

VITAL SIGNS

NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL PHYSICIANS FOR THE PREVENTION OF NUCLEAR WAR (IPPNW)

YES, WE CAN!



IPPNW marked its 30th anniversary this year—our 25th as a Nobel Peace Laureate—with a message that is every bit as compelling today as it was in 1980. Nuclear weapons by their very nature are inhumane and unconscionable, and the only way to make sure they are never used again is to eliminate them from the face of the Earth.

The humanitarian argument for the abolition of nuclear weapons got welcome support from two places in recent months. The International Committee of the Red Cross, which has had a history of engagement with the nuclear issue stretching

back to its relief efforts after the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, issued its strongest condemnation of nuclear weapons to date in April. ICRC President Jakob Kellenberger said that nuclear weapons have the potential “to render impossible the mission of humanitarian assistance that this organization exists to fulfill.”

One month later, the member states of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, gathered at the UN for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, emphasized the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons not once, but twice, in the Conference outcome statement. In each instance, the consequences of



PHOTO: J. LORETZ

nuclear weapons use were cited as necessitating nuclear disarmament, and a connection was made to the growing international support for a nuclear weapons convention.

IPPNW reached out to our Red Cross [\[continued on pg. 6\]](#)

PREVENT VIOLENCE, PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT



IPPNW's Aiming for Prevention (AfP) program entered its tenth year this fall with a solid record of accomplishments and a clear set of goals for the coming year.

A whirlwind of activities during the year's second half began in June, when AfP experts, including Bob Mtonga of Zambia (see interview on page 7), Ime John of Nigeria, and Emperatriz Crespín of El Salvador, focused on violence as a humanitarian crisis at the 4th Biennial Meeting of States of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms. That same month, AfP coordinator

Maria Valenti helped lead discussions on a five-year workplan at a two-day strategic planning meeting of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Violence Prevention Alliance in Rome.

Next was IPPNW's World Congress in Basel, where AfP activists from around the world presented on a range of initiatives, from injury research to policy advocacy. Members held consultations with the WHO Department of Violence and Injury Prevention, Action on Armed Violence, and others. What emerged was a consensus on the critical role of the medical community in armed violence prevention work, and the



PHOTO: M. VALENTI

need to continue discussions on ways to increase IPPNW participation in such activities as violent injury research and policy design.

IPPNW presented a dozen papers and posters on violence and health to the 10th World Congress on Injury and Safety Promotion in London in September. [\[continued on pg. 6\]](#)

OPERATING FOR A COMMON PURPOSE

IPPNW 2010 CONGRESS, NOBEL PEACE LAUREATE SUMMIT, AND THE HAAS AWARD
MORE TO READ ONLINE: IPPNW.ORG AND PEACEANDHEALTHBLOG.COM

LEFT TO RIGHT:
LEILA MOEIN,
MICHEAL CHRIST,
SHAHRIAR KHATERI



Iranian affiliate joins IPPNW

In August, at our 19th World Congress in Switzerland, IPPNW welcomed Iranian Physicians for Social Responsibility as the newest member of our federation. IPPNW now has 63 affiliates in 62 countries. The move follows several years of close cooperation between IPPNW and concerned physicians and medical students in Iran.

PSR-Iran was founded by two prominent Iranian physicians – Dr. Shahriar Khateri and Dr. Mohammad Reza Soroush – who have spent the past two decades working with chemical weapons survivors of the Iran-Iraq war.

Dr. Khateri, who represents PSR-Iran at the IPPNW International Council, was a child soldier during the war and was exposed to chemical weapons attacks by Iraqi forces three times. Iraq used mustard gas and the nerve agent sarin repeatedly on both troops and civilians, leaving more than one million people exposed to toxic chemical agents.

To help inform the world and to work most effectively with civilian and soldier survivors, Drs. Khateri and Soroush started a nongovernmental organization called the Society for Chemical Weapons Victims Support. They have conducted extensive

research on best practices and new procedures to address the injuries inflicted by chemical weapons and have become leading advocates at home and internationally for peaceful resolution of conflict.

