



IPB News

WWW: Working for a World Without War

International Peace Bureau

May 29th 2009

IPB Annual Conference – Washington D.C., Nov 14-18, 2009

As the new U.S. administration has revived the hopes of peace activists inside and outside the USA, this conference, co-organized with Peace Action, will be a great opportunity to intensify partnerships, share views and lobby decision makers on the theme: *Rolling back militarism: a task for the global movement*. The programme will include a central event and additional activities depending on the wishes of partners and participants. But it is still open so suggestions are welcome. [Access the conference flyer](#).

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.

UN Consultations: Armed Violence and Development

The deadline for state submissions to the UN Secretary-General on the connection between preventing armed violence and promoting socio-economic and political development, is rapidly approaching. The submissions, due 31 May 2009, will be used to compile a report to be published in November 2009. A working group of NGOs, including the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and the Quakers UN Office (QUNO) have compiled some guidelines, suggesting topics for inclusion in government submissions. To find out more about this effort and other work being done on this initiative, please visit the [IANSA website](#).

Air Cargo Companies Deliver Illicit Weapons and Aid

According to a recent report from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), air cargo companies involved in illicit arms transfers to Africa are also being repeatedly contracted to deliver humanitarian aid. In fact, *Air Transport and Destabilizing Commodity Flows*, argues that at least 90% of the international air carriers named in arms trafficking reports have also been used by UN agencies, leading NGOs, as well as NATO and EU governments. [Read the full press release from SIPRI](#), [access the full report](#) or [find out about one NGO's response](#).

New Report Profiles Children and Armed Conflict in Myanmar (Burma)

A new report from Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *No More Denial: Children Affected by Armed Conflict in Myanmar (Burma)*, is the most comprehensive and up-to-date report available on the situation of children in Myanmar's armed conflict areas. Documenting the killing and maiming of children, rape, abduction, forced displacement, child soldiering, and other violations, the report coincides with the release of a similar document from UN Secretary-General. "Too much time has been wasted denying the extent of the crisis that children in Myanmar's conflict zones are facing," said Julia Freedson, Director of Watchlist, calling on the

United Nations Security Council to take strong action. [Read the full press release](#) or [download the full report](#).

Energy Conflict Could Bring Violent Military Clashes, Russian Security Strategy Warns

According to *The Guardian*, a new Kremlin security strategy published May 13th, states that the growing struggle over the world's energy reserves could spill over into military clashes. The report names the Arctic, Middle East, Central Asia, and the Caspian Sea as areas of potential conflict. The document, which will form Russia's national security strategy until 2020, also warns against the threat posed by NATO and identified US missile defence as one of the main challenges facing the country. According to Moscow-based defence analyst, Ruben Sergeyev, Russia is seriously concerned about the growing military gap between US and Russia as well as America's new arms systems development. A new report from the Arctic Council states that Russia is considering developing floating and submersible nuclear power stations to exploit Arctic oil and gas reserves. Read more about [Russia's new security strategy](#) or the [Arctic Council's report](#).

Pakistan Needs More Aid, not Weapons

Pakistan already receives \$100 million a year to keep its nuclear arsenals out of the hands of extremists and President Obama plans to spend an additional \$3 billion over the next five years training Pakistan's army to fight militants. Now Canada's Prime Minister Stephen Harper is considering lifting the ban on selling Pakistan military goods. But as argued in a recent *Toronto Star* editorial, Pakistan is in far greater need of generous foreign aid than weapons, particularly in areas such as Swat. Providing funding for schools, community health, and energy projects "would threaten Pakistan's extremists more than a few cases of Made-in-Canada night goggles ever will". The United States will spend \$7.5 billion over five years on civilian aid, while Canada provided \$25 million in aid in 2007 and \$8.5 million for Swat refugees. [Read the full piece](#).

Military Spending

Australia's New Navy and Military Ambitions

In what is foreshadowed to be the most dramatic build-up of naval power since World War II, the Australian government released its new defence white paper on May 2nd; the paper sets out a plan to create a new Australian navy of unrivalled power which doubles the nation's submarine fleet and adds three new air warfare destroyers, eight new frigates, 24 new naval combat helicopters, and a larger patrol craft fleet. If approved, this new navy would cost tens of billions of dollars and would be the largest single investment since the Federation of the nation. The paper requires Australians to accept permanent real growth in defence spending for the next two decades, regardless of circumstances. According to *The Australian*, it is a provocative response to China's rise as an economic and military power. The paper also alludes to Australian forces taking a more active role in ensuring stability in the South Pacific. [Read the full article](#).

