



# IPB News

WWW: Working for a World Without War

International Peace Bureau

June 26<sup>th</sup> 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 conference and a day-seminar on military spending. The schedule is still open so suggestions are welcome. The conference flyer and a news update are available at the IPB website. Registration will open after the summer break.

## **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**

### **The Pentagon's Multibillion Dollar Proposal to Tackle Cyberwar**

The Pentagon turns its focus to the war in cyberspace as President Obama and his staff plan to coordinate a multi-billion dollar initiative to manage and protect government systems from the security threat of individual hackers and sometimes foreign governments. Obama is expected to sign a classified order that will create a military cyber-command, which has raised debates about national security and the interests of private contractors who have been enticed by military contracting. For more please visit:

[www.nytimes.com/2009/05/29/us/politics/29cyber.html?th&emc=th](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/29/us/politics/29cyber.html?th&emc=th)

[www.nytimes.com/2009/05/31/us/31cyber.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/31/us/31cyber.html)

### **Deepak Chopra's Nine Steps to Convert the USA to a Peace Economy**

Renowned author and one of the great leaders of mind-body medicine, Deepak Chopra, has written a letter to President Obama with advice on how to foster a peace-based economy within the United States, rather than one built on militarism and national defense. With his nine points, Deepak hopes to stress that the importance of the positive future of society will be based on peace and not on the exploits of war. [http://www.tikkun.org/article.php/jan09\\_chopra](http://www.tikkun.org/article.php/jan09_chopra)

### **Former Presidential candidate, George McGovern, gives advice to Obama**

In a statement addressing President Obama and the current state of US military spending, McGovern offers very relevant advice, concluding that the US can defend itself on half the military budget it is spending. McGovern suggests allocating US funds to other areas of the US agenda that are in need of attention, such as environment and education. He also gives further

advice regarding the removal of troops from Afghanistan and Iraq as well as on battling terrorism. To read the statement in more detail, visit:

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124381226265170437.html>

### **Cyber petition re the French Loi de Programmation Militaire, 2009-2014**

IPB member organization, Mouvement de la Paix, recently launched a cyber petition addressed to the French government urging the cancellation of its proposed increases in military expenditures from 2009-2014. The parliament vote was on June 15<sup>th</sup>. The Mouvement de la Paix aims to not only increase awareness about this government initiative, but also to ban the program being passed into law. To access cyber petition go to:

<http://www.mvtpaix.org/utills/petitionparlementaires-LPM.php>.

### **Israel Bucks Trends and Raises Taxes and Defense Spending**

Despite the global trends of countries struggling with the economic crisis and therefore considering reduction of their national budgets, the new Israeli government of Benjamin Netanyahu plans to increase defense spending. The justification is to respond to continued security threats from Hamas in the Gaza strip, and from Iran. Obama's plans to cut aid to Israel mean that the Israeli government will fund this increase by using its indigenous defense industry. More at: <http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3714404,00.html>

### **Gates: More Missile Defense Spending Possible**

Current US Defense secretary, Robert Gates, is considering the possibility of spending more on missile defense in order to protect the country against national security threats from countries such as North Korea and Iran. However, President Obama has expressed scepticism about this plan, which might lead to him to reduce the project's scope. (Source: report from AP).

### **Women Legislators Call for Cuts to Military Budget**

Sharmini Peries, a journalist with TRNN, interviews Senator Nan Orrock about the state of US military spending. Senator Orrock is calling for a reduction in discretionary spending by the Pentagon. She believes excessive military spending distorts the economy and is not in the best interest of the US domestically and internationally. The Senator also discusses Obama's military spending versus the previous Bush Administration's military spending habits. To watch this interview, please visit:

[http://therealnews.com/t/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumival=3791&updaterx=2009-06-03+03%3A54%3A55](http://therealnews.com/t/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=31&Itemid=74&jumival=3791&updaterx=2009-06-03+03%3A54%3A55)

## **Nuclear Weapons**

### **Success for the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva**

March 29, 2009 marked an achievement for the Geneva Conference on Disarmament after over a decade of stalemate. Headed by the President, Amb. Jazairy of Algeria, the Conference delegates successfully agreed upon a consensus document that would establish working groups on four core issues and special coordinators on three other agenda items. There is much future work to be done, but this occasion was a true landmark in furthering the cause. For background information, and delegates' responses to the successful outcome, go to:

<http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/political/cd/cdindex.html>

### **New Canadian Youth Website Against Nuclear Weapons: Seriously, Time to Stop**

*Seriously, Time to Stop* has sponsored a competition to speak out against nuclear weapons. Please visit, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UN78OrI4sBQ>, to see a young Canadian's entry video. To watch other entries, please visit, [www.youtube.com/group/seriouslytime2stop](http://www.youtube.com/group/seriouslytime2stop).

