IPB
International
Peace Bureau

Newsletter

May 2018

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

We had two very important events in New York this month. A conference with many prominent speakers, which analysed and warned about the current nuclear dangers, discussed the UN Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty and other disarmament initiatives, and to build global movement for peace and complete nuclear disarmament.

The other event, was the awarding ceremony for our MacBride Peace Prize 2017 – Noam Chomsky.

Both events are summarised in this newsletter.

Also, **GDAMS** ended on May 3 this year. You will find a list of all activities here.

A report will be published soon!

In this issue we have a special session – **From our members**. IPB is an international network and wants to inform about the activities of our members. We also invite all our members to send us short report about their main current activities.

We hope you enjoy reading!

With our warmest regards from Geneva,

Amela Skiljan

Conference in New York

TWO MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT

How do we move from geopolitical conflict to nuclear abolition?

The conference was convened to analyze and warn about the current nuclear dangers, to raise the UN Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty and other disarmament initiatives, and to build global movement for peace and complete nuclear disarmament.

At a time of multiple crises, we brought together among the world's most thoughtful and experienced foreign, military and nuclear policy analysists to discuss increasingly dangerous great power tensions, background and diplomatic options to the Trump-Korea crisis – with Iran on its way, the state of the nuclear arms races, and paths to greater peace and nuclear disarmament.

The conference was a joint project of IPB, Peace and Planet, the Campaign for Peace Disarmament and Common Security, the Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung – New York Office, American Friends Service Committee, Peace Action New York State and Brooklyn for Peace and was held on May 12, in New York.

The programme was as followed:

Welcome Greetings:
Albert Scharenberg
Lisa Clark
Toshiki Fujimori

Keynote Speech:
"The Future of Humanity" by Noam Chomsky

The Dangers of a Great Power War:

Tarja Cronberg
Daniel Ellsberg
Zia Mian
Hiroshi Taka (We, the Japanese People, Will Choose the Road to Achieve a Nuclear-free, Peaceful Japan)

Chair: Lisa Clark

Prospects for Nuclear Disarmament:

Sergio Duarte
Reiner Braun
Joseph Gerson
Christine Hong

Chair: Jackie Cabasso

For this occasion, **Noam Chomsky** held a speech on "**The Future of Humanity**", of which the following transcript is an excerpt.

"Dan Ellsberg describes his remarkable new book – essential reading – as "a chronicle of human madness." The record reviewed lives up to the title – and raises serious questions about whether Homo sapiens is an evolutionary error.

An objective and informed observer might conclude that since World War II, the species has been dedicated to establishing the thesis that humans are just a mistake. That should have occurred to those with eyes open on August 6 1945, a day I remember all too vividly, both the horrifying news and the casual reception. It resonated when I read William Perry's comment recently that he is doubly terrified: both by the extreme dangers and the lack of concern over the mounting threat of terminal destruction.

The awful events of August 6 taught us that human intelligence, in its glory, had devised means of destruction that would very likely escalate to the point where mass suicide would be imminent. Those familiar with the record are aware that it is a near miracle that we have survived so far – and such miracles are not likely to persist. It's all too easy to list flash points around the world right now that might explode to terminal conflagration. When the Doomsday clock was first set in

1947, the minute hand was placed at 7 minutes to midnight. Halcyon days, from our perspective.

In 1945 we did not yet know that the nuclear age coincided with the onset of a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene, in which humans are dedicated not only to destroying organized human life, but many other species too as the accompanying Sixth Extinction proceeds on its lethal course.

There have been debates about the onset of the Anthropocene. The World Geological Organization settled on the beginning of the postwar period, because of the sharp escalation in environmental destruction. When the Doomsday Clock was moved forward to two minutes to midnight last January, the accompanying statement opened by warning of the failure "to respond effectively to the looming threats of nuclear war and climate change, making the world security situation more dangerous than it was a year ago—and as dangerous as it has been since World War II."

Our prime concern here is on the first of these threats, nuclear war, but we should at least mention the utterly astounding fact that the most powerful state in history, with unparalleled advantages, is not only refusing to join the rest of the world in making at least some effort to address the imminent and devastating threat of global warming, but worse yet, is devoting its energies to accelerating the race to destruction for the exalted purpose of stuffing a few more dollars into some overstuffed pockets before we say goodbye to hopes for decent survival.

And the no less astounding fact that so little notice is taken of this amazing spectacle and what it tells us about our society and culture.

But let's keep to the nuclear threat. There will be little disagreement here on the compelling need to rid the earth of the scourge of nuclear weapons, and others today will surely discuss the many ways that can be pursued to approach this goal. I'd therefore like to say a few words on a different though closely related matter, which doesn't receive the attention I think it deserves."

The whole speech can be found here.

In addition, video livestreams of the morning and afternoon sessions are available.

