



## Social Responsibility, Controversial Weapons and the Military

In October 2006, the European Defence Agency published 'An Initial Long-Term Vision for European Defence Capability and Capacity Needs'. The Agency, originally foreseen as a new part of the European Union institutional structure in the 'Treaty Establishing a Constitution for Europe', was created ahead of the ratification of that Treaty in 2004.

The publication of the long-term vision gives an initial insight into the work and approach of the Agency.

A rather surprising paragraph jumped out on first reading of the document:

**Paragraph 22:** In the Kosovo air war only fifteen per cent of munitions dropped were 'smart'; by the 2003 Iraq war, the proportions between dumb and smart were reversed. Serious thought needs to be given to the future utility of unguided munitions (and of aircraft that cannot use smart weapons), as well as cluster bombs, mines and other weapons of indiscriminate effect. The environmental impact of military action will also come increasingly into focus, including concern for effects on our own troops - as with the crises over the use of depleted uranium ammunition in the first Gulf war and later in Kosovo.

In September 2006, the Times Online published an article under the headline 'Watch out, Sarge! It's environmentally friendly fire', highlighting what appeared to be recent attempts both by the defence industry and the military establishment to develop environmentally responsible approaches. The article focused on the 'Corporate Social Responsibility Policy' of BAE Systems (a policy which they are proud of and which they display prominently on their website), but also mentioned that environmentally friendly ammunition was something supported as an approach by the UK Ministry of Defence.

The article quoted as examples the idea of 'lead-free' bullets and rockets with reduced

toxicity. The director of corporate social responsibility at BAE Systems is quoted as saying: "Weapons are going to be used and when they are, we try to make them as safe for the user as possible, to limit the collateral damage and to impact as little as possible on the environment."

Struck by the extraordinary cynicism behind the idea of trying to argue that environmentally friendly ammunition and weapons systems are somehow better than other weapons - never mind that they kill and are intended to kill - I undertook some further research and discovered the Ministry of Defence (MoD) UK publication: 'Sustainable Development and Environment Manual'. At a mere 602 pages, it is not a light read. In it, there is a so-called 'leaflet' on green munitions (Leaflet 6 in Volume 2) which clearly states that whilst there is no explicit 'green munitions' policy in the MoD, there is a philosophy that suggests this is a good idea.

A search for various terms relating to what might be referred to as 'controversial weapons' in order to ascertain what the MoD has to say about their environmental impact finds the following:

- No mention of land mines - maybe they do not pollute the environment sufficiently to warrant a mention

- Two references to depleted uranium - both only comment on the desirability of information sharing about them between the US and the UK  
(See page 2)

### In this Issue:

Integrating Environment, Development and Conflict Prevention Page 2

End of Women's Prisons in the UK? Page 3

Martina Weitsch in Serbia and Bosnia: part one Page 4



- No mention of cluster bombs - maybe they, too, do not pose enough of a danger to the environment
- Eleven references to the term nuclear. The most interesting of these is:

**Chapter 1 Annex A (16 Key Performance Indicators):** under the 'nuclear' theme, the objective is stated as 'to comply with the National Strategy to reduce radioactive discharges to the marine environment to close to zero by 2020 and minimise radioactive waste' and under the heading of 'performance indicator' the statement: 'No indicator in place'.

No doubt similar 'green' approaches are being discussed by manufacturers other than BAE systems and by defence ministries outside the UK. We would be keen to hear from our readers about these if you have come across them.

But where does all this lead? Does it leave only rightful and righteous anger about blatant cynicism in the defence establishment? Should this relatively recent development in the defence establishment be used to argue on the basis of this apparent concern for the environment and from within that logic, that the use of controversial weapons should be stopped?

*Martina Weitsch*

## Integrating Environment, Development and Conflict Prevention

The reality that conflict will inevitably result from climatic change is slowly beginning to seep into public awareness. Increasingly, there are articles and publications highlighting these future links, and on 29 and 30 March, there was a two-day conference in Berlin entitled *Integrating Environment, Development and Conflict Prevention - European and National Approaches and Challenges*. The essential premise of the conference was that environmental change caused by global warming will spark conflict in an array of areas, and because there can be no development without peace, environmental issues must be mainstreamed into European development policy.

