



Around Europe

Quaker Council for European Affairs

No. 276 October 2005

The European Union & Small Arms

The Issue of Small Arms & Light Weapons

- Globally there are currently around 639 million small arms and light weapons in existence. Eight million small arms and light weapons are produced annually.
- Roughly half a million men, women and children are killed by armed violence every year.
- Without strict controls at international, regional and national levels, small arms and light weapons will continue to help fuel violent conflict.

The UN Programme of Action

As small arms and light weapons have been the common weapon of use in recent conflicts, the UN has been paying special attention to this issue.

From 9-20 July 2001, the UN held a Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. This Conference agreed a Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons.

The 2005 report '*Examining the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action*' described this agreement as "*the central global agreement on preventing, combating and reducing illicit trafficking, proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons*".

This report (available to download at: www.iansa.org/un/bms2005/red-book.htm) was produced jointly by the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), a global network of civil society organisations working to stop the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and Biting the Bullet, a joint project between International Alert, Saferworld and the University of Bradford in the UK, to coincide with governments meeting at the UN to review the Programme of Action in July 2005. The report finds that little has been achieved since the signing of the agreement. Minimum steps towards implementation have not been taken. For example, under 40 countries have laws controlling arms brokers, while many countries' laws on arms transfers are inadequate or out of date.

The Role of the European Union

As highlighted by a public meeting held in the European Parliament in June 2005 on '*Arms Exports in the EU: A Threat to Peace and Security?*' France, Germany, Italy, Sweden and the United Kingdom were responsible for a third of the worldwide arms transfer agreements signed between 1994 and 2001. Since ten new countries joined the EU in 2004, the EU now exports more arms than either the USA or Russia.

In May 2005, the Transnational Institute, a worldwide fellowship of committed scholar-activists, published '*The Emerging EU Military - Industrial Complex: Arms industry lobbying in Brussels*' by Frank Slijper, a researcher and campaigner on arms trade issues for the past thirteen years working at the Dutch Campaign Against Arms Trade (www.stoparmstrade.org).

According to this briefing (available from www.tni.org) the relationship between the European Commission and the arms trade industry is "*a case study of backroom policy making, and a caricature of how many people today look at European decision-making processes in general*". The report expresses serious concern that the influence of the arms industry over EU policy will continue to grow and examines how this will impact on arms export control mechanisms such as the 1998 EU Code of Conduct on arms exports, which is intended to forbid arms sales to human rights abusers or conflict zones.

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Commemoration of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki Bombings

On 23 May 2005, a written declaration was submitted to the European Parliament by 5 MEPs (Gisela Kallenbach, Jill Evans, Caroline Lucas, Tobias Pflueger, Jean-Luc Dehaene and Ana Gomes). In the June edition of *Around Europe* QCEA asked our readers to write to their MEPs and ask them to sign it. In order for the declaration to be sent to the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in time for the commemorations in early August, it was redrafted as an appeal. This appeal has been signed by most of the political groups in the European Parliament as well as by an additional 80 individual MEPs.

This appeal was taken by Gisela Kallenbach MEP to the 6th Annual Conference of 'Mayors for Peace' and to the 60th Annual Commemoration of the Bombing of Hiroshima. A report from her visit is available from the QCEA website at: www.quaker.org/qcea/intergroup

QCEA would like to thank all those who took the time to respond to our request and wrote to their MEPs asking them to sign the declaration.

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The Control Arms Campaign

In 2003, IANSA, Oxfam and Amnesty International launched the 'Control Arms' Campaign. This campaign seeks to build support among governments for an Arms Trade Treaty, a legal instrument that would prohibit arms from being exported to destinations where they are likely to be used to commit grave human rights violations.

They are currently organising a 'Million Faces' visual petition - a way for you to show your concern about the spread of arms. They aim to collect one million photos and self-portraits of people from around the world.

Please see below how you can sign up to the 'Million Faces' petition and how to find out more on the issue of Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Get Involved

Join the 'Control Arms' Campaign and the 'Million Faces' visual petition at: www.controlarms.org

Visit the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) website and find out more at: www.iansa.org

Robin Bloomfield

Time for Transparency

The Dutch and French rejections of the EU constitution make the time ripe for strong measures to make the influence of different lobby groups on Brussels policy processes more transparent. The European Transparency Initiative, initiated by Vice President of the Commission, Siim Kallas, must not miss this opportunity.

The EU's democratic deficit has long been discussed, and yet it never seems to go away. The perception continues that the EU is an impenetrable fortress, where corporate and political elites make decisions with no room for citizens' involvement. The estimated 15,000 lobbyists in Brussels, the vast majority working for business interests, combined with dubious public affairs practices and a lack of any credible mechanism for ensuring transparency give credence to this perception.

A recent example of misleading business lobbying, uncovered by Corporate Europe Observatory (www.corporateeurope.org), is the 'Campaign for Creativity' (C4C). Whilst the campaign gives the impression that it is an organisation of artists, musicians, designers,

software developers and other creative professionals, it is in reality orchestrated by Campbell Gentry, a public affairs firm.

