



# IPB News

WWW: Working for a World Without War

International Peace Bureau

November 11, 2009

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

Theme: *Rolling back militarism: a task for the global movement*

IPB members, partners and supporters gather this weekend in Washington DC to share ideas and plans for advancing the international peace agenda. This conference, co-organized with Peace Action, America's largest grassroots peace network, is an invitation to examine our campaigning priorities and options, to explore new ways to challenge militarism, and to build international partnerships. The programme includes a central conference and a day-seminar on military spending, plus the annual IPB Council meeting and a planning session for the NPT Review next May. It will also be the occasion for the award of the IPB's annual Sean MacBride Peace Prize. Speakers include veteran campaigner Tom Hayden and peace educator Betty Reardon. The conference programme, practical information, and other documents are available at the IPB website. Registration is STILL OPEN:

[https://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/161/l/eng/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event\\_KEY=54100](https://salsa.democracyinaction.org/o/161/l/eng/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=54100)

## 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

### Obama signs record \$ 680 billion war bill

On October 25, 2009, President Barack Obama signed a \$680 billion defence budget for the next fiscal year, which includes \$170 billion in funding for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It also modifies the military commissions systems at Guantanamo Bay, increases prisoners' rights to evidence and witnesses and introduces new restrictions on coerced testimony and hearsay. However, civil liberties advocates point out that the bill does not adhere to international law and the Geneva Conventions, as children can still be tried as war criminals and terrorists.

The bill also includes a law expanding the definition of hate crimes to cover those targeted because of their sexual orientation, granting new protections to lesbian, gay and transgender people under federal law. Despite the fact that the 2010 defence authorization bill eliminates funding for some expensive projects such as Future Combat Systems and the Lockheed-Martin VH-7, it includes many military projects that Obama opposed like \$560 million for a new F-35 Joint Strike Fighter engine. During his speech at White House, Obama said that the bill is an important step forward and that he intends on cutting more waste. He mentioned that the Government

Accountability Office has found cost overruns of \$296 billion when it analysed major defence projects from the last year.

<http://www.cspan.org/Watch/Media/2009/10/28/HP/A/24831/Pres+Obama+Signs+National+Defense+Authorization+Act+for+Fiscal+2010.aspx>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-signing-national-defense-authorization-act-fiscal-year-2010>

The 2010 defence budget is the largest in U.S. history. It roughly equals the military spending of over 185 countries combined. Arn Specter, in his article at <http://www.opednews.com/>, questions the huge amount spent by the U.S. on defence and points out that the only attacks the country has suffered were Pearl Harbor and 9-11. He argues that instead of spending enormous amounts on defence, the administration should focus on reducing unemployment, health care reform and regulating mortgage rates.

## The U.S. military spending continues to grow despite deficit concerns

On October 21, 2009, an alternative news station, Democracy Now, aired an interview with Jo Comerford, the executive director of National Priorities Project. In the interview, Comerford talks about the budget deficit that the U.S. is facing and compares the cost of healthcare reform to the cost of the military spending. While it is estimated that the healthcare reform will cost \$900 billion over the next ten years, it is relatively low in comparison to the military spending, which will grow by \$133.1 billion over the next decade. The NPP has been examining the federal government's budget for the last 25 years and according to them, until Sept. 30, 2009, Americans have paid \$915 billion for the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Military expenditures in 2010 will cost Americans an estimated \$704 billion.

Jo Comerford mentions that while millions of citizens remain without healthcare they cannot afford, the cost of military spending is enormous and continues to grow. For example, since 2001 New York has spent \$30.6 billion of taxpayers' money on wars in Iraq and Afghanistan which would pay for one year of healthcare for \$5.6 million people. The interview is available at <http://www.democracynow.org/> and more information can be found in her article at <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2009/10/cashing-war-dividend>

