



# International Peace Bureau

WWW: Working together for a World Without War

IPB News

October 16<sup>th</sup> 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 (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.

## IPB at Asia-Europe People's Forum

IPB was well represented at the Asia-Europe People's Forum (AEPF), held in Beijing on Oct. 12-15. The introductory speech of IPB President, Tomas Magnusson, given at the workshop on weapons of mass destruction in Cluster1, can be found [here](#).

## Interview with Oscar Arias on arms trade and military spending

"When a country decides to invest in arms, rather than in education, housing, the environment, and health services for its people, it is depriving a whole generation of its right to prosperity and happiness. Global expenditure on arms and soldiers is more than one trillion dollars per year. That's approximately US\$3.3 billion per day. This staggering misallocation of resources is a brutal demonstration of the skewed priorities and values in many societies." Read the [full interview](#) of the *Harvard International Review*, which addresses also the issue of the Costa Rica Consensus and of the Arms Trade Treaty.

## Hundreds attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Hemispheric Meeting against Militarization, Honduras

Held on Oct. 2 to 6 in the municipality of La Esperanza, this meeting gathered over 700 people, including delegates from indigenous, peasant and workers' organizations from some twenty countries. Besides protests against the US military base in the Palmerola region, the main focuses of this meeting were the neocolonial looting of natural resources, and policies, such as the Plan Puebla-Mexico or the Merida Initiative, that bring "development" backed up by machine guns. Read [here](#) the report by Laura Carlsen, Director of the [Americas Policy program](#). More in Spanish [here](#).

## NATO anniversary 2009, Appeal from Preparatory meeting - Stuttgart, October 4-5.

On the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the NATO military organisation, we appeal to all people to come to Strasbourg and Kehl in

April 2009, to protest against NATO's aggressive military and nuclear policies, and assert our vision of a just world free of war. The [full statement](#) agreed upon by IPB and 11 other peace organisations, contains initial details about the events planned at the beginning of April 2009.

NATO's chief called last week on members to increase their military spending, even though the global financial crisis is set to cut government budgets. He said NATO must be present in Afghanistan for several more years and that the alliance needed to normalise its relations with Russia after the conflict in Georgia. More from the [Irishtimes](#).

### **First Committee Monitor by Reaching Critical Will**

Reporting on the first week of the UNGA's First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, this edition covers extensively all topics. It notes that "Reducing military expenditures and devoting some of these resources to development, as suggested by many delegations at First Committee and the General Assembly, seems to be an ideal way to solve many of the challenges facing the international community and to meet the goals of the United Nations: peace, security, justice, development, human rights. Yet disarmament and non-proliferation fora like First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament, or the Disarmament Commission, where these types of commitments should be discussed, have been recently reduced to repeating past promises and struggling to even function properly." Find the full report and all relevant material at Reaching Critical Will's [website](#).

### **Military vs. social spending**

#### **Banks shun harmful investments: NetwerkVlaanderen - Bank Track report**

Entitled *Ending Harmful Investments* the 56pp report discusses limits to investments in four damaging practices: the support of dictators (Burma and Sudan), the infringement of labour laws, the destruction of the environment and the production of weapons. This resource aims to help the financial institutions concerned to develop a less risky policy; it offers motivation and gives examples of institutions like ASN Bank, Banca Etica, the Norwegian Govt Pension Fund, which already have a policy with clear limits on investments. More on NV's [website](#).

#### **Sri Lanka wants to increase its defence budget - will it really help end war?**

Sri Lanka's government plans record spending on defense (\$1.6 billion) and public security next year to pay for driving Tamil Tiger rebels from their remaining strongholds and to end a civil war that's left 100,000 people dead. See the full report from [Bloomberg](#).

#### **Making sense of \$ 700 billion**

Respected author James Carroll writing in the IHT helps us to make sense of the twice \$700 billion the US authorities decided to spend on defence and financial rescue: "The \$700 billion bailout aims to rescue the world's economy, but that, too, raises questions about the Pentagon's prior effect there. Because America has put military invention at the heart of its enterprise, the exporting of

weapons to countries that do not need them and cannot afford them has become a main mode of America's being in the world." Full opinion available [here](#).

### US asks Japan to pay part of costs to boost Afghan army

Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said last month that U.S. allies, apparently referring to Japan and South Korea, need to help pay the cost of the U.S. initiative to double the size of the Afghan army over the next five years from more than 65,000 now, a sum projected to reach "several billion dollars a year." Full report at [Japan Today](#).

## Weapons and their effects

### ATT resolution at the UN General Assembly this month

The vital next step in the process for an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is taking place in October 2008 at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. A draft resolution calling for further discussions has been circulated to diplomats in New York. This resolution is a welcome step, but the **Control Arms campaign** believes it must be stronger to maintain the momentum for an effective Treaty. Find more information and possible campaigning activities to support the ATT at [IANSA](#).

### Cluster munitions' ban: actions planned in 22 countries

Campaigners for the Cluster Bomb treaty are anticipating an increasingly large campaign to be launched simultaneously, during the Global Week of Action. GWOA takes place from 27 Oct. to the 2 Nov. and is dedicated to activities and media work to urge all governments to sign the treaty at the Oslo Signing Conference on 3 Dec. Currently NGOs from Vietnam to United Kingdom are taking part in GWOA, from collecting signatures for the [Peoples Treaty](#), to conducting workshops. For more information on how to get involved email IPB volunteer Sara Shawesh at [sara.shawesh\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:sara.shawesh(at)gmail.com) and go to [stopclustermunitions.org](http://stopclustermunitions.org) for more updates and a detailed list of happening events.

