



Newsletter



March 2019

Dear friends and colleagues,

In different parts of the world, March 2019 was a month of adversity, disaster, and grief. Cyclone Idai affected the lives of more than two million people, making it one of the most destructive tropical cyclones to ever hit Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi. Another sorrowful episode of white supremacist bloodshed caused the death of 50 innocent people who attended their Friday prayers at mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. Increasingly and in multiple countries, a sharp rise in political tensions and extremism has kept us on our toes.

However, it is important that we remind ourselves that, against this worrying backdrop, several important initiatives have come to life to bring, day by day and person by person, bring positive change into our world. This month's newsletter attempts to present a hotchpotch of such initiatives within the scope of the peace movement, offering an overview of the activities planned and coordinated in the past four weeks by IPB, our board and council members, and some of our member organisations.

On the 23rd and the 24th of March, members of the IPB board gathered in Paris, France, for their first in-person meeting of 2019, and worked hard to set the right course for our upcoming projects. This year's GDAMS campaign is already in full swing, calling on world leaders to "Demilitarize: Invest in People's Needs!". The 2019 Youth Leadership Conference of PeaceJam UK happened in Winchester and was joined by Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Betty Williams. A couple of events related to the 70th anniversary of NATO took place, including a press conference and an "alternative birthday party" in Berlin. Furthermore, IPB issued two important statements: one calls for the immediate release of Chelsea Manning, imprisoned for refusing to testify to a grand jury in the WikiLeaks investigation, and the other condemns the imprisonment of Tarak Kauff and Ken Mayers, Veterans for Peace's activists, following a nonviolent protest in Ireland.

This and much more happened in March. We hope you enjoy reading this month's newsletter!

Editorial: Theresa Kresse (Coordinator),
Natalia Carrusca (Program Intern)

Demilitarize! Invest in people's needs

APRIL 13TH TO MAY 9TH 2019
GLOBAL DAYS OF ACTION
ON MILITARY SPENDING



This month, the **GCOMS** - Global Campaign on Military Spending released its third newsletter of 2019! It provides an overview of current events related to military spending around the world and of the campaign's activities in preparation for the next **GDAMS** - Global Days Against Military Spending (13 April – 9 May 2019) . Click [here](#) to access the newsletter.



HELP AND SUPPORT US
DONATE
TO THE IPB



EVERY DONATION, REGARDLESS OF THE
AMOUNT, COUNTS!

Thank you!

EVENTS

MEETING OF THE IPB BOARD

On 22 and 24 March, IPB's Board members gathered at the offices of our member Le Mouvement de la Paix, in Paris. Throughout the weekend, the Board discussed future projects and activities and, among other subjects, deliberated over recent membership candidatures for IPB's network.



The Board of IPB came together on the 23rd and the 24th of March for its first in-person meeting this year. During the meeting, which took place in the office of our partner organisation Mouvement de la Paix, the members of the board deliberated about IPB's current and future projects and recent membership applications, among other matters.

Discussions took place about the current events and activities linked to our Global Campaign on Military Spending (GCOMS) and the 2019 Global Days on Military Spending (GDAMS), which will take place between April 13 and May 9. This year's slogan for GDAMS is "Demilitarize! Invest in people's needs". The board members also

exchanged views on a series of other events and activities, including the counteractions to NATO's 70th Anniversary that will happen in Washington DC from March 30 to April 4, the side events planned for the NPT Preparatory Committee Session in New York City, and the IPB Youth Network Conference taking place next September, in Berlin.

Equally important, the board discussed extensively about the new challenges lying ahead of IPB. This included, for example, an exchange about IPB's upcoming Triennial Meeting, which will happen in London in late October and during which new board and council members will be elected. Furthermore, the current board member talked about strategies to strengthen the network and the ties between our members, in order to become more resilient in the face of the new global issues.



Furthermore, we are delighted to announce that two organisations were accepted by the board as new members of our global network: the "[Global Initiative for Environment and Reconciliation](#)", from Rwanda, and the "[Bharat Uday Mission](#)", from

India. You can read more about these organisations on page 11 of this report.

PRESS CONFERENCE AT IPB'S OFFICE



Photo: Lucas Wirl

On the 12th of March 2019 [a press conference](#) was held in the IPB's headquarter in Berlin Office. The aim of the event was to present to the German press the various events and demonstrations being organised to mark the 70th anniversary of the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO), which will happen on the 4th of April 2019.

The press conference was hosted by the "No to War – No to NATO" network. Kristine Karch and Lucas Wirl, Co-Chairs of the international network, attended the press conference, together with Reiner Braun, Co-President of the IPB and member of the coordinating committee of "No to War – No to NATO". They were also joined by Alexander Neu from the German leftist party (*Die Linke*), Member of the German Parliament.

