



IPB News

WWW: Working for a World Without War

International Peace Bureau

April 6, 2010

IPB Nobel centenary year-special events planned!

This year IPB celebrates a very special year: it is 100 years since the organisation was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for its efforts in promoting peace, and for coordinating the work of national peace societies. In 2010 we are organising various events to commemorate this important milestone in the history of the organised peace movement. These activities culminate in a major **international conference** plus the triennial IPB Assembly and other activities, **in Oslo from 23-26 Sept.** IPB invites all members and supporters to join together for this great celebration in the Norwegian capital. Under the broad title '*A Climate for Peace*' we will organise - together with the Norwegian Peace Council - an intensive programme of discussions, social gatherings and cultural events. You can read details of the programme as it develops via <http://www.ipb.org> - (see box)

If you require an invitation letter for visa purposes, please write to Hedda Langemyr <hedda@norgesfredsråd.no> who will send you a formal letter that you can present to the Norwegian Consulate in your capital city. For all other details please contact IPB Geneva secretariat.

Before that, from June 6th to late July, IPB's photo-exhibition 'Making Peace' will be shown along Lake Geneva in front of the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. There will also be a 'Peace Village' on June 6th and Garden Party. In addition, we have written to all our members to invite them to organise activities and events in their own areas, as part of the Centenary programme.

IPB's 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 \$1464 billion in 2008); 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.

Military Spending

NATO chief demands more money for bombs

Anders Fogh Rasmussen, NATO Secretary-General, requested on March 27 that European countries spend more money on their war equipment and build a missile defence shield, which would set up missile sites in Australia and the Pacific region linked to the US and Europe. He also complained about the growing gap between European and US spending that may endanger the relationship between the allies. Mr. Rasmussen was attending a Brussels forum organised by the German Marshall Fund of the United States, whose agenda includes forging closer military ties between the US and Europe.

<http://www.morningstaronline.co.uk/index.php/news/content/view/full/88517>

US military spending responsible for huge national debt: \$23 trillion spent

The US debt currently equals \$13 trillion and a big part of it is the result of military spending. The US military expenditure from 1946 until 2010 has been close to \$23 trillion. After the end of WWII the country located huge amounts of money into its military, while other countries were spending it on social programmes. The US appointed itself the defender of 'free world' and participated in the subsequent wars in Korea, Vietnam, the Desert Storm operation, plus the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, the cost of which have been paid by taxpayers. The US defense budget is seven times bigger than China's and constitutes around fifty percent of the total US budget. More at <http://www.burlingtonfreepress.com/article/20100328/OPINION02/3280318/My-Turn-Will-military-spending-doom-us> and <http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/David-R.-Francis/2010/0329/Defense-budget-After-Afghanistan-and-Iraq-withdrawal-a-peace-dividend>

The decline of the USA and military spending

According to an article published in *Il Manifesto* by Mario Pianta, 38 million Americans live in poverty and have to resort to food stamps to survive, while 2% have no financial income, either from work or unemployment. The ratio between the amount earned by the poorest 10% and the richest 10% has increased by 40% since 1975. While the politicians helped to rescue the banking sector, no one helped the Americans who are now unemployed. The deepening public debt is partially the result of huge military spending by the US, which equals half of what the whole world spends on weapons. Pianta suggests that a \$400 bn plan should be spent on social programmes providing income support and creation of public sector jobs. This could be financed by increasing taxes on the rich. <http://www.icip-perlapau.cat/e-review/issue-2-march-2010/the-decline-usa-financial-crisis-and-military-expenditure.htm>

Fears over China neighbours' arms purchases

In response to an increase in China's regional powers, neighbouring south-east Asian countries have increased their arms purchases. The observers are worried that the disputes in the South China Sea may become violent. As Siemon Wezeman, from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute observes, south-east Asian governments have purchased many submarines, fighter aircraft and long-range missiles in the last few years. Singapore has acquired six frigates, thirty-two fighter aircrafts, twelve fighters and two submarines; Malaysia bought two submarines, twenty-six fighter aircrafts and six frigates. Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam have also placed orders for submarine and fighter aircrafts. More at <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/4865edbc-2fd3-11df-9153-00144feabdc0.html>

Spanish military expenditure report

The Centre of Peace Studies JM Delàs in Barcelona has prepared a report on Spanish military expenditure for 2010. According to the report, the overall military spending figure is almost double the Ministry of Defence budget and equals over € 18 billion. Despite the economic crisis that Spain is suffering from, the scheduled investments are almost the same as in the previous years and include EF-2000 fighter plane, the Leopard tank the S-80 submarine and other purchases. http://www.centredelas.org/attachments/579_informe5_eng.pdf

