway, Mexico and Austria objected. [Human Rights Watch welcomed](#) this achievement, noting that anything less than an outright ban would be an unprecedented reversal of human rights law. Activists, [among them the group Article 36](#), had argued that softer rules on the manufacture and use of cluster bombs would legitimize them, backtracking from the Oslo Convention, an international treaty that seeks a total worldwide ban.

11th Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty in Phnom Penh

From Nov. 28th to Dec. 2nd 2011, close to 100 governments, international organizations, civil society and survivors from Cambodia and around the world gathered in Phnom Penh at the 11th Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty. The meeting assessed challenges and progress made on the universalization and full implementation of the Treaty. States announced both promising progress and worrying setbacks in their efforts to eradicate landmines. Summaries and statements made at the meeting are available [here](#), and a photo-report is available [here](#).

Control Arms Launches Parliamentary Declaration

Dec. 5, 2011 - Members of Parliament are renewing their call for a strong Arms Trade Treaty in a [Parliamentary Declaration](#) being launched by the Control Arms coalition. The Declaration is an endorsement and encouragement of the negotiations for an Arms Trade Treaty. Control Arms urges supporters to contact parliamentarians in your country and ask them to sign the Declaration, and to organize briefings or meetings with groups of parliamentarians about the Arms Trade Treaty.

Report: 'Defining Toxic Remnants of War' Roundtable

IPB staff attended a roundtable discussion in Geneva on Nov. 17th, 2011 on the issue of Toxic Remnants of War (TRW). The roundtable explored whether there is potential for developing a conceptual framework aimed at limiting the release and impact of toxic materials during military activities, with a particular focus on the responsibility of states, and emphasized a humanitarian focused approach. Work on this issue will be continued by IKV Pax Christi and the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons.

2. NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND): [Doomsday Clock Moves a Minute Closer to Midnight](#)

Jan. 11, 2012 - IPB member CND expressed concern at the news that the Doomsday Clock has been moved a minute closer to Midnight. The symbolic clock now reads five minutes to midnight: a response to inadequate progress on nuclear weapons reduction and climate change. CND General Secretary, Kate Hudson, has described the move as 'a painful reflection of the faltering progress on nuclear disarmament'.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Adopt Draft Resolution '[Working towards the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons](#)'

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies adopted a [draft resolution](#) on Nov. 26th that emphasizes the human suffering that will result from any use of nuclear weapons and the absolute imperative to prevent such use. The Resolution finds it difficult to envisage how any use of nuclear weapons could be compatible with the rules of international humanitarian law. Finally, it appeals to all States to ensure that nuclear weapons are never again used. An overview and perspectives from Australia are available [here](#). [Mayors for Peace](#) and the [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons](#) welcome this resolution.

Robert Alvarez, Institute for Policy Studies: [The Human Face of Making Nuclear Weapons](#)

Dec. 7, 2011 - As of 2010, some 50,000 people have received \$6.5 billion compensation for illnesses and deaths following exposure to ionizing radiation, beryllium and other toxic substances while making nuclear weapons. The tireless work of activists, some politicians and researchers served to make public the disastrous consequences of workers' exposure to radiation. However, the struggle for justice for people deliberately put in harm's way in order to amass nuclear arms is far from over.

UNITED KINGDOM

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND): [Trident Spending Rises as Tories Suppress Debate](#)

Dec. 1, 2011 - CND expressed outrage at Government bad faith over Trident replacement plans. Answers given to two recent Parliamentary Questions revealed that Ministry of Defence spending on Trident replacement is actually £2 billion more than the previously reported almost £4 billion, and that Defence Secretary Philip Hammond stated that the government has "no plans" to publish the Lib Dem-led "Trident Alternatives Review".

3. MISCELLANEOUS

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF): [16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence](#)

From Nov. 25th to Dec. 10th 2011, '16 Days of Action against Gender Violence' took place, a global campaign initiated by the Center for Women's Global Leadership. The 2011 Campaign theme was "From Peace in the Home to Peace in the World: Let's Challenge Militarism and End Violence against Women!" WILPF participated in the Campaign with the slogan: "Blow the Whistle to Redefine Security". WILPF called for a reduction of military spending and the redefinition of security, among others. More information on WILPF's actions [here](#).

The Nobel Peace Prize Award Ceremony 2011

On December 10th, 2011, the Nobel Peace Prize Award Ceremony took place in Oslo, where the three female laureates each received the Nobel Peace Prize. Thorbjørn Jagland, Chairman of the

Norwegian Nobel Committee, gave a [presentation speech](#) highlighting the role of women in building peace. The laureates [Ellen Johnson Sirleaf](#), [Leymah Gbowee](#) and [Tawakkol Karman](#) each gave a Nobel Lecture.

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs Establishes Vienna Office

Nov. 11, 2011 – The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) established a new office in Vienna, which took up operations on November 2nd. The Vienna Office will follow-up on relevant developments and provide advice to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, as well as organizing meetings and conferences in the field of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation

UNITED KINGDOM

Ann Jordan: **Manchester Peace and Social Justice Trail**

IPB Council member and peace educator Ann Jordan outlines the work of the local group who put together a [Peace and Social Justice Peace Trail](#) to show and teach about important aspects of the city's peace history. The trail highlights progressive people, ideas, groups and movements from the city and its region, such as the creation of the first Nuclear-Free Local Authority and Manchester's Vice Presidency of Mayors for Peace. >>>[READ MORE](#)

4. RESOURCES

Ivan Eland: **New Book: [No War for Oil: US Dependency and the Middle East](#)**

This book examines the troubled legacy of wars and military actions undertaken to secure access to oil. Contrary to the beliefs shared by the architects of U.S. foreign policy for most of the past century, Eland concludes that ensuring the free flow of oil to the United States does not require U.S. military protection of the world's oil-rich regions. Debunking many of the myths about oil markets and correcting misperceptions about U.S. national security, Eland shows that markets alone can be relied upon to supply oil to Americans, just as markets are used to provide paying customers with other valued products.

Greg Muttitt: **New Book: [Fuel on the Fire - Oil and Politics in Occupied Iraq](#)**

Muttitt investigates one of Iraq's most pressing questions, namely what is happening to Iraq's oil. He reveals how the occupying powers efforts to return Iraq's oil industry to multinational companies against Iraqis' determination to keep production in the public sector has fuelled violence. In [an interview](#), the author talks about the book and its findings.

Michael Klare: **Upcoming Book: [The Race for What's Left: The Global Scramble for the World's Last Resources](#)** (publication due in March 2012)

Michael Klare describes the scramble for the world's resources amidst growing resource depletion. The consequences of "this frenzy of extreme exploration and acquisition" are grave: next to environmental consequences, resource shortages can cause border wars. The only way out, Klare argues, will be to alter our consumption patterns altogether.

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