During the press conference, speakers presented the various actions planned in Germany and internationally on the occasion of the NATO's anniversary. Subsequently, they elaborated on the importance of opposing the alliance's demand to receive 2% of member states' GDP, its confrontational politics and policies, and its ever-expanding global involvement. Lastly, speakers presented to the press a few alternative strategies for a cooperative and common security policy, marked by the effort of demilitarisation in lieu of accelerating the international arms race.

For information on events in Washington DC events on the occasion of NATO's anniversary, check page 5 of this report. For information on events taking place in other parts of the world, [click here](#).

PEACEJAM UK'S ANNUAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The 2019 Youth Leadership Conference of PeaceJam UK took place on 9 and 10 March, at the University of Winchester. Luke Addison, one of IPB's Regional Representatives in Europe, was one of the people behind the successful organisation of the event.

This year, participants were joined by Nobel Peace Laureate Betty Williams, from Northern Ireland. Co-recipient of the 1976 Nobel Peace Prize, Betty Williams is the creator of the Peace People movement, together with Mairead Corrigan Maguire. The movement advocated against sectarian violence in Northern Ireland during The Troubles.



PeaceJam's Conference was attended by 100 young people from across the UK; who were given the unique opportunity to meet Williams and learn from her inspirational experiences. They discussed

nonviolent strategies to address the issues of their communities, particularly knife crime, climate change and mental health problems.

The young leaders also shared their experiences with local projects, part of the “One Billion Acts of Peace” movement from PeaceJam’s educational programme.

The conference aims to strengthen the development of young leaders who are committed to promoting local and global change. Previously, the conference has counted with speakers such as Nobel Peace Prize winners Jody Williams, Rigoberta Menchú Tum and Leymah Gbowee. The event was organised with support from the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union.

AN ALTERNATIVE PARTY MARKING NATO’S 70TH ANNIVERSARY

The “No to War - No to NATO” Network in Germany organised an alternative “birthday party” for the 70th anniversary of the NATO. The event took place on the 18th of March at the “House of Democracy and Human Rights”, in Berlin.



During the event, prominent members of the German peace movement spoke about how the world would look like if NATO ceased to exist: presenting these imaginary scenarios, they talked

about possible paths for the dissolution of the military alliance and the social and economic benefits that it would generate.



The list of speakers included Reiner Braun (Co-President of IPB), Wolfgang Gehrcke and Alexander Neu (members of the Left Party and, respectively, former member and member of the German Parliament), Lucas Wirl (Co-Chair Person of the international network “No to War - No to NATO”) and the writer Christiane Reymann.

COUNTERACTIONS TO NATO’S SUMMIT AND ANNIVERSARY

The foreign ministers from NATO’s country members will meet in Washington DC (USA) on 3 and 4 April 2019, marking the 70th anniversary of the alliance. Meanwhile, a series of counteractions are taking over the city, saying NO TO NATO and NO TO WAR. IPB and the international network “No to War – No to NATO” are engaging, as organisers or supporters, in several of these actions.

The first event took place on 30 March: a mobilization in the form of a rally and march, opposing NATO, war, and racism. It was organised by an ad hoc coalition of NGOs and activists of the North American peace movement, including members of IPB’s network.



Click [here](#) to read about other events taking place in Washington until 4 April and [here](#) for information on events in other parts of the world, all marking the occasion of NATO's summit and anniversary.

WORKSHOP ON CIVIL LIBERTIES ORGANISED BY NDH IN YAOUNDÉ

On 4 and 5 March, our Cameroonian member organisation Nouveaux Droits de l'Homme (NDH - Cameroon) organised a [workshop on civil liberties](#) in Yaoundé. The event's opening ceremony was attended by representatives of diplomatic

missions, media channels, political parties, administrative authorities, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms and CSOs, as well as members of academia and legal experts. Throughout the sessions, participants discussed the current situation of civil liberties and fundamental rights in Cameroon, addressing the national, the continental (African Union) and the global (UN) frameworks for the protection of fundamental freedoms.

On the second day, the organisers were faced with an attempt from the police and the sub-prefect of Yaoundé 05 to interrupt the activities, which were only able to continue under the surveillance of local security forces. IPB stands with NDH in strongly condemning this episode as an attack to the freedom of assembly.



IPB STATEMENTS

CALL FOR THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF CHELSEA MANNING

"The International Peace Bureau calls for the immediate release of Chelsea Manning who has been imprisoned for refusing to testify to a grand jury in the investigation into WikiLeaks. Chelsea

was found guilty in 2013 of charges including espionage for leaking secret files that informed the public about the illegal and immoral activities of the U.S. and other governments to WikiLeaks. However, her sentence was later commuted and she was released from prison. In the past, President Donald Trump called Manning an

"ungrateful traitor" who "should never have been released from prison" and now it seems the US government is keen to get her behind bars once more.



