



IPB News

WWW: Working for a World Without War

International Peace Bureau

January 15th 2009 edition

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 \$1339 billion in 2007); 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.

GAZA: January 10-11 protests - IPB statement - and much more

Enormous efforts are being made worldwide to bring peace to Gaza. The situation is changing fast and it is impossible to track all the initiatives. Here is a selection of important links and reports.

- An impressive record of the hundreds of protests which gathered worldwide over one million people against the Israeli attack of Gaza can be found at the grassroots Palestinian anti-apartheid wall campaign's [website](#).

- On January 14th, IPB issued a statement urging even stronger protests: read the [full text](#) (also in French).

- Bolivia cuts Israel ties over Gaza: Morales said on Jan. 14 that he would seek to get top Israeli officials, including Ehud Olmert, the Israeli prime minister, charged with "genocide" in the International Criminal Court. Full report [here](#).

- Find [here](#) a link to a BBC video report from a Norwegian doctor working there in Gaza, where medical care is very much challenged.

- Israel's intervention in the Gaza Strip has been fuelled largely by U.S.-supplied weapons paid for with U.S. tax dollars. More details from the Arms and Security Initiative of the [New America Foundation](#) available [here](#).

- AVAAZ petition - Gaza: Stop the bloodshed, has gathered already 430,000 signatures. Sign it online [here](#) and spread it.

- "Enough. It's time for a boycott of Israel", Naomi Klein [op-ed](#) 1/10/09 *The Guardian*, UK

- The Gaza Conflict: in-depth analysis by Prof. Paul Rogers of the [Oxford Research Group](#).

War Profits Fiasco in Afghanistan

Humanitarian aid worker Ann Jones gives her insight into the inextricable Afghan situation: "Whatever the truth of the matter, in the long run, it's not soldiers but services that count -- electricity, water, food, health care, justice, and jobs. Had the U.S. delivered the promised services on time, while

employing Afghans to rebuild their own country according to their own priorities and under the supervision of their own government -- a mini-Marshall Plan -- they would now be in charge of their own defense. The forces on the other side, which we loosely call the Taliban, would also have lost much of their grounds for complaint." Full text and links to her book *Kabul in Winter* [here](#).

NATO high official warns against European withdrawals from Afghanistan

According to AFP, US general Bantz Craddock is concerned that European countries involved with the NATO forces in Afghanistan might be willing to withdraw, due to the financial crisis and military budget reductions. Mr. Craddock forecasts the US army will maintain a presence for decades. Full report in French [here](#).

Armed violence, disarmament and development

Research in the field tends to confirm the fact that development and disarmament players are often working separately, whereas armed violence and underdevelopment are closely related. The Geneva Declaration process should help change this situation, although the IPB believes that it should address more directly the issues of disarmament and military spending. More on development programs that integrate peacebuilding and disarmament strategies, from [The Ploughshares Monitor](#).

Military vs. social spending

Guns, Butter, and Obama

With the United States in deep recession and resources dwindling for the new administration's programs on health care, education, and the environment, Conn Hallinan at *Foreign Policy in Focus* explains how crucial the struggle over the defence expenditures will be in defining the coming years. "The problem with U.S. military spending isn't just expensive weapons, but the underlying philosophy that the use of force is a valid policy tool. And on that question, the incoming Obama administration has yet to break from the past." [Full article](#).

For a stock market-focused forecast of defense spending in 2009, see [seeking alpha](#).

Meanwhile, US Minister of Defense Robert Gates [tells the press](#) that the costs of the war in Afghanistan and Iraq will exceed \$136 billion in 2009, which will mean an [additional \\$70 bn](#).

Petition Calling for Obama to Slash Military Budget

Green Change has a petition circulating calling for Barack Obama to slash the military budget and invest the money in education, health care, green energy and mortgage security. Sign the Secure Green Future petition to President-elect Obama [here](#).

President of Brazil Unveils Plan to Upgrade Military

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil unveiled a new national defense strategy on Dec 18, calling for upgrading the military forces and remaking the

defense industry. The plan also called for a debate in Brazil on whether mandatory military service should be enforced and how the armed forces should be professionalized. [Read more](#).

Weapons and their effects

Forty years on, Laos reaps bitter harvest of the secret war

After 95 nations signed the Cluster Munitions Treaty, in Laos, the most bombed nation on earth, their lethal legacy is a part of daily life. The Guardian's Ian MacKinnon delivers [a first-hand report](#) on the impacts and perspectives for the abolition of cluster munitions.