Defence Spending Must be Raised, Says Indonesian President

The President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, recently stated that the government should increase the defence budget once the global economic crises ends. Yudhoyono recognized that the current defence budget was well below ideal levels. The 2009 defence budget was Rp 33 trillion (\$32 billion) which Yudhoyono argues is far below the minimum amount of funding required for the military's operational needs. According to the *Jakarta Globe*, the Indonesian Defence Minister announced that the ministry would attempt to increase 2009 maintenance budgets and hoped for a significant increases in 2010. [Read more](#).

Obama Expands American Warfare State

In a recent opinion piece, Sherwood Ross laments the never-ending, exponential, and unfounded U.S. military expense and aggression in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq. The Pentagon, he

argues, is on its way to tighten its control of the world with the help of President Obama's enabling budget. "The American Warfare State marches on!" Ross argues. [Read the full piece from *Media with Conscience*.](#)

Nuclear Weapons

NPT PrepCom A Success?: Two Perspectives

Diplomats at the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee meeting (PrepCom) in early May 2009, produced an agenda for next year's review of the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (RevCom) focussed on three primary themes including disarmament, non-proliferation and nations' right to civilian atomic energy. According to *Global Security Newswire*, the fact that the U.S. is now willing to discuss disarmament and engage with Iran is one of the reasons that an agreement on an agenda was reached in what is labelled by some as a successful conference. In the words of one Western diplomat, "Huge obstacles remain, but the clear change of tone coming from the Obama administration has changed the equation". The Womens' International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), called the PrepCom a "qualified success". Although diplomats were able to agree on an agenda for the RevCom on the third day, the PrepCom failed to adopt substantive recommendations for the RevCom. [Read the full article from *Global Security Newswire*](#) or the [final edition of WILPF's *NPT News in Review*](#) from the 2009 PrepCom.

World Court Opinion on Nuclear Disarmament Needed

In a recent report, the International Human Rights Clinic (IHRC) at Harvard Law School and the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA) called on the UN General Assembly to ask the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to clarify the legal obligation to achieve nuclear disarmament. In a 1996 advisory opinion, the ICJ unanimously declared that Article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty obligates all parties to "bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control". The IHRC and IALANA argue that the ICJ should explain what steps states must take in order to meet their obligation in Article IV and the 1996 opinion. Read the full report, [Good Faith Negotiations Leading to the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons](#) and [read an article from *Global Security Newswire*](#).

Nuclear Bailout: Report on the proposed upgrades to U.S. Nuclear Weapons Complex

A new report from the New American Foundation, *Nuclear Bailout: The Costs and Consequences of Renovating the Nuclear Weapons Complex*, focuses on recently proposed upgrades to the U.S. Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). The report argues that investments such as these in the NNSA would undermine President Obama's stated intention of working towards a nuclear free world. Outlining the monetary and diplomatic costs of the proposed upgrades, the report calls for a careful vetting process by outside agencies and individuals, including the Government Accountability Office. [Read the full report.](#)

Upcoming 2009 World Conference Against A and H Bombs

An updated program and schedule are now available for the 2009 World Conference against A and H Bombs, taking place August 3rd-9th in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Conference organizers hope that the event will be an important springboard towards the 2010 NPT Review Conference and achieving a world without nuclear weapons. Registration is still open and organizations are encouraged to send representatives. Find out more on the [Organizing Committee's website](#).

Weapons and their effects

ICBL Denounces Taliban Use of Landmines in Swat Valley

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) denounced the recent use of antipersonnel landmines by the Pakistani Taliban in a May 20th statement. Human Rights Watch, an ICBL member, has collected reports documenting cases of Taliban militants laying antipersonnel mines in the town of Mingora, in the centre of the fighting. According to the Sustainable Peace and Development Organization (SPADO), an ICBL member operating in Pakistan, landmines pose an additional threat in a region where civilians are already struggling in a tense humanitarian situation to protect themselves and their families. SPADO has stated that they will begin a mine risk education program in the interally displaced people's camps in addition to its current efforts to use local media to inform the population of the mine danger. [Read the full article.](#)

Global Week of Action Against Cluster Bombs

Between May 29th and June 4th, campaigners in 40 countries will take part in demonstrations and actions against cluster bombs as part of the Global Week of Action Against Cluster Bombs. The Cluster Munitions Coalition offers a number of materials for campaigners and a comprehensive listing of activities that will take place. [Find campaigning resources](#) and [find out more about the week of action.](#)

Colombia Destroys Last of Cluster Bombs

On May 7th, Colombia destroyed its last remaining cluster bombs in accordance with its signing of the Convention on Cluster Munitions last year. The destruction of the weapons took place at the Marandua Military Base in Eastern Colombia in front of delegates from 14 countries. [Read a brief article from the *Edmonton Journal*, watch a video, or see pictures](#) of the event.