**Abolition 2000 launches new initiative - The Nuclear Abolition Flame**

The Abolition Nuclear Flame is a symbolic 'flame' devised to increase awareness about nuclear abolition. It is inspired, in part, by the Hiroshima Flame kindled over 50 years ago, which was in commemoration of the two nuclear bombings of Japan. Everyone can be a part of spreading the nuclear abolition flame by joining the web portal and/or sending letters to the US and Russian Presidents. To join this movement, please go to: <http://www.abolitionflame.org/>

**Mikhail Gorbachev on North Korea test - Don't make it Worse**

Gorbachev calls for six-party talks and political action to be enacted regarding the new wave of nuclear testing in North Korea. He states that despite speculation as to North Korea's motivations, diplomatic action must be taken rather than switching to a military response against North Korea. Full text at:

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/05/opinion/05iht-dgorbachev.html?\\_r=1&hpw=&pagewanted=print](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/05/opinion/05iht-dgorbachev.html?_r=1&hpw=&pagewanted=print)

**Weapons and their effects****Countries Destroying Cluster Bomb Stockpiles: results**

Several of the 96 countries who signed the treaty December 2008 to ban cluster bombs have now started to destroy their stockpiles even before the treaty has been ratified. These governments have moved from defending the use of cluster munitions to signing a treaty against them. With the treaty coming into force six months after its ratification, these governments who support the treaty hope that hold-outs such as the US, China and Russia will sign the treaty as well.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/29/AR2009052900971.html>

**While Condemning Sri Lanka Violence, EU still sells arms to government**

The EU recently called for an international inquiry into violations of human rights during the fighting in Sri Lanka. And yet... apparently, several European nations have been supplying the Sri Lankan government with arms -- despite the fact that EU governments ban the selling of weapons to conflict zones. To read more, visit: <http://euobserver.com/13/28155>

**India: Uranium mining/processing in Jadugoda, severely indicted for its health impact on local communities**

The [Uranium plant in Jadugoda](#) is regarded as suspect for causing several severe health problems within the local communities. Also, there have been discrepancies in environmental and health reports dealing with the matter, which, as activists point out, suggests skewed and tampered evidence. [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SAAN\\_/message/1270](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SAAN_/message/1270)

**Other news****Rotary West African Peace Initiative**

Travelling through 15 West African nations in order to promote peace, unity and reconciliation between West African nations affected by war, the [Rotary Peace Caravan](#) will build eight peace huts alongside West African community members. [www.waynyouth.org](http://www.waynyouth.org)

**World Peace March to Start from most Peaceful Nation on Earth!**

World Without Wars have decided to start the [Peace march](#) in New Zealand on Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The peace march will commence in [New Zealand](#), traverse 95 countries and culminate in Argentina. Coinciding with this monumental global project will be thousands of events, such as forums, festivals and concerts. See World March websites: International [www.theworldmarch.org](http://www.theworldmarch.org). New Zealand: [www.worldmarch.co.nz](http://www.worldmarch.co.nz)

## IPB staffer moving on

Many IPB members will remember our good friend **Silvi Sterr**, who has been a loyal member of the IPB staff team for the last 5 years. Prior to working for IPB she was for a while the Secretary-General of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) in Geneva. Then in 2004-5 she became the Coordinator of our **Women in Peacemaking** project, which combined a number of public events celebrating the life of Bertha von Suttner (IPB Vice-President and Nobel Peace laureate 1905) with outreach to, and support of, contemporary peace-women in Central and Eastern Europe. Since then she has been an active volunteer at the IPB HQ, helping build our Disarmament for Development project. Silvi is now returning to her native Munich to take up a position at a community health centre. We wish her all the best in the next stage of her career.

## Resources

### Launch of "Banning Cluster Munitions"

A new report has been released detailing how the ban on cluster munitions, achieved through the 2006 "Oslo Process", was successful through cooperative efforts of committed States, international organizations and civil society. The [report](#), which was released on May 29, 2009 also serves to show the evolution of cluster munitions policy in 150 countries.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/29/AR2009052900971.html>

### New IPB Brochure on Arms Trade

We are happy to announce the publication of a new IPB brochure entitled: *The Arms Trade: How it works - How it undermines development - Getting it under control*. Written by IPB staffer Alicia Dueck, it serves as a useful introduction to the complex issues relating to the arms trade. The text links the issue closely to IPB's main programme Disarmament for Development. It has a useful listing of NGOs and institutes working on the problem, and some useful 'quick facts' and charts. The publication was launched at the recent meeting of the European Network Against Arms Trade (ENAAAT) in Barcelona.

Available on line at [www.ipb.org](http://www.ipb.org) or as hard copies by post from IPB secretariat (please send contribution to cover costs, such as 50 CHF/30 Euro for 10 copies). Please distribute this information widely.

## 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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