## Cluster Munitions Coalition launches investments campaign

In London, on October 29, CMC launched a major global campaign 'Stop explosive investments'. The campaigners gathered in Canary Wharf, London's financial district, which is home to two banks, Barclays and HSBC, which provide financial services to major cluster bombs producers. The aim of the campaign is to lobby financial institutions to disengage from investing in cluster bomb producers. [www.stopexplosiveinvestments.org](http://www.stopexplosiveinvestments.org)

## Cutting military spending would help pay for climate and hunger

Almost every day we read news about climate and poverty challenges that are growing and becoming costly to solve. These problems are well described in the articles 'Biggest Obstacle to Global Climate Deal May Be How to Pay for It'

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/15/science/earth/15climate.html?\\_r=1&scp=4&sq=climate&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/15/science/earth/15climate.html?_r=1&scp=4&sq=climate&st=cse) and 'World Hunger Is Worsening, U.N. Says'

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125551065832784443.html>. The cost of the new climate agreement will be \$100 billion per year by 2020 to help fast-developing countries change to cleaner technologies and to help poorest countries to deal with the consequences of climate change. International climate agreements require financing as developing countries cannot afford to curb their emissions on their own. However, the United Nations Adaptation Fund, which is

meant to help poor countries finance projects to stop the effects of global warming, has only \$18 million as developed countries did not contribute funds as they promised. Also, this year the number of undernourished people has reached 1.02 billion, according to a U.N. food agency. The situation calls for an increase in investment in agriculture and aid from the wealthier states. While experts try to find ways how to finance climate agreements and agriculture in poor countries, no one dares to mention \$1.4 trillion spent each year on the military.

## Billions of dollars spent on military could create new jobs

*Another view...* The recent economic crisis has led to a growth in unemployment. In September 2009, 263,000 Americans lost their jobs. According to the most recent AFL-CIO report 70% of Americans under 35 do not make enough money to cover their bills. At the same time the U.S. troops are still present in Afghanistan and Iraq, which costs billions of dollars. The U.S. government spent an estimated \$624 billion on the military, plus \$188 billion on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in 2008. While the Congress argues that military projects are a source of employment, a new study done by researchers at Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst shows that the federal government could generate thousands more jobs, both directly and indirectly, by focusing spending on health care, education, or clean energy rather than on defence. \$1 billion could pay for 10,400 healthcare jobs and 16,900 education jobs. <http://www.fpif.org/fpiftxt/6493>

## Belgium reduces military spending

Belgium has already decided to limit its military expenses. On October 13, 2009 Belgian defence officials announced that the country will cut its military spending by 10 percent over the next three years. Belgium is planning to save 100 million Euros by reducing the number of military personnel from 38 000 to 34 000 by the end of 2012 and by closing 30 military installations. <http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?i=4322241&c=EUR&s=TOP>

## Nuclear Disarmament

### Invitation to planning meeting for the NPT 2010 Review

Next May the UN will hold a crucial five-year review conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in New York. As nuclear weapons crises and opportunities have deservedly attained a higher profile recently, the timing of this conference is quite fortuitous for those of us seeking peace and the elimination of nuclear weapons. As the attached [Disarm Now! Call](#) explains, an impressive international coalition of peace and disarmament groups has come together to launch an international petition drive calling for the initiation of negotiations to abolish nuclear weapons worldwide, and to plan NGO activities at the UN in New York next May, including a **major international peace conference (April 30 & May 1)**, and a **mass rally May 2**, with May 2 designated globally as International Day of Action for a Nuclear Free World. The organisers invite all interested persons to join our planning of these and related events at a meeting next week to plan this campaign. **The meeting will be held Monday, November 16 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. at the State Plaza Hotel, 2117 E Street, N.W. in Washington, D.C.** Metro is recommended as parking is very limited on Capitol Hill. This meeting will be held the day after the IPB conference at Georgetown University in Washington.

## BASIC updates on Iran

British American Security Information Council publishes detailed bi-weekly updates on developments related to Iran's nuclear programme. The most recent issue contains articles on

P5+1 talks in Geneva, Iranian admittance to developing a nuclear enrichment programme, Obama's change of defence plan and others. [www.basicint.org/update/iran.htm](http://www.basicint.org/update/iran.htm).