Photo: Flickr / [@torbakhopper](#)

The more than 700,000 confidential documents, videos and diplomatic cables that were passed on to WikiLeaks journalists have revolutionised the way that government military and surveillance actions have been viewed and in 2013 the International Peace Bureau presented its annual award – the Sean MacBride Peace Prize – to Chelsea Manning in recognition of the courage needed to make this information publicly available in the name of transparency and press freedom.

The disclosures demonstrate the urgent need to remove the dominance of military thinking and the way it is implicit in aggressive alliances such as NATO. We urgently need to strengthen openness, freedom of the press and the democratic process and enable the UN to focus on diplomacy, international law and intercultural cooperation to achieve environmental and human security.

IPB believes that whistle-blowers and the right to speak out freely are essential for securing a peaceful and just world. Free Chelsea Manning now.

Lisa Clark, Reiner Braun & Dave Webb
Presidents & Vice President of the IPB
Florence, Berlin & Leeds, 11 March 2019“

CALL FOR THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF TARAK KAUFF AND KEN MAYERS

Update: On March 28, Dublin's High Court determined the release on bail of Kauff and Mayers, However, the two activists are still facing charges and prevented from returning to their country. The IPB stands with Veterans for Peace and other organisations of the peace movement in urging the authorities to lift all charges and allow Kauff and Mayers to return to the US. Click [here](#) for regular updates on the case.

“The IPB condemns the imprisonment of Tarak Kauff and Ken Mayers, US Veterans for Peace activists, and calling on Irish authorities for their immediate release.

Following a nonviolent protest conducted by a group of US Veterans for Peace activists at Shannon Airport, in Ireland, Tarak Kauff and Ken Mayers were detained by Irish police forces. Since then, the former US servicemen – aged 82 and 77 – have been held without bail, which was denied by the Ennis District Court.



Photo: Ellen Davidson

The peaceful protest on the airfield aimed to call attention to the extensive use of Shannon Airport as a landing and refuelling spot for US military planes, carrying troops and armaments. In 2017, the Irish government approved the shocking figure

of 334 applications for military flights to land at Shannon Airport, in spite of Ireland's status of "neutral country".

A Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, the IPB is dedicated to the vision of a world without war. Our international network is comprised of more than 300 individuals and civil society movements and organisations in 70 countries, all committed to advancing peace by nonviolent and democratic means. US Veterans for Peace, to which the detained peace activists are affiliated, was founded in 1985 and is one of our most active member organisations.

Through this statement, IPB condemns the detention of Kauff and Mayers and calls on the Irish authorities for their immediate release. Furthermore, we stand with US Veterans for Peace against Ireland's involvement in any stage of other country's military operations, reminding the authorities of their commitment under the neutrality status.

Berlin, 27 March 2019"

OTHER ACTIVITIES

NEW ZEALAND'S PEACE MOVEMENT SUCCESSFULLY MOBILISES FOR A BAN ON SEMI-AUTOMATIC WEAPONS

In response to the mass shooting at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand's PM Jacinda Ardern promised to tighten gun laws in the country – according to the Peace Movement Aotearoa, a tightening that is "long overdue". As a response to the PM's declaration, New Zealander gun shops registered an increase in the sale of semi-automatic weapons – the same "military-type" firearms as the ones used in Christchurch. This shocking development led peace activists and scientists to mobilise for a ban on semi-automatic weapons while legislative changes were in process. On 17 March, the Peace Movement Aotearoa published preliminary urgent action alert that can be accessed [here](#).

The mobilisation was successful, with the government officially announcing, on 21 March, a moratorium on all civilian held semi-automatic weapons and large capacity magazines. Click [here](#) for more details and to watch Ardern's declaration of the ban.



ESCUELAS DE PAZ STANDS FOR JEP IN COLOMBIA

Our member organisation [Escuelas de Paz](#) took part in demonstrations that called for the preservation of Colombia's "Special Jurisdiction for Peace" (*Jurisdicción Especial de Paz - JEP*), a mechanism for transitional justice created through the landmark peace agreements signed by the FARC and the Colombian government.



The protests, which took place in Bogotá on 13 and 18 March, were organised following President Ivan Duque's decision to object core points of the JEP's statutory law, and the proposal to reform the legislative act that lays the basis for Colombia's "Comprehensive System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition" (Sistema Integral de Verdad, Justicia, Reparación y No Repetición - SIV JRNR).