Three years ago, they opened the Iran Peace Museum with the premise that showcasing the horrors of war will contribute to the prevention of future wars. Dr. Khateri, the museum's director, said, "The people of Iran always hear about the glories of war, when we were invaded, but they rarely hear of the devastation of war."

PSR Iran's charter in IPPNW is to "promote a culture of peace through highlighting the extreme horrors of weapons of mass destruction." IPPNW is especially encouraged by the new Iranian affiliate's obvious determination to incorporate young medical students at every level of this work.

Nobel Laureates Summit

IPPNW joined the Dalai Lama, landmines campaigner Jody Williams, Irish peace activist Mairead Corrigan Maguire, former South African President Willem de Clerk, and others at the 11th World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates on November 12 in Hiroshima. This year's Summit underscored the urgency of abolishing nuclear weapons. Bjorn Hilt of Norway, the chair of IPPNW's board, and co-

president Vappu Taipale of Finland represented the federation at the Summit. Dr. Hilt made a personal appeal for "a safer and healthier world," telling the conference that "in my mind nuclear weapons are used every day by the nuclear-weapons-addicted states when they continue to threaten others with extermination." Dr. Taipale reminded the assembled Laureates that "every billion dollars spent on nuclear weapons is a billion dollars that could have been spent to improve the health of the global population."

In their final declaration from Hiroshima, the Laureates said they "have no doubt that the use of nuclear weapons against any people must be regarded as a crime against

Plans for the IPPNW World Congress 2012 are already under way.

Student Congress
August 22 – 23, 2012

Main Congress
August 24 – 26, 2012

2012 IN
HIROSHIMA:
SAVE THE
DATES!





humanity and should henceforth be prohibited....Nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented, but they can and must be outlawed.”

Haas Award

IPPNW, the International Association of Lawyers Against Nuclear Arms (IALANA) and the International Peace Bureau (IPB) have received the 2010 John and Chara Haas Award for International Peace and Social Justice for their work on the World Court Project and “for their joint efforts to establish global consensus on the illegality of nuclear weapons.”

In accepting the award on behalf of IPPNW, program director John

Loretz said that “What brought doctors, lawyers, and peace activists together on [the World Court Project] was a profound understanding that nuclear weapons, by their very nature, fall outside anything even remotely justifiable as an act of war under the norms of international humanitarian law.”

The previous recipients of the award, which honors those who have spent a lifetime in the cause of peace, safeguarding the environment, and in helping to reduce and end nuclear weapons, were author Jonathan Schell (2008) and Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission chair Hans Blix (2009).¹⁵

WHY PROMOTE NUCLEAR ABOLITION?

“Nuclear weapons are unique in their destructive power, in the unspeakable human suffering they cause....and in the threat they pose to the environment, to future generations, and indeed to the survival of humanity...”

[P]reventing the use of nuclear weapons requires fulfillment of existing obligations to pursue negotiations aimed at prohibiting and completely eliminating such weapons through a legally binding international treaty.

JAKOB KELLENBERGER,
PRESIDENT,
INTERNATIONAL
COMMITTEE
OF THE RED CROSS



ICRC

IPPNW.ORG



LEFT: DR. BERNARD LOWN SPEAKING DURING THE AFP PLENARY VIA SKYPE.



PHOTOS FROM THE 2010 IPPNW CONGRESS, BASEL, SWITZERLAND

ONLINE: SPEECHES AND VIDEO
IPPNW2010.ORG



TALKING PEACE IN NORTH KOREA

FIND OUT HOW IPPNW PROMOTES INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE AND COOPERATION
PEACEANDHEALTHBLOG.COM

The recent escalation of conflict in the Korean Peninsula highlights the importance of IPPNW's long-standing commitment to building channels for peaceful communication.

Since 1992, IPPNW has worked to create dialogue between IPPNW members in the West and physicians from the region that transcends political and ideological divides.