C4C has been highly active in lobbying members of the European Parliament to adopt strong protection on software patents, a position advantageous to large software multinationals. Whilst the website vaguely mentions that the campaign is "supported by" software multinationals (Microsoft and SAP among others), and industry association CompTIA, the overall impression is of a campaign by creative individuals.

When C4C was asked for details of how it was financed, no clear answers were forthcoming. It remains unclear, therefore, if C4C is truly an organisation that represents creative professionals, or if this appearance is merely to the benefit of the software multinationals who finance the campaign.

In addition to using front organisations, European public affairs practitioners, largely funded by big business, have a variety of tactics at their disposal. Think-tank and research institute funding, the funding of patient groups by the

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Time for Transparency

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pharmaceutical industry, and the ability to commission report after report all create conditions that obscure the identities and interests of the involved parties. The situation is worsened still when former public officials regularly go to work for lobbying firms to lobby the institutions where they previously worked.

After seeing the detrimental impacts of deceptive lobbying on many areas of policy, including international development, public health, and the environment, a coalition of organisations, which QCEA has joined, has formed The Alliance for Lobbying Transparency and Ethics Regulation (ALTER-EU).

Alter-EU calls for the implementation of mandatory lobbying disclosure: all lobbying organisations (including NGOs) over a certain size should submit information on how they are funded and what areas of public policy they have been working on. Disclosure of meetings and communications between lobbyists and high ranking public officials and a cooling-off period before EU public officials can be hired for lobbying work would also ensure transparency on whose interests are being considered in policy formulation.

The tragedy for European democracy would be for business lobbyists to be successful in watering down Commissioner Kallas' strong stance to date by proposing self-regulatory standards. Commissioner Kallas' European Transparency Initiative has the potential to tackle these serious issues at the heart of European democracy. The opportunity must not be missed.

Owen Espley

Campaigner at Corporate Europe Observatory and a former Programme Assistant at QCEA (2003)

Peace Tax Protestor in the UK Visited by Bailiff

On 31 August, Robin Brookes, one of the Peace Tax Seven in the UK, was visited by the bailiff. This was to seize goods to cover the tax which Robin has been withholding from the government in order to protest against the use of his money for military purposes. Such use of money conflicts with Robin's conscience as a pacifist.

At his home, Robin had a wall of money prepared. The wall was intended to demonstrate

- The amount of money the UK spends every ten seconds on occupying Iraq
- The amount of money each family pays each

New Year's Workshop In Vienna 28 December 2005 to 02 January 2006

The Austrian Quarterly Meeting (of Friends) and Konfliktkultur Association in Vienna are inviting young Friends from European countries to participate in the project 'Imagine Peace' reflecting on the significance of peace, asking about its meaning and developing descriptions and images of their understanding of peace.

This will take place from 28 December 2005 to 2 January 2006. The workshop itself is free (participants do not have to pay for accommodation, food or facilitation). Your only costs would be your travel to Vienna and any personal spending during your stay.

The central idea of this project derives from the thesis that peace must be more than the opposite of war. How can we define active positive peace? What kind of images develop in a process of searching for new notions and definitions of peace?

The workshop will develop creative and new representations in words, figures, pictures or other conceptions defining peace without any connotation to war as its opposite.

The workshop is part of a larger project: 'Imagine Peace' to commemorate the outstanding work of the Austrian Bertha von Suttner who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1905.

More information from:
www.BerthavonSuttner2005.info or by e-mailing **office@BerthavonSuttner2005.info** or **jalka@konfliktkultur.at**

year to finance war and what might otherwise be done with this money (such as heating and food for 100 Ukrainian families for a month, equipment for 6 primary schools in Kosovo, or 6 months' worth of basic healthcare in Bangladesh).

The bailiff, after having first enquired about the progress of the case of the Peace Tax Seven, removed the money and took it with him.

Next month, we will reflect in a little more detail on the connection between this case and the work QCEA has been doing on the issue of the Peace Tax at the Council of Europe.

Martina Weitsch



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QCEA is now offering individual subscribers the opportunity to receive *Around Europe* by e-mail instead of by post.

Subscribing by e-mail will cost € 15 or £ 10 per year for individuals who want to subscribe only to the e-mail version. This charge is to help cover the staff costs of producing *Around Europe*.

By receiving *Around Europe* by e-mail you will help QCEA save money and cut its environmental impact.

We are offering Associate Members the option to have only an e-mailed version of *Around Europe*. However, this will not have an effect on the membership rate for Associate Members, as this is intended to be a way of supporting QCEA's work and to cover the cost of sending other publications in hard copy.

We recommend that Meetings which are Associate

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Deutschland: über das Konto der Jahresversammlung: Rel. Gesellschaft der Freunde (Quäker), Postgiroamt Hannover, Konto 128 16-300, BLZ 250 100 30 (mit Vermerk QCEA).

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