As can already be felt, global warming will provoke environmental changes throughout the biosphere, but research shows that the gravest effects will be felt in the arctic region and in Africa. The poorest countries and those least able to adapt will be the hardest hit. The feared future effects of climate change range from conflict over scarce resources like water or arable land, exacerbated by environmental degradation, to conflict to secure vulnerable energy supplies. Unstable regions and large numbers of environmental and economic migrants will have a major impact on European security and certainly all of the Millennium Development Goals will be threatened. Human distress and violent conflict on a large scale will be a direct consequence of environmental change, which we know is fuelled primarily by human activity in industrialised countries. This will have an unequivocal impact on security and stability throughout the world, and thus a successful response to climate change is necessarily also a form of conflict prevention.

The conference began with general discussions of global trends and challenges for Europe, the central focus being the nexus between environment, security and development. There was recognition that a type of cooperative or global security must be developed as a prerequisite for the security of any one country. Michael Müller, the German Parliamentary Secretary of State, described the need for a "world domestic policy" to ensure the sustainability of a globalised world. Precisely because of the high level of global interconnection and interdependence, John Ashton, from the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, stressed the need for European soft power on climate change, including investing much more into exploratory research on climate change and possible alternatives. Europe must make use of its diplomacy and bargaining power to work with third countries to develop sustainable energy policies and to avoid eventual hard-power solutions.

One of the main concerns raised was the difficulty of adopting an integrated approach, both at a national and at a European level. Diverse national and ministerial priorities make the development of an interdisciplinary approach to environment, development and conflict prevention extremely difficult. Anja Köhne, of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), suggested that environmental awareness could be facilitated by looking at how climate change and its effects will directly impact the priorities of different ministries and countries. To truly address climate change a holistic approach is required, and like the Cold War, it needs to be fought on all levels. Understanding climate change as intricately linked to development and security enables a more coherent approach, but



'mainstreaming' climate change (i.e. incorporating it into all projects and goals instead of climate change having its own programmes) also runs the risk of allowing it to slip between the cracks of more clearly defined projects.

Another central question was raised by Alexander Carius, of Adelphi Research: are development ministries really the best for environmental priorities to 'piggy-back' onto? Though the connections between environmental change and development are clearly delineated, it was also recognised that this coupling could be problematic and counter-productive. Development NGOs and ministries focus on the reduction of poverty, often working bilaterally; environmental challenges require a multilateral and regional approach, with a base in conflict prevention. It was suggested that the European Neighbourhood Policy could be used as a platform for a regional approach to development, environment and conflict prevention. An effective means for knowledge transfer on 'green' technology, energy security and climate change is necessary to prevent emerging economies from repeating our mistakes without cementing existing inequalities.

The effect that climate change, access to energy and to other resources has on conflict needs to be examined far more extensively and needs to be a driver of EU policy. There must be a broader interpretation of security, as it is clear that the political weight of climate change varies depending

on how it is classified. The discussion about adaptation to climate change needs to merge with the discourse on conflict prevention, on crisis management, and also with that of cooperation. International cooperation on energy and development is especially difficult because it effectively means a redistribution of power that will affect those who currently hold the lion's share. Nevertheless, there is the possibility for a peace dividend to arise from collaboration on environmental projects, and that must start with preventative cooperation.

In the next hundred years the population is expected to double, and the demand for energy will be five times more than it is currently. We will need a massive shift in our infrastructure to avoid far-reaching conflict motivated by energy competition and environmental degradation. To truly address both the direct and indirect consequences of climate change, we need a new philosophy on the "good life", a new definition of modernity, a massive cultural shift. To this end, there must be an engaged and aware European population, including Quakers and others. This is necessary not only to moderate personal consumption, but to give national politicians the will needed to take on comprehensive energy policies before it is too late. Quakers are known for speaking truth to power and a frank discussion of the true consequences of our dependence on a fossil fuel economy is where that begins.

*Sophie Miller*

## The End of Women's Prisons in the UK?

The QCEA's *Women in Prison* report (2007) found that prison sentences are neither effective nor appropriate for many women offenders. Due to their small numbers, most women in prisons across Europe suffer from being held far from their families. Many women have limited access to services, including education, and often find their specific health care needs unmet.