Multinational delegations of physicians and medical students have visited North Korea numerous times in order to strengthen the relationship with the DPRK affiliate of IPPNW. In turn, North Korean physicians have been hosted on various occasions by IPPNW members in the United States and by affiliates in Europe.

The exchanges have focused on spreading awareness of the medical hazards of nuclear weapons and creating learning opportunities about the practice of medicine in different countries.

Earlier this year two of our physician leaders from Finland, IPPNW's Co-President Vappu Taipale and her husband Ilkka Taipale, met with members of IPPNW's affiliate, the

Korean Anti-War Peace Physicians. A few weeks later, two North Korean doctors visited Finland.

While in Pyongyang, the Taipales were able to donate a new computer to the affiliate and arrange for the delivery of more than 400 kg of medical textbooks collected by Finnish medical students to benefit North Korean students.

Through the years, IPPNW physicians from Australia, Finland, Germany, Japan and Sweden have sent volumes of desperately-needed updated medical textbooks, journals, CD-ROMS, and donated vitamins to our colleagues in North Korea as part of IPPNW peace-building mission. 



ONLINE RESOURCES

New Nuclear Weapons Inheritance Project handbook
ippnw-students.org/NWIP

ICAN brochures, powerpoints, books and reports
icanw.org/resources

Million Pleas
Tell world leaders it's time to abolish nuclear weapons. Upload your plea.
millionpleas.com

Medicine Conflict and Survival
A designated journal of IPPNW and its UK affiliate, MEDACT
tandf.co.uk/journals/mcs

PEACERAFFLE.ORG

100% of proceeds support IPPNW's mission to promote a safer, healthier, and nuclear weapons-free world!



Only 300 tickets to be sold (great odds)!
\$10,000 - Grand Prize drawing on June 1, 2011.
You do not need to be present to win.
Give it as a meaningful gift.


Give Peace a Chance and purchase tickets today!

NEW CONNECTIONS

MEET THE NEW LEADERS OF THE BOARD AND STUDENTS
IPPNW.ORG/CONTACT/BOARD.HTML

Every two years, IPPNW holds elections for the Board of Directors and the medical students elect two exemplary medical student activists.

We are pleased to introduce: Leila Moein of Iran (right) and Ogebe Onazi of Nigeria (left) who will be International Co-Student Representatives (ISRs) for the next two years.

IPPNW's Co-Presidents will be Drs. Robert Mtonga, Zambia, Sergei Kolesnikov, Russia and Vappu Taipale, Finland. 



CLIPPED FROM THE CNN OP-ED PAGES

“In the 21st century, nuclear weapons are a liability, not an asset.

The United States will be far safer with fewer nuclear weapons in the world and a stronger, more stable relationship with Russia.”

PETER WILK, PSR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR URGING US SENATE APPROVAL OF NEW START, IN CNN OP-ED. PSR CONDUCTED AN INTENSE CAMPAIGN TO HELP WIN PASSAGE OF NEW START, WITH EXTENSIVE SPEAKING TOURS, NUMEROUS MEETINGS WITH NEWSPAPER EDITORS, PHYSICIAN-AUTHORED OP-ED PIECES AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR, AND THE MOBILIZATION OF PSR ACTIVISTS TO SEND THOUSANDS OF LETTERS AND EMAILS AND TO MAKE HUNDREDS OF PHONE CALLS.


QUESTIONS ABOUT SUPPORTING IPPNW?

ASK GARRETT!

NEW STAFFER OF THE CENTRAL OFFICE: GARRETT R. FITZGERALD

Garrett FitzGerald joined the staff in October 2010 to support the philanthropy and involvement of IPPNW's loyal donors. He comes to the work as a fellow traveler, with a deep commitment to and expertise in peace work. Garrett recently earned his Master of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School focused in the area of religion, ethics, and politics, and holds a BA in peace and religious studies from Guilford College.



nonviolence education and community organization initiatives. 

Give a gift in honor of a loved one or create your own legacy today by joining our planned giving program, the Sadako Peace Society.