SIPRI: Reviewing NATO's nuclear policy

A recent report from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) examines the role that nuclear weapons could and should play in NATO. The SIPRI report, written by Senior Researcher, Dr Ian Anthony, analyses the issues that should be the focus of NATO's upcoming review of its Strategic Concept which dates from 1999. On March 5th, the report was discussed at a joint European Parliament-NATO Parliamentary Assembly public hearing on transatlantic security relations. To access the full report, [click here.](#)

Action Against ITEC Arms Fair in Belgium

Supporters of the Dutch organization Vredesactie, visited the recent ITEC arms fair in Belgium between 12-14 May under cover to research the products and services at the exhibition. Belgian politicians also took action on May 13th against the fair. ITEC is one of Europe's premier events dedicated to defence, education, training, and simulation. The different actions against ITEC received widespread attention in Dutch media. For an article in English about the actions, please visit the [War Resisters' International website](#). More information about the ITEC is available from [Vredesactie](#) and you can [watch a video](#) of Vredesactie's under cover investigation of ITEC.

Other news

World March for Peace Set for Exciting Kick-off

The World March for Peace and Nonviolence, set to begin in Aotearoa, New Zealand on October 2, 2009, "hopes to inspire people from all walks of life to promote the abolition of nuclear weapons, an end to war, and the rejection of violence in homes, communities, nations and around the world". The March, which will begin on the anniversary of Gandhi's birth, will last 90 days and travel through 90 countries over all six continents, ending in the Andes Mountains of Argentina on January 2, 2010. IPB's Vice-President, Alyn Ware, is the New Zealand Coordinator for the event.

Find out more about the kick-off activities in New Zealand [here](#) or visit the [World March's international website](#).

UNESCO's Power of Peace Network: A Initiative to Foster Mutual Understanding

UNESCO's new Power of Peace Network (PPN) is an initiative to support and train a network of local creative talent with the aim to develop and brand programmes and content on peace-related themes. This content would then be distributed globally through radio, internet, television, games, and new digital and web-based services. UNESCO is using its resources to work with private and public partners to develop the PPN initiative. More information on this exciting new venture is available [here](#).

FOR Leads Call to Oppose Proposed U.S. Military Facility in Colombia

Fellowship for Reconciliation (FOR) USA is calling for vigorous debate on a U.S. plan to establish a new military facility in Palanquero, Colombia. John Lindsay-Poland, FOR's Latin America Program Co-Director said, "This base would feed a failed drug policy, support an abusive army, and reinforce a tragic history of U.S. military intervention in the region...It's wrong and wasteful, and Congress should scrap it." President Obama's Pentagon budget includes \$46 million for the development of the Palanquero base. Read more on [FOR's website](#).

A Conversation with Chris Langley on "Soldiers in the Laboratory"

In a recent issue of *Lab Times*, Chris Langley, Research Officer for Scientists for Global Responsibility (SGR) is interviewed on the influence of the military on science and technology. Langley, a former neurobiologist, speaks out about SGR's publications *Soldiers in the Laboratory* and *More Soldiers in the Laboratory* and the challenges faced trying to gain access to information on military investments in universities and R&D. Covering such topics as increasing military influence with the privatization of UK universities, military research and its civilian spin offs, military R&D's increasing focus on high technology, and soldier performance enhancement, Langley provides an insightful account and hopeful statements on the future relationship between science and war. [Read more](#).

On the New CD Proposed Programme of Work

A new proposed programme of work, CD/1863, was submitted recently for the Conference on Disarmament's 2009 session. This programme differs substantially from proposals in recent years in that it calls for the establishment of working groups on the four core issues. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and several other high-level speakers urged the adoption of the proposed programme. The Secretary General called for a "new multilateralism," explaining, "We live in an age of interdependence....where cooperation replaces confrontation, where creativity replaces stalemate." Read the May 19th [CD Report](#) from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).

Resources

Voices of Peace from the Balkans and Caucasus Action Pack

The International Fellowship for Reconciliation's Women Peacemakers Program published its annual action pack focussed this year on the situation of women in Armenia, Georgia, Kosovo, and other places in the Balkans and Caucasus. The action pack is available [here](#).

Confronting the Bomb: A Short History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement

A new book from Lawrence S. Wittner, an abbreviated version of the author's monumental 3 volume *Struggle Against the Bomb*, is available from Stanford University Press. Find out more from [Stanford University Press](#) or the [Eurospan Bookstore website](#).

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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Editor: *This is the last newsletter edited by Alicia Dueck (alicia@ipb.org). We thank her for her valuable contribution and wish her well in her future career.*

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