MacBride Peace Prize Ceremony 2017 to award Noam Chomsky

Prof. Noam Chomsky was not just a lecturer at the Two Minutes To Midnight conference, but he is also the third winner of the MacBride Peace Prize 2017. The award ceremony was held on May 12 in New York.

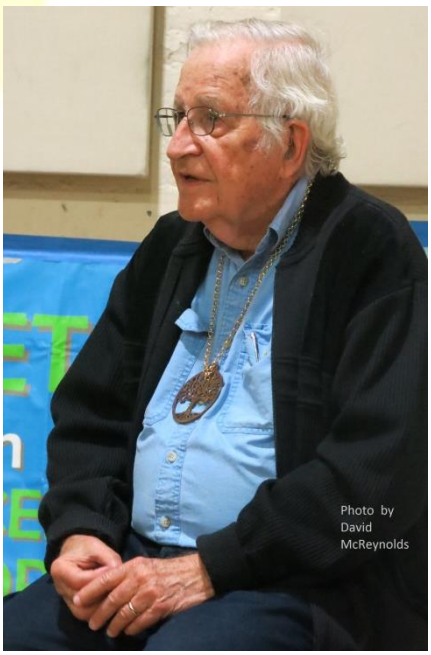
Noam Chomsky is awarded by the Seán MacBride Peace Prize for his tireless commitment to peace, his strong critiques to U.S. foreign policy, and his anti-imperialism. Professor Chomsky has been properly described as "a genuine people's hero, an inspiration for struggles all over the world for that basic decency known as freedom", as "one of the greatest and most radical public thinkers of our time", "one of the most significant challengers of unjust power and delusions", and as a 'guru' for the world's anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movement. In recent years, in addition to his continuing contributions to the fields of linguistics, philosophy and cognitive science, his critiques have focused on the U.S. post-9-11 "War on Terror" which has provided cover for a continuation of U.S. imperial policies, and the imperative of addressing the dangers posed by nuclear weapons and climate change.

The laudation on Prof Noam Chomsky was held by Irene Gendzier and began with the words

"I am deeply grateful to Joseph Gerson for inviting me to join you in an event whose importance is lost on none who dare to think of our future and that which we leave for the next generation, if indeed; their members will survive the indifference to climate change and nuclear politics that may yet be our legacy.
Such indifference is not only anathema to those who are here today, it is a condition impossible to sustain in the presence of their knowledge, experience and history of struggle for peace and nuclear disarmament."

The whole speech can be found here.

Photos of the Ceremony can be found here.



The withdrawal from the Iran deal by US President Trump has not only exacerbated international politics, it will lead to further armament and confrontation. First attacks between Iran and Israel underline the dangers of the actual situation.

Israel is a nuclear weapons country. A possible nuclear proliferation is impending, even though this has been denied by Iran for now. Saudi Arabia and other countries in the Middle East are in principle capable of acquiring nuclear weapons.

The biggest danger is coming from the Israeli government (in an alliance with Saudi Arabia). Prime Minister Netanyahu has already announced war with Iran several times – sooner rather than later, he said. Surely, he wants to divert attention from domestic allegations of corruption as well with these politics of war. This farce, not only against Iran but the whole world and international organizations such as the IAEO, last week with made-up and ancient (refuted) allegations was already the opening move to further acts of aggression, even to war.

The withdrawal from the Iran deal surely also directly encourages the Israeli government to attack the "aggressive Iran" (whose (foreign) policy can be criticized but is conforming with international law and respects sovereignty and contracts) – with airstrikes, with missile attacks. In a region overflowing with conflict and war, with belligerent behavior of the great powers, an expansion of the confrontation can never be ruled out. The war in Syria can escalate further, even the whole region could explode.

The situation can become incredibly dangerous, a big military conflict is not impossible. The European governments are called upon to say no to the politics of the US and Israel. Vassal's fealty is the last thing we need now.

NATO must stop any support to Israel government`s war politics and NATO must stop their military engagements in the region. We need negotiations for a "Conference of Security and Cooperation in the Middle East".

We demand the international and national peace movements: take actions.

If it comes to war, ordered by the Israeli government, let us come together again on the streets quickly and spontaneously. Raise your hands – we still have time to stop the warmongers.

We call for a nuclear weapon / weapons of mass destruction free zone in the Middle East.

Berlin, 2018 May 10th

www.no-to-nato.org

info@no-to-nato.org

From Our Members

We have news from our members in the UK! Many thanks go out to Bruce Kent for keeping us up to date!

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ARMS TRADE

Campaign Against Arms Trade has received permission from the Court of Appeal to challenge the UK government's continued licensing to Saudi Arabia of military equipment being used in its deadly war in Yemen. BAE Systems' fighter jets and Raytheon UK bombs are part of a Saudi arsenal which has caused what the UN describes as the world's worst humanitarian crisis. The hearing is likely to take place in the autumn.

CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

To mark the 60 years since CND was founded we have built a 2 meters high model of our internationally known peace symbol. It has been touring the country with its 'Scrap Trident' message. Trident submarines carry nuclear warheads which are entirely dependent on United States missiles. This tour has visited many major locations from Brighton to North Wales.

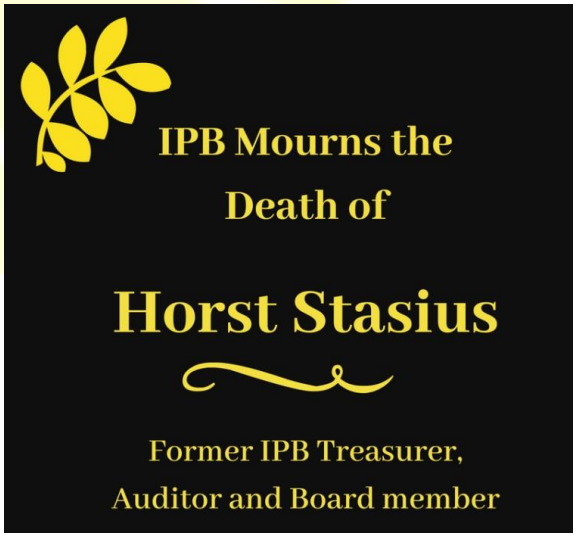
CND is also planning, both to attend the upcoming NATO summit with a 'No to NATO' message and to unite with other peace groups to show President Trump, when he visits Britain in July, that his militaristic policies are not welcome here.

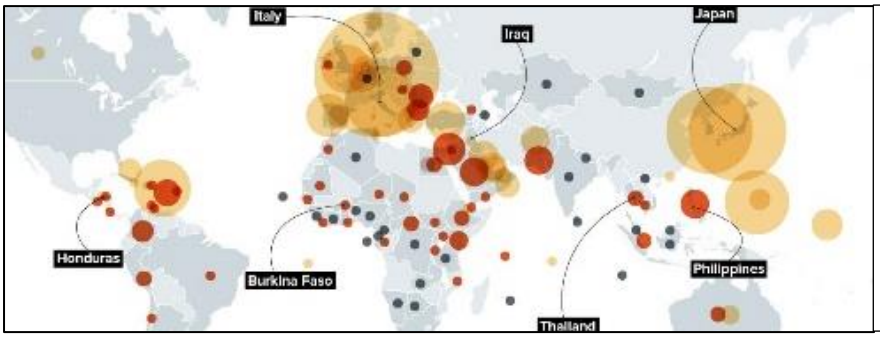
PAX CHRSTI (British Section)

This month, to increase awareness of the current Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty, we have sent our Briefing on it to every Catholic bishop in England and Wales, to thousands of our members and supporters and to other peace groups.

Since we are also still in the First World War commemoration period we have helped to coordinate the annual Conscientious Objectors' Da y event (May 15) held every year in London's Tavistock Square.

At our Annual Meeting in June we will be planning, with others, how to increase opposition to Drone warfare which is now part of operations in Afghanistan Iraq and Syria.





International Meeting against Foreign Military Bases

June 29 2018

11 am – 5 pm

Dear colleagues and friends

Last year many of us met at the protest actions in Ramstein and started the process of developing an international network against foreign military bases.

We would like to continue with this process and that is why we would like to invite you to an international meeting.

The **big actions against the US Air Base 2018** will be held from **June 23th to July 1st**

This year´s actions are numerous and represent a wide variety:

- an international camp
- a peace academy for one week
- public event in the evening
- a big rally in front of the Air Base Ramstein
- actions of civil disobedience

You are heavily invited to join some or all these events too. For more details, please visit www.ramstein-kampagne.eu

Also, we want to invite you to a special meeting against foreign military bases, which will have the following purposes:

- exchange of our actions against military bases
- develop common activities
- create a deeper exchange of opinions and strategies
- enlarge our international network against foreign military bases.

Date and location:

Friday June 29th; 11.00am - 5pm

Church of Reconciliation, Leipziger Straße 5, 67663 Kaiserslautern.

It would be great if you or one of your friends could join the event/s. Please send us your response to: Reiner Braun hr.braun@gmx.net.

Please note that the Campaign has very limited financial means and cannot cover travel and accommodation costs.

If you have any questions and/or comments, do not hesitate to contact us.

Provisional agenda

11.00 Opening and welcome

11.15 – 13.00 No to military bases – Experiences from actions (reports and discussion):

-- US military base Pat Eden

-- Military bases in GB

-- Activities against the US air base in Ramstein

-- New military base in Sicily

1pm -2pm Lunch break

2-00 – 4.00 pm

Discussion about next steps for an international network against military spending

Introductions by the Coordinating Committee "Stop Air Base Ramstein"

Report form the preparation of the Ireland conference

4.00 to 5.00 pm

Agreements, next steps and next meetings.

Editorial: Aurelia Donat
IPB
Marienstraße 19-20
10117 Berlin
Germany
www.ipb.org