'Merchant of death' denies arms dealing

Viktor Bout, the man accused of being the world's biggest arms smuggler, faces court in fight against extradition to US. According to reports by UN agencies and several western governments, Bout has delivered arms to dictators and warlords in Africa and Afghanistan, allegedly breaking UN arms embargoes in the process. [Read full article](#).

Weapons of Mass Destruction

Nuclear Security Spending: Assessing Costs, Examining Priorities - new groundbreaking study

The United States spent over \$52 billion on nuclear weapons and related programs in fiscal year 2008, but only 10 percent of that went toward preventing a nuclear attack and slowing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and technology. Find the full study by the *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* [here](#).

UK's Aldermaston bomb factory sold to American company

The UK's Aldermaston bomb factory was sold the California-based Jacobs Engineering Group just before Christmas by a ministerial decision without consultation of parliament, resulting in the UK government no longer having any stake in the production and maintenance of its nuclear arsenal. [Read full report](#).

Other news

No radar! online petition against US radar in the Czech Republic, and more

Launched by Europe for Peace, this petition which opposes US military installations, part of the National Missile Defense system, in the Czech Republic has already gathered some 150 000 signatures. Sign [here](#) in order for it to reach half million supporters.

You will find at europeforpeace.eu numerous videos and messages of activists and renowned supporters of the campaign.

Russia wants warships stationed around the world

Russia's military leaders approved a plan by the navy on Jan 4th to station warships permanently in friendly ports across the globe. [Read full report](#).

Help protect Iranian Nobel Laureate Shirin Ebadi

The Nobel Women's Initiative is urging civil society to support Iranian Nobel Peace Laureate and human rights lawyer Shirin Ebadi, who is facing severe repression, raids on her office as well as numerous death threats against herself and her daughter.

Please visit the [Nobel Women's Initiative site](#) to read about and help Shirin Ebadi.

Arms race, uneasy peace in Sudan

Sudan - Although the Arab-dominated government of Sudan and the semiautonomous region of Southern Sudan have been at peace for three years, there are signs that both sides are stepping up the pace of a cold war-style arms race.

After a 21-year civil war, reports indicate that both sides are actively preparing for the possibility of a renewed outbreak of fighting. Decades of conflict have left many in the north and the south unable to fully trust one another, leaving many analysts wondering if the current peace will endure.

[Read full story.](#)

'War on terror' was a mistake, says UK Foreign Secretary Miliband

In an important article in the Guardian (Jan. 15), five days before the Bush administration leaves the White House, Miliband delivers a comprehensive critique of its defining mission, saying the war on terror was misconceived and that the west cannot "kill its way" out of the threats it faces. Full article [here](#).

Desmond Tutu hands over international children's peace prize

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Desmond Tutu handed over the fourth International Children's Peace Prize to Mayra Avellar Neves from Brazil on Dec 4th. Mayra was awarded the prize for her courageous and successful battle against extreme violence in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, which each year costs thousands of children their lives. [Read full story.](#)

Resources

NEW Small Arms Survey Publication: Small Arms in Rio de Janeiro

Compiled jointly with Viva Rio and ISER, this 75pp report presents findings on the impact of the small arms buyback, the availability of small arms and their use in committing crimes, and on the demand for such arms, especially in impoverished peripheral areas. Available [online](#).

New book: *The Bases of Empire, The Global Struggle against US Military Posts*

It documents the massive political, economic and environmental impacts that the US military bases across the globe have and studies the movements and campaigns against them. Find large abstracts [here](#).

10 YEARS SINCE HAGUE APPEAL - Global Campaign for Peace Education Newsletter (#61: Jan. 2009)

Subscribe to the GCPE newsletter and find past issues [here](#).

Housmans Peace Diary 2009

The 56th edition of the *Housmans Peace Diary* was published in October. Not only is it a beautifully presented, pocket-sized diary, but thanks to its World Peace Directory it serves as a unique reference tool for peace, human rights and green activists everywhere. The Directory lists almost 2000 peace, environmental and human rights organisation in 150 countries, and is the only directory of its kind. Order for just £8.95 post-free, from www.housmans.com

Newsletters

IPB receives many e-newsletters, both from our members and non-member organisations. Click [here](#) for a list with hyperlinks. Also, to review IPB's past newsletters, please visit [this link](#).

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](#).

Message to IPB members: if you have reports of activities that are relevant to this newsletter please email them to the Secretariat.

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