"CAMPAIGN TO STOP KILLER ROBOTS" PARTICIPATES IN THE CCW

IPB is one of the 93 NGOs that have joined forces in the [Campaign to Stop Killer Robots](#), working

internationally to ban autonomous weapons systems. In the past days, "Stop Killer Robots" discussed the issue with national governments and other civil society organisations in Geneva, on the occasion of the United Nations Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW).



They have reported that a small group of military powers continues to delay efforts for a treaty against lethal autonomous weapons systems, in spite of the continuous calls from civil society and artificial intelligence experts since 2015. You can read more about that [on the campaign's website](#).



PROTESTERS URGE BELGIAN BUSINESS GIANT TO STOP ARMING SAUDI ARABIA

Marking the 4th anniversary of the civil war in Yemen, our member organisation [Agir pour la Paix](#), together with Vredes Actie, conducted a protest on 25 March at the headquarters of the CMI Group, the umbrella company of arms producer CMI Defense. The Belgian business giant provides tank

turrets for Canadian GDLS's light armoured vehicles, deployed by Saudi Arabia.



The peace activists used red paint to symbolise the bloodshed in Yemen and lowered banners from the building's rooftop terrace, telling the company and the Walloon government to “stop arming Saudi Arabia”.



OPEN LETTER FOR THE CONTINUITY OF THE PEACE PROCESS IN THE KOREAN PENINSULA

The Peace Process on the Korean Peninsula must go on

**한국 시민사회단체,
유엔 안보리에 공개서한 발송**

북미 대화 재개, 인도적 지원에 대한 대북 제재 해제,
한반도 평화체제를 위한 협상 시작을 지지하는 입장 발표 요청

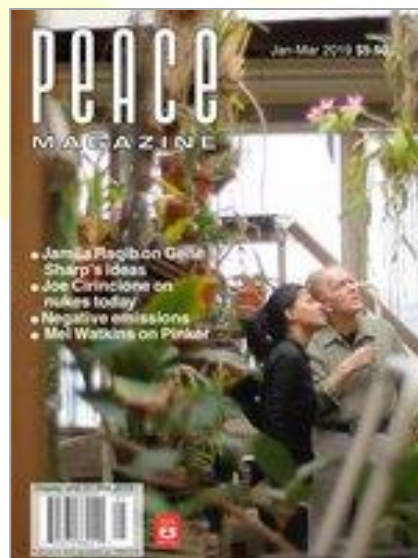
Our member organisation People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD) was one of the signatories of an open letter for the continuity of

the peace process on the Korean Peninsula. Addressed to the UN Security Council's members, the document was signed by 55 South Korean CSOs. Click [here](#) to read it in full.

“NATO, REALISM, AND CANADA” AN ARTICLE BY PHYLLIS CREIGHTON

The January/February issue of *Peace Magazine* brings an article by IPB's consultant Phyllis Creighton on NATO, approaching realist perspectives to war and peace and the Canadian membership in the military alliance.

The author is also actively engaged with two of IPB's member organisations in Canada: the “Canadian Voice of Women for Peace” and “Science for Peace”. In 1991, Creighton assisted in the development of a brief submitted by Science for Peace to the Citizens' Inquiry for Peace and Security, calling for Canada's withdrawal from NATO.



Click [here](#) for more information on Peace Magazine's January/February issue.

NEW MEMBER ORGANISATIONS

GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR ENVIRONMENT AND RECONCILIATION



The Global Initiative for Environment and Reconciliation (GER) is a Rwandan organisation that aims “to empower communities for conflict resolution, peace building, reconciliation and environment protection”. Working in Rwanda and the Great Lakes, they foster the dialogue between decision-makers and stakeholders within local communities, facilitate workshops, and work on the issue of post-genocide reconciliation in Rwanda. They offer a platform for survivors and perpetrators of the genocide, as well as members of the local youth, to heal collective traumas dating back to 1994, allowing for the re-integration of ex-prisoners and combatants, and the strengthening of a culture of nonviolence.

They also work on empowering communities to deal with environmental issues affecting their development, such as land issues and the management of natural resources. Providing community members with the tools to understand the relation between environmental protection and sustainable peace, GER supports them in advocating for

the fair distribution of natural resources and the respect towards biodiversity.

BHARAT UDAY MISSION

Bharat Uday Mission is a movement initiated by the conscious people of India, who believe in action. Our aim is to cleanse the present rotten social and political system completely. Bharat Uday Mission is a socio-political movement comprising of Engineers, Doctors, Lawyers, Students, Businessmen and people from all walks of life.



Dear IPB member,

Are you taking part in or leading the organisation of any activity in **APRIL 2019**? Send information about **your events** to the e-mail address info@ipb-office.berlin if you would like them to be mentioned in the next IPB newsletter!