### Toronto: Trade in a handgun, pick up a Nikon

If swords can be turned into plowshares, maybe aging firearms can be swapped for brand-new digital cameras. And while few foresee a plunge in Toronto's homicide rate as a result of its newest gun amnesty, perhaps - perhaps - its streets will be a little safer. The "Pixels for Pistols" programme, supported by a camera store chain marking its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary, kicks off on Oct. 22 for a month. [Full article](#) from *Globe and Mail*.

## Weapons of mass destruction

### European cities join leadership to eliminate nuclear weapons

With 12 new member cities and four new Executive Cities, the international organisation Mayors for Peace continues to gather strength in its global campaign for the abolition of nuclear weapons before 2020. This month, the organisation announced global membership had reached 2,422 member cities, including 89 capitals, in 131 countries. Full press release [here](#).

### International disarmament expert to head Middle Powers Initiative

Ambassador Henrik Salander, a Swedish diplomat and internationally-renowned expert on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, has been named the new Chairman of the [Middle Powers Initiative](#) (MPI), succeeding the founding chairman of MPI, former Senator Douglas Roche of Canada. Amb. Salander has had many pivotal roles in the international debate over nuclear disarmament. MPI is dedicated to the worldwide reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons, in a series of well-defined stages accompanied by increasing verification and control. It is co-sponsored by eight international NGOs including the IPB.

## Iraq

### *LaOnf*: solidarity campaign supporting Iraqi nonviolence activists

*LaOnf* is a network of over 100 Iraqi organizations, and individuals, from all religious and ethnic groups, with different ideological and political backgrounds, who have joined together to promote nonviolence as the most effective way to struggle for an independent, democratic, and peaceful Iraq. A week of nonviolence has begun, 10 Oct., ahead of the local elections in the governorates. Sign the letter of support [here](#), and find more at <http://www.laonf.net/Default.aspx>

### *Beyond the Green Zone: Dispatches From an Unembedded Journalist in Occupied Iraq*

A book by independent journalist Dahr Jamail, with a foreword by Amy Goodman. "While the powerful media conglomerates embedded on the ground with the invading and occupying forces, Jamail embedded with the suffering people of Iraq and uncovered the horrors of this war of 'liberation'." (Jeremy Scahill, New York Times best-selling author of *Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army*)

## Gender and violence

### 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence

Taking place between 25 Nov. and 10 Dec., this year's campaign will celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UDHR and make demands to advance women's human rights. IANSA women will participate and mobilise against gun violence in their countries and communities. Find the campaign kit [here](#) and further information at [IANSA](#).

### Open letter re abuse by UN personnel - presented to UN by 175 orgs.

175 organisations are signatories to the [statement](#).

### Global Directory of Gender, Peace and Security Research Institutions

Since its launch in 2006, the Gender, Peace and Security Research (GPS) Directory serves as the most comprehensive database of its kind. Currently, it contains information and access to more than 120 research institutions in academia, universities, UN organs and NGOs focusing on GPS related issues. It is bringing its members, together in an online discussion titled "Filling the Gaps: A Virtual Discussion on Gender, Peace and Security Research" from 13-31 October 2008. More at the [UN-INSTRAW's website](#).

### Book: *(En)Gendering the War on Terror: War Stories and Camouflaged Politics* by Krista Hunt and Kim Rygiel (eds.)

This collection of analyses features “the devastatingly global nature and effects of the Bush administration's war on terror, instigated and perpetuated not only by the Bush government but by all those (governments and individuals) who subscribe to a politics of categorising and policing human identity according to the highly problematic discursive configurations of 'risk', 'security' and 'threat'.” Full review and book details [here](#).

## Other news

### 2008 'Alternative Nobel Prize' - 4 recipients

Shared between the Land for the Tillers' Freedom (India), Amy Goodman (USA), Asha Hagi (Somalia) and Monika Hauser (Germany), [The Right Livelihood Award](#) honours this year champions of independent journalism, peace-building and social justice.

## Resources

### *Shooting Down the MDGs* - new paper by Oxfam

Irresponsible arms transfers force up defence spending in developing countries and divert resources that could otherwise fund education, health care, and social development. For a great many of the world's poor people, war or criminal armed violence are directly impeding their chances of development. At least 22 of the 34 countries least likely to achieve the MDGs are in the midst of - or emerging from - conflict. The 30pp [paper](#) is also available in Spanish and French.

### *New miniAtlas of Human Security*

The Human Security Report Project at Simon Fraser University, Canada, has co-published with the World Bank a 50pp at-a-glance illustrated guide to global and regional trends in human insecurity—focusing on wars, genocides, battle deaths, refugee flows and human rights abuses. The *miniAtlas* is available [online](#) in English, French and Spanish.

## Newsletters

IPB receives many e-newsletters, both from our members and non-member organisations. Click [here](#) for a list with hyperlinks. Also, to review IPB's past newsletters, please visit [this link](#).

## 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](#).

**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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