Questions?
Please contact:
gfitzgerald@ippnw.org

His work at the nexus of these issues has led him to rural Honduras to inner-city schools in California and North Carolina. Garrett, and has helped foster creative partnerships with a variety of



CHRISTINE BEERLI AND AMBASSADOR SERGIO DUARTE WERE PLENARY SPEAKERS AT THE MAIN CONGRESS.



AIMING FOR PREVENTION ACTIVISTS AGREE, "GUNS ARE BAD FOR HEALTH."



DR. ANDREW WININGTON, NEW ZEALAND SPEAKING AT THE BASEL CONGRESS.




LEFT: DR. CARLOS PAZOS, CUBA AND DR. SERGEY KOLESNIKOV, RUSSIA

["Yes, we can" continued from pg. 1]

colleagues soon after Mr. Kellenberger made his remarks to the diplomatic corps in Geneva. Peter Herby, the head of ICRC's arms unit, participated in an IPPNW seminar on the medical and environmental consequences of nuclear war during the NPT Review. ICRC vice president Christine Beerli addressed a plenary session at the World Congress in Basel, and met with IPPNW leaders to explore ways in which our organizations might cooperate to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

ICAN — the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons — had a major presence at both the NPT Review and the Basel Congress. More than 40 IPPNW physicians and medical students from a dozen countries came to New York to promote ICAN's goal of a nuclear weapons convention, alongside hundreds of civil society activists who lobbied their NPT delegations throughout the month with a common purpose.

The ICAN working group held extensive meetings in Basel with grassroots campaigners, strategists, and diplomats from supportive, nuclear-weapons-free governments to craft a new two-year action plan for abolition. The most tangible and exciting outcome of those meetings was a successful grant application to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which has given ICAN funding to start and support a European hub office in Geneva for the next two years.

You can keep up with the latest ICAN news—and learn how to get involved yourself—at icanw.org. 

["Prevent Violence, promote development" continued from pg. 1]


AfP activists from the US, Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, and Nigeria reprised the slogan—"guns are bad for health"—in a variety of sessions devoted to the theme of safe and equitable communities. At related meetings of injury experts held in advance of "Safety 2010," Dr. Mtonga and IPPNW consultant Dr. Diego Zavala reported on the results of an IPPNW/ICE (International Collaboration Effort on Injury Statistics) survey on the degree of North/South collaboration on injury prevention, and also on mortuary data collection.

In October, IPPNW was elected to serve on the newly reorganized Control Arms Campaign Steering Board, represented by Drs. Aminu Mohammed of Nigeria and new IPPNW co-president Bob Mtonga. Bob represented IPPNW at the 2010 UN First Committee on Disarmament in New York, where IPPNW contributed the health perspective to meetings intended to build momentum for a global, legally binding, human-rights-centered Arms Trade Treaty. IPPNW's Aiming for Prevention work was also featured in a special issue devoted to public health of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development newsletter.

Health and development were the theme of the 63rd annual UN/DPI

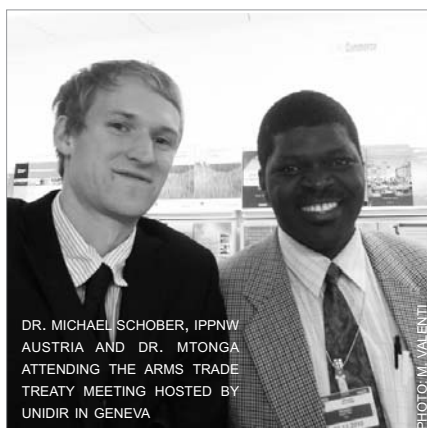
NGO conference in Melbourne. Dr. Cathey Falvo played a key role in organizing the conference and writing the closing statement. Dr. Sue Wareham, president of the Medical Association for Prevention of War (IPPNW-Australia), spoke at the closing roundtable, where she drew out the connection between military spending and the lack of progress in achieving the MDGs. Dr. Wareham and other physicians at the conference lobbied successfully for a conference recommendation to "cut military expenditures, which will free up resources that can be used for the training and retraining health workers, teachers, and infrastructure."