Weapons and their impact on development

Children killed in cluster bomb blast in Laos

On February 22, 2010 a cluster submunition exploded in a village in Lao PDR's Champasak province killing five children. According to Lao government sources, eight children found a BLU-3

cluster submunition while they were feeding buffalo. The bomb exploded when they were playing with it. The blast killed five children and injured one. The Lao National Regulatory Authority has promised a detailed investigation into the incident. Cluster submunitions also called 'bombies', together with landmines and other explosives left after the war claim up to three hundred victims per year, in the country. The incident highlights the importance of urgent action to ensure clearance of cluster munition remnants.

<http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/news/?id=2072>

Switzerland bans investment in cluster munitions

On March 10, the National Council of the Swiss parliament voted in favour of a motion that bans investment in the production of all banned weapons, including cluster munitions and landmines. Switzerland signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions at the Oslo signing ceremony in December 2008, but it has still not ratified. The CMC urges as many states as possible to join the treaty and begin to implement its provisions this year. The treaty comes into effect on 1 August, which coincides with Switzerland's National Day. <http://www.stopclustermunitions.org/news/?id=2073>

Clusters: Africa Regional Conference

Africa Regional Conference on the Universalization and Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions took place in Pretoria between March 25-26. Over thirty states participated in the conference, which focused on the Convention, particularly in Africa, cooperation and assistance. The report from the conference, prepared by Katherine Harrison from Action on Armed Violence, is available [HERE](#).

"Shooting Poverty" film competition

Oxfam has launched "*Shooting Poverty*", a film competition that invites young filmmakers to submit their written vision for a short documentary, focusing on the impact on development of armed violence and the arms trade. Three winning proposals will receive full production support. Deadline: 1 June. Information in English, Hindi, Portuguese and Spanish can be found at: <http://shootingpoverty.org/>

Nuclear Disarmament

Countdown to the NPT Review Conference, May 3-28

With four weeks left until the NPT Review Conference in New York, civil society groups around the world are putting pressure on their governments to commit to a Nuclear Weapons Convention. The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons has been promoting red wristbands in support of Nuclear Weapons Convention, available to everyone who attends the Review Conference. The red wristband poster is available at <http://www.icanw.org/files/wristbandposter4.pdf>. The organisation has also launched a website for Nuclear Abolition Day www.nuclearabolition.org

Japanese civil society is especially active and engaged in advocacy for nuclear weapons abolition. More than 1500 Japanese civil society representatives will participate in NY. The UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, expressed his support for the Nuclear Weapons Convention by sending letters to all world parliaments urging them to support the efforts towards a nuclear free world. His letter is available at http://www.gsinstitute.org/pnnd/docs/UNSG_Eng.pdf. To read more please visit <http://www.icanw.org/>

Nuclear Abolition Conference + Rally - NYC, April 30-May 2

Join with thousands of people from around the world on the eve of the NPT Review Conference at the United Nations. Hundreds of international organizations have come together to organize a weekend of action to bring pressure to bear on world leaders who will be attending the NPT conference to make nuclear abolition a reality "in our lifetimes!" We also understand that nuclear disarmament is interconnected with ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, funding human needs and environmental sustainability, so we will march together to call for: **No Nukes, No Wars, Fund Human Needs, Protect the Earth!** Hurry now to register!

Plus: International Day of Action – Sunday, May 2: Rally, March & Peace Festival

Full details for both events at: <http://peaceandjusticenow.org>

The new START Treaty and reactions to it

The White House has released information about the newly-signed START Treaty. The Treaty is organised into three tiers. The first tier is the Treaty; the second includes the Protocol to the Treaty and the basic rights and obligations. The third tier consists of Technical Annexes to the Protocol. According to the Treaty, the US and Russia will limit strategic arms within seven years from the date when the treaty enters into force. The limit of warheads is 74% lower than the limit of the 1991 START Treaty and allows 1,550 warheads. The duration of the new START Treaty will be ten years. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/key-facts-about-new-start-treaty>

IPB member groups Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Nuclear Age Peace Foundation have welcomed the treaty, which will replace the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty and shows that the two countries are making progress related to nuclear reductions. However, there are still serious obstacles to a nuclear free world, such as a disagreement between the US and Russia on US missile defense plans, which would put missiles close to the Russian border. The US Senate must also ratify the treaty with 67 votes. David Krieger, President of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, appealed to the Senate to ratify the treaty without conditions that would undermine its progress. <http://www.wagingpeace.org/> Kate Hudson, chair of British CND, stressed how important it is for leaders of nuclear states to use the momentum to secure more cut-backs. She urged the British Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, to act and to eliminate the costly Trident programme. <http://www.cnduk.org/>

Nuclear weapons research and production to support disarmament?