## Hiroshima and Nagasaki bid for 2020 Olympics

Hiroshima and Nagasaki have joined efforts to bid for the 2020 Summer Olympics as announced by the mayors of both cities. Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba and Nagasaki Mayor Tomihisa Taue are leaders of the **Mayors for Peace 2020 Vision Campaign** which advocates a global ban on nuclear arms. Despite praising the two cities, the Japanese Olympic Committee mentioned that to be successful, "a bid requires more than a message of peace". Other cities bidding to host the 2020 Summer Olympics are Budapest, Delhi and Istanbul. A host city will be named in 2013.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB125524684167078477.html>

## A short movie on Trident by the Ministry for Peace

The Ministry for Peace campaign UK held a meeting in the British Parliament, on October 28. During the meeting, the organization asked the question why the government was considering spending £97 billion over 30 years on renewing the Trident nuclear weapons while there is no new money for pensioners. Short film at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UkQRaIXspk>

## Weapons and their impact on development

### Colombian Statement on Military Bases

The Academic Network on Security Privatization-Chapter Colombia has expressed its concern about the new military agreement under Plan Colombia that is about to be signed by the U.S. and Colombia. The organisation believes that the agreement will diminish the power of the Colombian government to maintain control over the military contractors sent by the U.S. The group points to the fact that the Colombian government puts national security at risk by agreeing to give up unlimited force to military contractors. The presence of Americans contractors tends to lead also to human rights abuses. The full statement is available [HERE](#)

## U.S. bunker buster may escalate tension over Iran's nuclear programme

The U.S. Department of Defense has confirmed the information that it is speeding up the production of the world's biggest bomb The Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP) is designed to destroy underground targets. The bomb which weights nearly 15 tonnes has an ability to drive through earth and concrete if dropped from high altitude. The project has been so far believed to be a research programme but it is clear now that it has been accelerated and may be deployed within 9 months. The news comes at a time when the U.S. is troubled by the situation in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and faces challenges from Iran and North Korea. Even though it does not mean that the bomb will be used in combat soon, its development nevertheless poses a threat to peace. <http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/iran/america-and-iran-big-bombs-and-base-politics>

## Af-Pak: The unwinnable war and Peace Action's call

Prof. Paul Rogers in his article 'AfPak: The Unwinnable War' discusses the plans of the U.S. administration to change the direction of its policy in Afghanistan and Pakistan and argues the plan is misguided and the war cannot be won. The U.S. is considering sending an additional 40,000 troops, even though there is no indication that this addition will contribute to a 'success'. However, at the same time, the Afghans are suspicious both of occupying American troops and of

Karzai's corrupt regime. The U.S. administration puts hopes in the fact that the situation in Pakistan is improving, which may not be the case for much longer due to the factors such as Pakistan's support of Taliban in Afghanistan. Full article at <http://www.opendemocracy.net/article/afghanistan/afpak-the-unwinnable-war>

**IPB** members and conference hosts **Peace Action** have put out an important call to refuse any escalation in the Af-Pak war. Their message is available [HERE](#).

## Turkish diplomat to head the Chemical Weapons Convention body

On October 16, 2009 Turkish Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü was approved as a leader by consensus of the 41-state Executive Council to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. His candidacy must still go before the OPCW Conference of State Parties during its next meeting From Nov. 30 to Dec. 4 in The Hague, Netherlands. Other six candidates were from Switzerland, Algeria, Finland, Indonesia, Germany and the UK. 'Chemical disarmament expert Paul Walker said he has met Üzümcü twice, and has been 'impressed by his knowledge of international security and nonproliferation issues, particularly related to the work of the organization he would lead'. If approved by the OPCW Conference, Üzümcü will start his term in July 2010.

