



International Peace Bureau

WWW: Working together for a World Without War

IPB News

8th February 2008 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 (now totalling \$1204 billion); 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 short film. National and international networks are gradually being developed.

IPB Activity Report now available on website

For a detailed overview of IPB's recent work, please take a look at our activity report for 2006-2007, now available at

<http://www.ipb.org/reports.html>. This was presented at the annual Council Meeting in November 2007 in Alexandria.

Note: the publication covers mainly the work of the secretariat and board. To find out more about activities of the member organisations, please visit the Membership -> Directory, chose International or National/Local, and go to the links of the organisations themselves.

Military Spending

Ban Ki Moon Statement to the Conference on Disarmament, linking disarmament with achieving the MDGs.

At the opening of the UN Conference on Disarmament (CD), UN Secretary General encouraged the 65 member body to move forward in 2008 in order for the CD not to lose its relevance. He made an explicit link between the contribution of disarmament to preventing arms races, to calming tensions and freeing up resources diverted to armaments that can be used to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). He also gave the CD full support for starting the negotiations on a fissile material treaty. Read full speech [here](#).

US war costs in Iraq; up, up and away

Whereas war funding averaged US\$ 93 billions a year from 2003 to 2005, it rose to US\$ 120 billions in 2006 and US\$ 171 billions in 2007. President Bush has asked for US\$ 193 billions in 2008. The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimated as much as US\$ 440 billions have already been spent to fund the war in Iraq since it was launched. Together, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan cost the country US\$ 11 billions a month. Read full article at

http://www.truthout.org/docs_2006/012608A.shtml

Proposed military spending is highest since WWII

The Pentagon unveiled on Monday 4th a 2009 Defence Department budget proposal of US\$ 514.4 billions. If approved in full by the Congress, annual military spending, when adjusted to inflation, will have reached its highest level since WWII. It is to be noted that this budget does not include supplemental spending on war efforts or on nuclear weapons. Read full article [here](#).

Bush requests US\$ 720 millions for missile defence in Europe

In the 2009 fiscal year budget proposal, the Bush administration requested US\$ 720 millions to deploy elements of the US missile shield in Europe. In the 2008 budget, US\$ 225 millions were already allocated to it. The whole project, including various missile interceptors, modification of its X-ray radars and the deployment of a new forward based radar, is estimated to cost the US\$ 4.8 billions from 2008 to 2013. Read more [here](#).

Weapons and their effects

Modern warfare causes unprecedented environmental damage - a new report from Worldwatch

Whereas wartime destruction of the landscape is nothing new, the scope of destruction seen in more recent conflicts is unprecedented, as seen in the American war in Vietnam, the Rwandan and Congolese civil wars and the current war in Iraq. Whereas deliberate ('ecocide' such as the response by the Americans to the Vietcong) or not (such as the massive forest stripping resulting from the settlement of refugees camps), it has the most serious and long-lasting effects on landscapes, biodiversity and soil resources. Read more at <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5544>

Cluster Munitions Coalition video press release

In preparation for the upcoming Wellington Conference, the next major international conference on cluster munitions, the CMC prepared an excellent short video to explain what cluster munitions are about, the disastrous humanitarian effects they have, and how the Wellington conference should be able to contribute to achieve a ban treaty on cluster munitions at the next conference in Dublin in May. Watch the video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xbn9yINIYfo>

ICRC call for a legal binding treaty on cluster munitions

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) called on Wednesday 6th February for the urgent conclusion of a global, strong and legally binding pact to ban all types of cluster weapons. More at <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L06862649.htm>

From Vienna to Wellington - Geneva Forum conference on cluster munitions

This conference, organised by the [Geneva Forum](#) and held in Geneva at the UN on Thursday 7th February, was a great opportunity to assess advances in

the negotiations on a ban treaty on cluster munitions. The last international conference held in Vienna showed there was a growing consensus on the issue between a growing number of participating states. Characteristics of the Oslo Process are an active participation of civil society and cluster victims, which has encouraged rapid advances and helped to close the gap between the reality on the ground and the international policy making. The perspectives for the next conference that will be held in Wellington are therefore positive, although further efforts are still to be made, particularly to stop attempts by certain countries to exclude particular cluster weapons from the ban or to introduce transitional periods, two provisions that would weaken the impact of the treaty.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

MPI on NATO generals' statement

The Middle Powers Initiative (MPI), an IPB member organization, firmly condemns the call of five of the west's most senior military ex-officers and strategists for increasing NATO's willingness to use nuclear weapons (see last newsletter). Considering pre-emptive nuclear strikes is 'irresponsible in the extreme', said Senator Douglas Roche, Chairman of the MPI, as he released a new MPI briefing paper which argues that non-nuclear weapon NATO states should work to bring NATO's nuclear weapons policy into accordance with NPT commitments and international law. Read press release and the briefing paper at

<http://www.middlepowers.org/archives/000336.html>

Resources

New Internationalist Depleted Uranium Special now available online

Last year, staff and members of the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW) submitted material to the *New Internationalist* magazine for a Depleted Uranium special. It is now available online at

<http://www.newint.org/issues/2007/11/01/>

Think peace : portrait of a 21st century movement - new movie

This documentary DVD filmed at the World Peace Forum in Vancouver from June 23-28 2006, examines the make up and direction of peace movement in the 21st century. In the view of the massive protests against the war in Iraq and the failure to stop it, the movie asks what went wrong. It includes interviews with diverse people such as Hans Blix, Rex Weyler and Holly Near amongst many others. More at <http://thinkpeacemovie.com/>

Global article 9 campaign newsletter

Plans are moving ahead for the major conference to be held on May 4-6 in Tokyo on the theme of Article 9. Those interested may wish to subscribe to their newsletter, click [here](#) (on their website, at the left).

Human security at the United Nations - Issue 2

The Human Security Unit at the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs just issued the second 'Human Security at the UN'

newsletter. It focuses on human security and the challenges of peacebuilding. You will find it at <http://ochaonline.un.org/HSNewsletter/tabid/2895/Default.aspx>

Newsletters

IPB receives many e-newsletters, both from our members and non-member organisations. Click [here](#) for a list with hyperlinks.

Calendar

Click [here](#) for IPB's international events calendar.

For disarmament events, go to the comprehensive Disarmament Calendars of UN and other intergovernmental, grassroots and civil society events in key cities by the Geneva Forum at www.geneva-forum.org and by Reaching Critical Will at <http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/resources/disarmcal08.html>

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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