Dr. Robert Civiak, a physicist and a former Programme Examiner for DOE nuclear security activities at the White House Office of Management and Budget, wrote a report that analyses fiscal year 2011 budget request done by the US Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration. The budget asks for a 13 % increase for the National Nuclear Security Administration, responsible for the maintenance of the US nuclear weapons stockpile. The largest 26 % increase is for the non-proliferation programmes within the NNSA. The budget includes large increases for research and development in nuclear weapon science and technology, which the Administration explains as necessary 'to preserve the safety and reliability of the US stockpile until all nuclear weapons are eliminated'. The report is at <http://www.trivalleycares.org/new/reports/FY2011BUDGETRPT.pdf>

Canadian former leaders warn about the nuclear threat

Former Prime Ministers of Canada, Jean Chrétien and Joe Clark, a former leader of the New Democratic Party, Ed Broadbent, and a former foreign affairs minister, Lloyd Axworthy, have appealed to the governments and the public of the US, UK, Italy, Germany and Australia to take action in regards to nuclear weapons. They warned about catastrophic effects of the use of nuclear arms. At the end of WWII Canada was one of the few countries that had raw materials necessary to

produce nuclear weapons, but taught by the experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Canadian leaders turned their attention towards the control of nuclear arms. Today they appeal for action against nuclear weapons to be taken immediately. More at: <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/toward-a-world-without-nuclear-weapons/article1512296/>

Other news

5th anniversary of the Global Article 9 Campaign

The Global Article 9 Campaign is celebrating its fifth anniversary. The organisation has been promoting peace constitutions and advocating the abolition of war around the world. An interview with Kawasaki Akire, Executive Committee Member of Peace Boat (IPB member) and Secretary General of the Global Article 9 Campaign shows the beginning and evolution of the organisation. He talks about how the organisation started its mission, and changes that it underwent.

<http://webmail.ipb.org/IClient/PreviewMsg.aspx?SeqNum=566315381>

Barcelona International Peace Resource Centre courses

Barcelona International Peace Resource Center offers a range of training courses related to the peace and humanitarian field. More information can be found at <http://www.cihc.org/>

Resources

The UN Disarmament Yearbook available

The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook Volume 34 (Part I): 2009 is now available in print and electronic formats. It compiles the resolutions and decisions of the previous General Assembly, their voting patterns in the General Assembly and the First Committee, lead sponsors, sponsors and co-sponsors, references to First Committee report and dates of adoption. It can be found at <http://www.un.org/disarmament/HomePage/ODAPublications/Yearbook/2009/YB.shtml>

Comic book "A Helping hand" on the global arms trade

The new reality-based comic book "A Helping hand" takes readers inside the world of Swedish arms exports and the global arms trade. Readers will follow fictional character Zven Johansson who decides to become an arms broker after losing his job. Although arms exports are heavily regulated in Sweden, this country has in fact tripled its arms exports over the past five years and it is now the world's eighth largest arms exporter. The book was published by SweFOR, the Swedish Peace & Arbitration Society (IPB members), Social Democratic Students Association, the Brotherhood Association and WILPF Sweden. www.krf.se/node/466

UN launches CSO Net- the Civil Society Network

With an increasing number of civil society organizations seeking consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, the NGO Branch of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), is increasingly being called upon to engage with these organizations worldwide on a wide range of issues on the UN development agenda. In order to facilitate this engagement and provide a suitable platform for civil society, UNDESA has launched a knowledge-based, open networking platform called CSO Net - the Civil Society Network, which is designed to facilitate

interaction among civil society groups worldwide, Member States and UN system agencies. The aim is to: share and promote best practices in the field of economic and social development; establish innovative and collaborative development solutions; facilitate partnerships among the users of the portal; and promote interactive discussions through online forums on issues of immediate relevance to the UN's agenda. <http://www.un.org/ecosoc/csonet>.

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](#).

If you have reports of activities that are relevant to this newsletter please email them to the Secretariat.

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