



IPB news

WWW: Working for a World Without War

International Peace Bureau

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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 staff team in Geneva wishes you
happiness and peace in 2009 !*

On the occasion of this holiday period, please consider an investment in the peace movement. Any donation will help IPB survive and thrive in the months to come. We send season's greetings to all our readers and supporters.

Year 2008: trillions spent to rescue banks and defend nations, while people are still starving!

Hypnotized by the economic crisis as well as the terrorist threats, rich countries have pushed development goals and human security approach into the background (read IPB [article](#) on the financial crisis and the latest Financing for Development conference). Meanwhile, the number of hungry people is increasing, close to 1 billion' (comments on FAO report at [Other news](#)).

IPB partner Frères des Hommes will send on 20 Jan. 2009 an open letter to Barack Obama requesting that his administration prioritize the fight against poverty over arms race. We encourage you to sign it [here](#) .

UN/NATO 'secret' agreement on Secretariat Cooperation

In a recent [statement](#), WILPF raises the contradiction of a UN whose aim is to maintain international peace and security by peaceful means, but who chooses to get closer to the NATO military alliance.

In this context, Costa Rica's initiative to revitalize UN Charter Article 26 of the UN Charter on military spending, is all the more remarkable (find all related statements and documents [here](#)).

Read Ernie Regehr's instructive [commentary](#) related to the neglected Art. 26.

Military vs. social spending

US: Military spending cut rumours live on

- With President-elect Obama's transition starting work, some more specific information about possible military spending cuts and increases in foreign aid is beginning to emerge, summarized in a recent New York Times [Article](#) and another one in the [LA Times](#).
- In relation to the rumours, John Bachtell makes the case for a grassroots movement advocating a peace economy and outlines the benefits of re-orienting military spending. www.pww.org-14104.
- After the exhausted rhetoric of spending discipline, chasing earmarks and generally putting financial legislation on a diet, Joseph Cirincione gives President-Elect Obama some clues as to where to start slashing government expenditures: by cutting the bloated budget for the research and construction of nuclear weapons. Read [full article](#).

Breaking the link between defence spending and national security

National security specialist Lorelei Kelly criticises the US lawmakers for "spending more and more on defense and purchasing less and less security for it" and admits that "breaking the very comforting link between defense spending and national security will be a huge psychological challenge for all of us." (full [text](#)). These remarks apply undoubtedly also to many other states who have followed a similar tendency of increasing defence spending. We could however add, that giving human security priority over the outdated concept of national security will be an even greater challenge.

Chile: Peru's call for spending cut unacceptable

A call by Peru that Chile scrap a law linking military spending to copper revenues is "unacceptable" interference in sovereign affairs, Chile's government said Monday, referring to Peruvian Foreign Minister Antonio Garcia Belaunde, who stated on Dec. 7 that Chile "would do well" to do away with the law "because obviously this purchase of arms is worrying." More [here](#).

Fiji budget unveils big jump in military spending

Fiji's coup regime announced that it has given its military a 15 per cent increase in the government budget for next year, cutting education funding and creating large tax-free zones to balance the decision. Full article [here](#).

Weapons and their effects

Oslo Treaty Signed

On December 3rd, 92 countries signed the new Convention on Cluster Munitions, unequivocally banning the production and use of cluster munitions, as well as making far-reaching commitments to bring relief to cluster munitions victims around the world. This is a historic victory for the international peace movement.

See the Cluster Munition Coalition's video summary [here](#) and the [description](#) of Sara Shawesh, IPB Volunteer Campaigner who attended the Oslo meeting.

Find information on the next steps after Oslo [here](#).

A publication on gender and the Convention is available for download [here](#).

Guns kill women at home, trigger global protest

The 16 Days between November 25, the International Day Against Violence Against Women, and December 10, International Human Rights Day marked the 16 days of activism against gender violence. This year, increasing focus was put on the effect of small arms and domestic violence. "There is a lot of work being done around the world on violence against women, but the aspect of weapons is overlooked," said Sarah Masters, Coordinator of the Women's Network. Read full article [here](#).

Peru destroys 100 tons of firearms

As part of their implementation of the Inter-American Firearms Convention, the government of Peru has undertaken the fourth round of small arms destruction, including arms from its own law enforcement forces. Full article by the [UNODA](#).

EU makes its Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers a legally binding agreement

The European Union transformed its Code of Conduct on Arms Transfers into a legally binding agreement on 8 December. The Code requires states to refuse arms export to countries where there is a clear risk that the weapons will be used for internal repression, or where they could be used aggressively against another country or to commit serious violations of international humanitarian law. It also requires the exporter to consider the importing state's record on terrorism and implementation of humanitarian law, and as well as relative levels of military and social spending. Campaigners welcomed the legal transformation and are now pushing for the Code to be made stronger. More from [IANSA](#).