IPPNW's founding co-president, Dr. Bernard Lown, made this point elegantly during a Congress speech: "The divide between the North and South," he said, "is maintained, nurtured, and made cancerous by the arms trade. This has become a substantial source of developing world debt, which limits poor countries investing in education, in health care, in clean water, in sanitation and in critical infrastructures."

This need to link the roots of armed violence with the global proliferation of weapons and with overspending on military programs at the expense of human health and security will be one of our strongest messages in the year ahead. 

AFFILIATES IN ACTION

INTERVIEW WITH DR. ROBERT E. MTONGA, ZAMBIA
IPPNW CO-PRESIDENT



DR. MICHAEL SCHOBER, IPPNW AUSTRIA AND DR. MTONGA ATTENDING THE ARMS TRADE TREATY MEETING HOSTED BY UNIDIR IN GENEVA

PHOTO: M. VALENTI

VS: How did you first become involved with IPPNW?

RM: I first became involved in 1988 as a third year medical student. Interested in the public health sector, I attended a lecture for medical students given by members of Zambian Healthworkers for Social Responsibility (ZHSR). There, I learned about the unique role that physicians can play as activists for social causes, as well as the public health implications

of a nuclear holocaust. I was immediately intrigued by this line of work, and joined ZHSR.

VS: What activities did you initially pursue?

RM: In addition to participating in advocacy activities for peace in general, I also worked with other medical students with refugees from Mozambique, Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia, and became involved with ZHSR's campaign against landmines.

VS: Can you tell us about one of your successful efforts in Zambia?

RM: I feel my work was instrumental in the Zambian Government's ratification of the International Mine Ban Treaty. Initially working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defense, I collected data, mounted an education program with decision makers, and advocated for local action on landmines by engaging members of Parliament from



PHOTO: A. MORIZONG

affected regions in Zambia. I then worked to help form a coalition of NGOs to work on the issue, including the Zambian Red Cross, Oxfam, and AFRONET. I was able to raise funding for the work from IPPNW, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, and Mine Action Canada.

VS: Dr. Mtonga, what are you involved in currently?

RM: As co-president of IPPNW, I am helping the African affiliates become more active in our campaign to achieve a nuclear-weapons-free world. At the same time I am serving as the Vice-President of the Injury Prevention Initiative for Africa (IPIFA) as well as being a Member of the Joint Leadership Committee for the Committee of the Cluster Munitions Coalition/International Campaign to Ban Landmines. **VS**



PHOTO: MARY WAREHAM, CMC

MEDICAL STUDENT SNAPSHOTS

HUNDREDS ENJOY SUMMER IN BASEL, SWITZERLAND

MORE PHOTOS: [FLICKR.COM/GROUPS/BAN2010TOUR](http://FlickR.COM/GROUPS/BAN2010TOUR)
[FLICKR.COM/GROUPS/IPPNW/](http://FlickR.COM/GROUPS/IPPNW/)



DR. ALEX ROSEN OF GERMANY PRESENTING PHOTOS FROM THE BAN TOUR TO THE CONGRESS PARTICIPANTS.

BAN TOUR PARTICIPANTS NEAR BUECHEL, THE LAST REMAINING NUCLEAR BASE IN GERMANY.



STUDENTS FROM NIGERIA TALKING WITH FOUNDING CO-PRESIDENT, DR. EVGUENY CHAZOV, RUSSIA.

BIKING FROM NAGASAKI TO HIROSHIMA 2012: PLAN NOW!

The organizers of the successful 2010 BAN tour (33 medical activists who biked 750km over 11 days) are already in discussion and beginning to plan a bike tour in 2012 from Nagasaki to Hiroshima.

If you are interested in participating, please connect with us:
facebook.com/ippnw

Online: More BAN tour photos
ippnw-students.org/BAN



IPPNW is a non-partisan federation of national medical organizations in 63 countries dedicated to safeguarding health by working to ban nuclear weapons and to address the impact of militarism and war on human health.

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