



IN BRIEF: NEW ARMS RACE MADNESS

China has launched its first aircraft carrier, fuelling fear of an arms race in the Far East. It is claimed, as always, to be purely for defensive purposes. But, just as we ask about the UK's "defence" spending, who is it defending against? Yes, there are ongoing disputes and rivalries in the area. Nevertheless no one is attacking, threatening to attack, or can conceivably be expected to attack China in the foreseeable future. Who would be stupid enough to attack the world's most populous country, with the largest army? The many millions of Chinese who still live in dire poverty, despite the economic growth of recent years, could find much better uses for the resources devoted to this and other military spending.

Meanwhile, in Geneva, the UN Conference on Disarmament (CD) remains moribund. The prospective fourth special session on

disarmament of the General Assembly, which has been on its agenda since the 1990s, has been mentioned several times recently, including by Sergio Duarte, UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, but there is no political will to implement it. Yet in the context of general disarmament negotiations, the incipient arms race noted above and others around the world could perhaps be prevented from escalating. The peace movement must continue to make the case for disarmament as a crucial element if the quest for peace. The CD should be at the heart of this process, rather than engaging in interminable arguments on procedure. Actions, not words, are needed. It has not been completely idle, however: In the interests of economy, its officers have been instructed to limit their reports to no more than 10,700 words! FJ



UN INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE, 21 September 2011

After the Conflicts - How Can Development Build Peace?

Rt Hon Hilary Benn MP

Shadow Leader of House of Commons; Former Secretary of State for International Development
Friends House, 173 Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ
Wednesday 21 September, 6.30pm - 8.30pm

UNITING FOR PEACE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Arab Spring: Uprising in Middle East & North Africa

The Morality of Intervention, Responsibility to Protect (R2P) and the role of the United Nations

Wednesday 9 November 2011, 6.00pm - 9.00pm

House of Lords, Westminster, London SW1A 0PW, Room 4A

Chair: Lord Frank Judd, Former Minister for International Development

Speakers: Geoffrey Robertson QC, Human Rights lawyer and author
Christopher Black, Lead Defence Counsel, ICTR
Jeremy Gilley, Founder, Peace One Day (TBC)
Tim Wallis, Director, Nonviolent Peaceforce
Vijay Mehta, Chair, Uniting for Peace
Brian Cooper, Co-ordinator, Uniting for Peace

INFORMATION DESK

Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation (p4): www.dhf.uu.se

War on Want (p6): www.waronwant.org

Nonviolent Peaceforce (p8): www.nonviolentpeaceforce.org/fieldwork

Aland Islands Peace Institute (p8): www.peace.aland.fi/

Peace Research Institute Oslo (Norway) (p8): www.prio.no/

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