Governments will vote, Dec. 22, on the resolution 'Towards an Arms Trade Treaty' at the UN. IANSA asks organisations to send a [letter](#) to their country's representative, encouraging them to vote yes.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

"Global Zero" Campaign Launched

On December 8th, more than 100 political, military, business, faith and civic leaders convened in Paris to start the Global Zero Campaign, signing a declaration that they will work for a universal, verifiable and total ban of nuclear weapons. Signatories include the likes of Jimmy Carter, Desmond Tutu and Mohammad Yunus. Read the BBC [article](#), and visit [globalzero.org](#).

Central Asia becomes a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone

On Dec. 11, the ratification of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone (CANWFZ) Treaty was completed, making Central Asia one of four NWFZs covering Latin America and the Caribbean, the South Pacific, and Southeast Asia. Momentum also is building for the completion of the fifth zone, covering Africa, and only two more ratifications are required before it enters into force. More on the Center for Nonproliferation Studies' [website](#).

Consensus EU disarmament proposal for 2010

The European Union has presented its own nuclear disarmament proposal to the UN, by way of a letter to the UN Secretary-General by the French President Sarkozy, who is presiding the EU Council at the moment. In it, the EU proposes a number of steps to move to nuclear disarmament, including the immediate ratification of the CTBT, negotiation of a fissile materials treaty, and removing weapons from hairtrigger alert. A translation of Sarkozy's letter to Ban Ki Moon can be found [here](#).

World publics favor elimination of all nukes

A WorldPublicOpinion.org poll of 21 nations from around the world finds that people in every country favor an international agreement for eliminating all nuclear weapons. In 20 of the 21 countries large majorities, ranging from 62 to 93%, favor such an agreement. On average across all countries 76% favor such an agreement, with 50% favoring it strongly. 16% are opposed, with just 7% opposing strongly. www.worldpublicopinion.org-577.php

Swedish IPPNW Section introduces a web education tool about Nuclear Weapons

The Swedish Physicians against Nuclear Weapons and the Swedish Peace and Arbitration Society have made an effort to collect and visualize information on nuclear weapons in an accessible way, providing both basic and in-depth knowledge about nuclear weapons and disarmament issues. Click this [link](#).

France proposes compensation for victims of its nuclear tests

For many years, the survivors of France's nuclear testing program in Algeria and the South Pacific have been calling on the French government to assume its responsibilities, calling for compensation for people who face increased risk of cancer and other diseases following exposure to ionising radiation. Now French Defence Minister Hervé Morin has reacted and proposed a compensation law. Read a critique by Nic McLellan on islandsbusiness.com.

Other news

NZ: Super Fund divests from cluster bombs and nuclear weapons

The New Zealand Superannuation Fund is to divest from seven companies involved in cluster munitions and nuclear explosive devices. Fund Chief Executive Adrian Orr said he believed the fund would not be contemplating further areas for exclusion and in the future would work with other funds to encourage ethical behaviour by companies. Full article [here](#).

Outlawed arms in investment check - New database launched

There are still companies involved or invested in the business with landmines and cluster munitions and that try to attract investors in stock markets worldwide to finance this business. A few days after the signing of the historic ban on cluster munitions in Oslo, Action Group *Landmine.de* has launched a new, global database on this issue, which is available at www.ethisches-investment.info.

Coming up: **Red Hand Day** - Against the use of child soldiers

On February 12th, the Red Hand Campaign calls on everyone to raise awareness of child soldiers by joining the global activities on the "Red Hand Day", including public protests and creative actions. For more information, see redhandday.org and child-soldiers.org.

Child soldiers is not only a problem of developing countries: for example the US military recruits regularly under 17 years olds to serve in the armed forces (read article on [TMS](#)), or in Switzerland, those turning 16 years old are invited to an initiation course to shoot with the army's assault rifle (article in French [here](#)).

60 Years after the "Nakba": Breaking the Gaza siege

Free Gaza is a movement of peace activists, human rights observers and aid workers organizing boat trips to the Gaza strip to raise awareness of the dire situation and to make states review their policy towards palestine. More at freegaza.org.

Resources

New book: *Globale Armutsbekämpfung -ein Trojanisches Pferd?* (German)

("The global battle against poverty - a Trojan horse?") discusses ways out of poverty and Western strategies of war. Themes are poverty as reason of wars; money for wars, but not for the poor; failed states; the EU as development helper and champion of weapon exports; wars in the Horn of Africa and in the Middle East; possibilities for civil society and international community. Order directly from the author Thomas Roithner [roithner\(at\)aspr.ac.at](mailto:roithner(at)aspr.ac.at) or through Amazon.de.

Natural resources and the arms trade in the African Great Lakes Region

The latest International Peace Information Service's briefing (bibliography and links) on natural resources and the arms trade in the African Great Lakes Region is now available online at [IPIS](#).

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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Newsletter edited by: Jacob Romer – Jacob@ipb.org & Frederic Durand – frederic@ipb.org

International Peace Bureau, 41 Rue de Zurich, 1201 Geneva, Switzerland

Tel: + 41 22 731 6429 / Fax + 41 22 738 9419

www.ipb.org