[http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/nw\\_20091016\\_1247.php](http://gsn.nti.org/gsn/nw_20091016_1247.php)

## Clinton's statement on Arms Trade Treaty and NGOs lobbying UNGA for ATT

On October 14, 2009, the U.S. Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, expressed support for the Arms Trade Treaty. In her statement, Clinton mentioned that the U.S. will work towards an international standard in the area of the international transfer of arms. She also said that the country is ready to support the negotiations as long as there is consensus of decision making among countries. <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/10/130573.htm>

On 23 October, NGOs addressed the government representatives at the UN General Assembly First Committee on Disarmament in New York. Rebecca Peters, IANSA Director, Fred Lubang from Thailand and Bibiane Aningina Tshetu from DR Congo explained that an effective Arms Trade Treaty is essential to promote peace and security. On 22 October, IANSA Women's Network held an event highlighting the need to link the ATT with UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security. A briefing paper argues that gender equality, prohibition of violence against women and active involvement of women in conflict prevention, conflict management and post-conflict peace-building should be among the guiding principles of the ATT.

[www.iansa.org/un/FirstCommittee2009.htm](http://www.iansa.org/un/FirstCommittee2009.htm)

## Other news

### World March Peace reaches Geneva

On Monday Nov. 9, the World March arrived in Geneva. After walking in bright sunlight with banners unfurled from the Place Neuve to the UN, over 100 people gathered at the Place des Nations for music and speeches. Among the orators were the Mayor of Geneva, IPB Secretary-General Colin Archer and representatives of the Group for Switzerland without an Army. Afterwards there were interviews with the media and, as the rain started to fall, a hot soup provided by the IPB kitchen team! See photos, reports, background documents at: <http://www.theworldmarch.org/index.php?secc=news>

### New Peace Institute in Spain and petition for a Peace Institute for Wales

A new peace institute has been created by the Catalanian Parliament in Barcelona (Spain). The Catalanian International Institute for Peace will work with citizens, academics and the government to promote peace research, training and awareness raising initiatives. IPB member Fundació per la Pau has been actively involved in the creation of the Institute and its Director, Alfons Banda, has been appointed to the Institute's board. [www.gencat.cat/icip/eng/index.html](http://www.gencat.cat/icip/eng/index.html)

In the meantime a petition calling for the creation of a **Peace Institute for Wales** will be given on 28 October to members of the National Assembly's Petitions Committee by representatives of various Welsh organisations. The main bodies behind this move are the Welsh Centre for International Affairs, Cymdeithas y Cymod, Cynefin y Werin and CND Cymru (IPB member). Secretary of CND Cymru Jill Gough said: *'The widespread support we received throughout Wales for this initiative shows that it is timely. It would reflect this nation's heritage, and mirror the public mood on global issues, if the Assembly gave a lead in establishing such an Institute in Wales.'* There are a number of institutions of this type in other nations, including Flanders, Catalonia and various states of the USA. They conduct training and research on peace issues, while also carrying out lobbying on matters relating to the arms trade and military expenditure. For further information, contact Stephen Thomas at the Welsh Centre for International Affairs: +44-29 2022 8549 / [stephenthomas@wcia.org.uk](mailto:stephenthomas@wcia.org.uk).

## New Executive Director for Nonviolent Peace Force

The IPB would like to congratulate Tim Wallis on becoming the new executive director for the Nonviolent Peace Force. Tim holds a PhD in Peace Studies from Bradford University and has over 20 years experience in peace-related work. He has been Training Director at International Alert, Director of Peaceworkers UK, Director of the National Peace Council, Editor of Peace News magazine, International Secretary of Peace Brigades International, Coordinator of the Commonwealth Peace Library, and Campaigns Organizer of the Molesworth Ploughshares Campaign. In 1995 he led an exploratory peace team to Chechnya and was involved in setting up the Balkan Peace Team and a number of other peace team projects. <http://www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/>

## Resources

### Peace and Change: special edition on Peace Education

The current edition of Peace and Change, a journal of peace research sponsored by the Peace History Society and the Peace and Justice Studies Association, USA, focuses on the subject of peace education. It includes ten articles, bibliography, book and films reviews. An electronic version of the journal can be accessed at:

<http://www.peacehistorysociety.org/journal.php>

## 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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