In the UK, the pressures faced by women in prison have come under recent scrutiny. Six women committed suicide at HMP Styal between August 2002 and August 2003. These deaths led the government to commission a report to examine the situation of women with particular vulnerabilities in the criminal justice system. The Labour peer Baroness Corston conducted the review which was published on 13 March 2007.

The Corston report calls for all women's prisons in the UK to be shut down over the next ten years. Research carried out by Baroness Corston highlighted that prison sentencing is overused and is highly inappropriate for many women - the same conclusions as those found in the QCEA

report. In place of the prisons in operation currently, Ms. Corston recommends that the government should 'announce within six months a clear strategy to replace existing women's prisons with suitable, geographically dispersed, small, multi-functional custodial centres.'

An online petition has been set up by a group of prison reform campaigners. The petition supports the Corston report and seeks to further awareness of the important concerns raised. The petition can be found by following the link at <http://www.womeninprison.org.uk/>

Readers are encouraged to read the report, which is available at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/corston-report/>

Prison is not the right place for damaged and disadvantaged women who pose no risk to the public. Hopefully, this report will contribute to more effective and appropriate responses from governments in the years to come.

*Matt Loffman*



## Martina Weitsch in Serbia and Bosnia

Martina Weitsch, Joint Representative at QCEA, traveled to Serbia and Bosnia in the week after Easter. She was invited by the Quaker Peace and Social Witness (QPSW) representatives there to participate in a seminar for some forty-five peace and human rights activists from all over the region with whom QPSW has worked in partnership over the last fifteen years.

Martina will reflect on her experience of this trip in several articles for *Around Europe* over the next few issues. Contemplation of what it means for peace and human rights activists to work in an area recovering from very recent conflict has raised many questions for her about peacebuilding work at European Union level.

What is awe-inspiring is the single minded determination of local activists, in the face of opposition and real threats to their personal safety, to carry on working for peace. They all know first hand how hard that is, they all know how long it will take, they all realize that peace may not be achieved in their lifetime - and they all grappled



Photo by Martina Weitsch

*Peace activists talking about 'Dealing with the Past', Bosnia, April 2007*

with their sense of what success and failure mean in that context.

The discussions, particularly those in small groups, took place outside, in the brilliant sunshine of that weekend, and the visual image of relaxed conversation over coffee, many cigarettes, and the odd ice-cream, belied the issues being discussed and the difficulties faced by all those involved locally. We have much to learn.

**Martina Weitsch**

### Subscriptions, Associate and Supporting Membership

#### Renewal date:

Please check month/year printed on address label.

#### Cost per year:

- **Around Europe:** post - £16/22 euros (25 euros outside Europe). e-mail - £10/15 euros (please ask for more details)
- **Associate Membership** (includes **Around Europe**, Annual Report, other publications and invitations to conferences) : £32/40 euros (45 euros outside Europe).
- **Supporting Membership:** 95 euros/£65 (please ask for more details)

#### Payment (receipts will only be issued if requested):

**Europe (except Nederland and UK):** in euros, to IBAN: BE68 0001 4998 4834, BIC: BPOTBEB1, or by credit card (quote number, name, expiry date, address; we acknowledge; you are billed in your home currency. Recommended method for those outside Europe.)

**Nederland:** via de Vereniging Vrienden v.d. Quakerraad voor Europese Aangelegenheden: Giro 2538685 VVQREA Helmond.

**UK:** by cheque payable to 'QCEA British Committee' sent to Marilyn Miles, Roseleigh, Northfield Road, Nailsworth, GL6 0NB, Glos., UK.

**Rest of World:** credit card (quote number, name, expiry date, address; we acknowledge; you are billed in your home currency.)



## Around Europe

Quaker Council for European Affairs aisbl  
Square Ambiorix 50, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium  
Editeur responsable : Elizabeth Scurfield  
[www.quaker.org/qcea](http://www.quaker.org/qcea) - [info@qcea.org](mailto:info@qcea.org)  
Périodique mensuel. Bureau de dépôt : Bruxelles X

Belgique-België  
P.P.-P.B.  
Bruxelles X  
BC 8843