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Newsletter

December 2016

***** Season greetings to all our readers! *****

Many thanks

for your support throughout the year



Do not hesitate to have a look at the previous editions of our newsletter available on [IPB's website](#).

New appeal on East-West relations

Stop the spiral of violence - for a new policy of peace and détente now!

IPB has agreed to support the new political initiative entitled “**Stop the Spiral of Violence – for a New Policy of Peace and Détente now!**”. In a joint statement, representatives from churches, business, political parties and civil society have called for such a policy. But in public security debates, these calls have been largely ignored. Today, a broad public and multi-partisan discussion on the demand for a “new policy of détente NOW” is more necessary than ever. The confrontation in Europe has to cease and – with benefits to the whole world – an All-European zone of ‘common security’ through the cooperation of all states from Vancouver to Vladivostok must be created.

MILITARY SPENDING



Senate passes defense bill setting stage for Trump buildup

The Senate on Thursday sent President Barack Obama the last defense policy bill of his presidency — but it is a measure that looks ahead to the next administration, setting the stage for a major boost in military spending. The Senate voted 92 to 7 to pass the annual National Defense Authorization Act, a \$619 billion Pentagon budget blueprint for the current fiscal year that halts a drawdown in the size of the Army and Marine Corps and overturns Pentagon plans to close military bases. The bill passed the House last week, also with an overwhelming, veto-proof vote. Vice President-elect Mike Pence said the new administration would send Congress a defense supplemental request within its first 100 days with the aim of reversing the "hollowing out" of the military.

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EU introduces Defense Research Plan to redirect billions of funds

On November 30, 2016, the European Commission proposed a €5 billion European I Fund and a lifting of rules preventing the EU's common budget and its development bank from investing in military research. The idea is to revitalize defense cooperation to face multiplying threats and also to send a message to US President-elect Donald Trump that Europe wants to pay for its own security. Reaction to the announcement was mixed.

See also:

- [EU Plans Big Military Spending Increase](#)
- [EU pledges billions in funds for defense spending amid 'multiplying threats'](#)
- [Brussels bureaucrats unveil a £4 BILLION plan to boost joint defence spending on everything from drones to helicopters](#)

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More on Military Spending

[SIPRI launches extended military expenditure data covering 1949–2015](#)

[Kaine: Trump spending freeze injects 'uncertainty' into military budget](#)

NUCLEAR



2016 Don't Bank on the Bomb update now available

Eighteen financial institutions, managing more than 1.7 trillion euros, prohibit investments in nuclear weapons producers. These institutions are prepared for the legal implications of a ban on nuclear weapons to be negotiated at the UN in 2017. Another 36 institutions have some form of limitation on such investments. But far too many institutions are still investing in nuclear weapons producers, according to *Don't Bank on the Bomb*, a report published on December 8th by Dutch peace organization PAX. The report details how 27 private companies are producing key components to make nuclear weapons as well as the 390 banks, insurance companies and pension funds that still invest in nuclear weapon producing companies. As the new treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons is negotiated in 2017, States should therefore include a prohibition on financing nuclear weapons.

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Nuclear power disasters have start dates, but no end dates!

After decades of planning, and many years of construction, Chernobyl's new Arch – the largest movable structure in history – has at long last been installed, at a cost of \$1.6 *billion*. It is merely intended to suppress massive amounts of radioactive dust, as Chernobyl's old Sarcophagus is dismantled by remotely controlled cranes. But the Arch will only last a century, at which point it will have to be replaced. At Fukushima, the mounting costs of dealing with the ongoing nuclear catastrophe's still worsening aftermath have skyrocketed into the hundreds of billions of dollars. For those injured or killed by Chernobyl, Fukushima, and TMI, these nuclear power disasters have no end date.

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More on Nuclear

[Update on U.S. case \(Marshall Islands\)](#)

ARMS TRADE



Global arms industry: USA remains dominant despite decline; sales rise in Western Europe and Russia, says SIPRI

On December 5th, SIPRI has released its new data on the international arms industry. The sales of arms and military services companies in the SIPRI Top 100 have fallen for the fifth consecutive year. However, at only a 0.6 per cent decline, the slight decrease may signal a possible reversal of the downward sales trend observed since 2011. Here is a more detailed description of the new SIPRI data: companies based in the US continue to dominate the Top 100 even if their arms sales decreased by 2.9 per cent compared with 2014; on the contrary, West European arms sales are up in 2015 after falls in 2014; the Russian arms industry continues growing in sales and South Korea is leading the rise of emerging producers in the Top 100.

