



IPB News

WWW: Working for a World Without War

International Peace Bureau

August 26th 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 United States' spending on conventional arms on the rise

While on the 5th of April, 2009 President Obama made a promise to reduce the number of nuclear weapons, there has been no mention about cutbacks on conventional arms sales. On the contrary, the Pentagon estimates that the US sales of weapons for the year 2009 will surpass \$40 billion. The USA produces the most advanced weapons such as combat aircraft and missiles which are sold to its customers in Asia, Middle East and Europe. The USA remains the biggest suppliers of arms to Iraq and has recently gained a new client in India. For more information please visit <http://ipsterraviva.net/UN/currentNew.aspx?new=6428>

The growth of the arms industry in Serbia

Despite the economic crisis, the Serbian military production is growing and is estimated to reach sales of \$650 million by the end of the year. The production includes training aircraft, small arms and rifles, which are mostly exported to Iraq, Afghanistan and the United States. Serbia also hopes to renew its cooperation with India, Indonesia and Middle Eastern countries. <http://ipsterraviva.net/UN/currentNew.aspx?new=6438>

The dangers of military spending in Latin America

The military spending in Latin American countries has increased in recent years and this year their governments will spend \$50 billion on their armies despite the fact that the majority of population in Latin America lives in poverty and that only Colombia is engaged in an armed

conflict. The coup in Honduras in June 2009 showed the threat strong militaries pose for nascent democracies.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/08/AR2009070803551.html>

Great Britain's Defence Budget Predicted to Decrease

Great Britain has one of the biggest defence budgets in the world, but this situation may change soon. Britain has suffered severely from the global recessions and it is losing its influence on international politics. Its participation in the Afghanistan and Iraqi wars, not popular with the public, contributed to the current economic crisis. The diminishing power of Britain will affect the future of its nuclear force and will have implications for NATO.

<http://www1.sundaymail.co.zw/inside.aspx?sectid=3299&cat=8>

Peace Constitutions for Global Disarmament conference in Costa Rica

A conference under the title 'Article 9 & Article 12 Conference - Peace Constitutions for Global Disarmament' was held in Costa Rica on July 16th. The conference focused on Article 9 of the Japanese constitution, Article 12 in the Costa Rican constitution and the UN Charter's Article 26. For further documentation: [President Oscar Arias's full message](#) and [Conference Declaration](#).

Nuclear Disarmament

On August 6 and 9, 2009 the world commemorated the 64th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic attacks.

The honour the memory of the victims and stress the need for the abolition of nuclear arms, the representatives of The World March gathered in the Hiroshima Peace Park and committed to carrying the peace flame through every country in the world, demanding nuclear disarmament.

To see the photos go to: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/jyotaro/sets/72157621826765053/>

The World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs that took place on August 3-9, 2009 in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, called for international solidarity to create nuclear weapon-free world. By referring to the Hiroshima and Nagasaki events, the conference declaration urged the US, Russia and other nuclear powers to further work on complete elimination of nuclear weapons. It also criticized North Korea's nuclear development and encouraged it to join the global effort of nuclear disarmament. The declaration expressed support for nuclear victims all over the world and called for the NPT Review Conference in May 2010 to take firm action towards a treaty to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons.

Also the Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, stressed the necessity of nuclear disarmament and reiterated his five-point plan. He called on the NTP countries to continue negotiations in that direction and to make disarmament more transparent. Ban Ki-moon urged the UN Security Council to protect the non-nuclear-weapon states and called for the elimination of other weapons of mass destruction.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/aug/03/nuclear-disarmament>

President Barack Obama will lead a meeting of the Security Council on Disarmament and Proliferation on September 23, 2009 on the first day of the U.N. General Assembly's annual ministerial meeting. Obama invited 14 Security Council nations to the meeting which will precede a conference on Nuclear Proliferation Treaty scheduled for 2010.

An IPB member organization, INES, prepared a petition that represents scientists and engineers from around the world and calls upon the leaders of the world to nuclear disarmament a priority. To read the appeal and sign the petition please visit www.inesglobal.com

Weapons and their effects

A petition gives hope to nuclear test laboratory workers

The former employees of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory in California who worked in the nuclear test area called Area VI between the years 1955 and 1958 and has suffered from cancer and other diseases caused by radiation, have now better chances of receiving federal compensation. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has given special status to the workers who may receive compensation of \$150,000 and medical and medical benefits if their claims are approved. To read more, visit:

<http://www.venturacountystar.com/news/2009/aug/10/ruling-will-help-field-lab-workers/>

Foreign uranium investors interfere with Niger's politics

Critics and environmental activists believe that countries such as France, China, Canada and Australia, considered to be major investors in Niger's uranium, have contributed to the recent Nigerien constitutional crisis that happened in August 2009. The reform to Niger's constitution will allow president Mamadou Tandja to be in power for his lifetime. The large financial gains that the country receives from its sales of uranium, mostly to France, influence the political situation in Niger, one of the poorest country in the world.

<http://ipsterraviva.net/UN/currentNew.aspx?new=6426>

Other news

In Memoriam: Keith Mothersson, author of IPB book on nuclear illegality

Among other sad events this summer was the news of the death at 61 of the Scottish activist and thinker Keith Mothersson, who was a pioneer of the World Court Project on nuclear weapons and author of IPB's book 'From Hiroshima to the Hague' (1992). Keith was a creative thinker across many fields of social change, a radical who did not fear to challenge the power system. His grand vision was of 'circles of circles' of civil society activism joining together for a green and peaceful transformation of society. The following text written by IPB Secretary-General Colin Archer has been accepted by the Guardian newspaper for publication in their section 'Other Lives'. Please see the [attachment](#)

Sudden death of Kenneth Mostad, former IPB news editor

IPB Secretariat is also very sad to report the sudden death of Kenneth Mostad, a young Norwegian student who interned at the IPB for several months in 2008. He was just 27.

Kenneth was the editor of the newsletter *IPB News* and he wrote a paper in the series *IPB Studies* on the topic: *Military intervention, aid and governance in Afghanistan* (July 2008) [available at: http://ipb.org/i/newsletters-and-publications/VI-C-ipb-studies.html](http://ipb.org/i/newsletters-and-publications/VI-C-ipb-studies.html) >>>[READ MORE](#)

We send our deep sympathies to the families of Keith and Kenneth.

China military launches a website

On August 20th, 2009 China's Defence Military launched its first official website. The website, which has also an English version, includes sections on its armed forces, defence policy, military exchanges and peacekeeping. There are also photo and video sections related to military events. So far China has been secretive about its military and it claims that the website is an effort to help foreign cooperation. China's military spending doubled in recent years and is estimated to be more than \$70 billion for this year.

To access China's military website visit: <http://eng.mod.gov.cn>

Free Photographic Exhibition on Exodus of Iraqis in Syria and Jordan

The Municipality of Lausanne and the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development are organizing a photographic exhibition that shows the reality of Iraqi camps in Syria and Jordan. The exhibition will be held in Lausanne from August 19th-29th, 2009 in Forum de l'hôtel de Ville. Entry is free of charge.

Resources

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 (ENAAT) in Barcelona.

Available on line at 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.

Launch of "Banning Cluster Munitions"

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

The Housmans World Peace Database

This website of the Housmans Peace Resource Project houses an on-line version of the Housmans World Peace Database. More information on <http://housmans.info/wpd/>

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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