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ENAAT
EUROPEAN NETWORK
AGAINST ARMS TRADE

European campaign against military research, Newsletter N°2

The European Network Against Arms Trade (ENAAT) has just released the 2nd issue of its newsletter. Among other news, the newsletter deals with the pro arms-industry Defence Action Plan of the European Commission revealed on November 30. It also highlights three projects selected under the European Parliament Pilot Project for military research, worth €1,4 million. Even if ENAAT's campaign "no Eumoney4arms" did not prevent the European Parliament from voting in favor of the Preparatory Action for Defence Research, it was successful in giving more visibility to the issue. ENAAT could also raise its profile as a credible alternative voice and good contacts have been made with some key MEPs who are now willing to continue working on this issue.

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More on Arms Trade

Where the guns go

Weapons and ammunition identification

IMPACTS OF WEAPONS



A successful conclusion to the Mine Ban Treaty - Meeting of States Party

The 15th Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty concluded successfully on 1 December in Santiago, Chile. States and civil society expressed a strong commitment to work together to reach a mine-free world by 2025. A strong Colombian delegation encouraged participants with news of the successful peace process there and the important role that mine clearance has played in resolving the decades-old conflict. Nevertheless, many participants warned against complacency and the need to focus on country-specific solutions to address the legacy of landmines from past conflicts as well as the increased use of improvised landmines by non-state armed groups.

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The environmental consequences of Iraq's oil fires are going unrecorded

Oil facilities have been targeted during conflicts since the start of mechanised warfare. It is a practice that can have serious consequences for the environment and human health. Oil fires started by Islamic State in northern Iraq have now been burning for months, exacerbating an already serious humanitarian crisis, but right now nobody seems to be monitoring their impact on the ground. For instance, the UN has called for Iraq and its neighbours to deploy mobile air sampling equipment. However, it's not clear whether this has been heeded by the Iraqi government.

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MISCELLANEOUS



East Africa: IPB member group hosts Peace and Security Convening during Zinduka Festival

The Coalition for Constitution Implementation Kenya (CCI-Kenya), a member organisation of IPB, successfully convened a Peace and Security Convening during the just-concluded Zinduka Festival that took place at Jicca Hotel in Ntinda Town, Kampala, Uganda. The Zinduka Festival is an annual regional festival that brings together people from across the East African Countries to interact, celebrate their diversity and engage with the integration process. It is a festival that offers the people a unique opportunity to contribute to the East African integration process through art and culture, policy dialogue and movement building. To get a glimpse of the event, read the report [HERE](#).

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Colombian Congress ratifies new peace accord

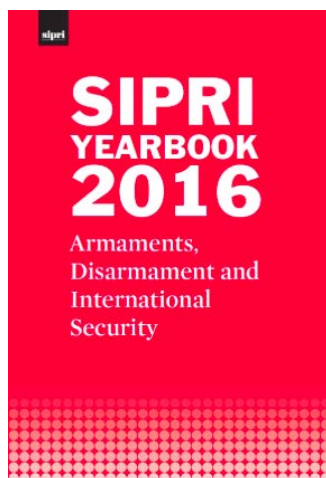
Colombia's Congress has approved a revised peace accord to end the 50-year conflict between the government and the FARC rebel group. The lower house ratified the pact a day after it was endorsed by the Senate, despite objections from the opposition. President Santos says the new proposals are stronger and take into account changes demanded by opponents of the scheme. The opponents, led by former President Alvaro Uribe, say the revised deal is still too lenient on FARC leaders. The first peace accord was rejected in a referendum, but the revised version does not require a popular vote.

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More on Miscellaneous

Climate change will stir 'unimaginable' refugee crisis, says military

RESOURCES



SIPRI Yearbook 2016 is a compendium of data and analysis in the areas of security and conflicts, military spending and armaments, and non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament. You can **order a print copy** or **subscribe to *SIPRI Yearbook Online***.

You can also find summaries in English and other languages **here**.

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ICRC report demonstrates people believe that wars should have limits

On December 5, 2016, the ICRC has published the results of a large survey detailing how people around the world perceive a range of issues relating to war. *People on War: Perspectives from 16 Countries* highlights the views of 17,000 people from conflict-affected areas, P5 countries and Switzerland. It reveals strong support for the Geneva Conventions (especially regarding healthcare) but growing indifference to torture.

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More on Resources

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: Theory and Practice

UN Report on Protecting Children from Armed Violence in the Community

Peace Education News! (Monthly newsletter)

The Coming War on China. Discomfiting film doc exposes US nuclear tactics

New HRW/IHRC report on Killer Robots

New Issue of the ICRC Review: The Evolution of Warfare

For upcoming events see IPB Calendar



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