

# INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN



World without Wars and Violence, International Humanist Organisation

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## Position regarding the rising tensions caused by the Iranian nuclear programme

Since the International Atomic Energy Agency report into the current status of the Iranian nuclear programme<sup>1</sup> was issued in November 2011, Israel, the USA and her allies have been quick to step up their criticism of the Iranian government and their real intentions in the face of Tehran's repeated denial of any attempt to develop nuclear weapons. According to the IAEA report Iran's nuclear programme could have a military purpose.

The discourse around the world is being heated up to the point where an attack on Iran is a distinct possibility. Similarities with the build-up to the war against Iraq in 2003 can be seen. In the latter case the USA and her allies went to war on the basis of a UK government report that was roundly condemned when the invasion failed to find any evidence of a nuclear or any other weapon of mass destruction programme even though the report claimed that such weapons could be launched within 15 minutes of the signal being given by Saddam Hussein. Given the cynical manipulation of western populations by the governments of the UK and the USA in the lead up to the Iraq War, any evidence used to justify a military intervention against Iran should be made available for independent verification. Without this there is no guarantee that what we are being told is not a pack of lies designed to lead an unwilling population into another war that we can ill afford, either in terms of the economic costs or in terms of the human costs.

Now more than ever before, the Middle East is a very unstable region and many analysts warn that an attack on Iran could grow into a serious conflict involving other countries that have nuclear weapons. The consequences of such a conflict are unthinkable.

### Therefore World without Wars and Violence calls on all countries in the world:

- › to not support a military strike against Iran by any means, and to officially denounce any such attack on all possible levels, in the UN and in military alliances, and not to initiate an attack and to not join an attack if started by another country or coalition;
- › to support the establishment of a Middle East Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zone<sup>2</sup>, to help set up a conference on this topic which was agreed at the 2010 NTP Review Conference, to hold it as soon as possible, and to make all diplomatic effort at the conference to bring it to a successful conclusion; ▣



### INDEX

- 1-2 Position regarding the rising tensions caused by the Iranian nuclear programme;  
World without Wars loves "Israel loves Iran"
- 2 News from Argentina and the Czech Republic
- 3 News from Canada and Italy
- 4 News from Greece



## World without Wars loves "Israel loves Iran"

A great new peace campaign has been launched on Facebook by two Israeli artists living in Tel Aviv. Thousands of people around the world are now following this campaign whose idea is very simple:

People in Israel write to Iranians saying that they don't want to fight against them and Iranians respond saying the same.

Expressions of Iranians and Israelis showing their mutual love for one another is typified by the photo of an Israeli man kissing an Iranian woman which has been covered by media around the world.

The opposition to a war between Israel and Iran has also been taken to the streets: a lively crowd of approximately 1000 people, according to estimates by the Israeli media, gathered at Habima Square in Tel Aviv, calling on Prime Minister Netanyahu to talk with Iran instead of starting a war. Others said that an attack on Iran will come directly at the expense of social justice in Israel. The message the demonstration was actually trying to convey was that the majority of the public is against the war.

# News from around the world

## ARGENTINA

### First Recreational and Cultural Day for Peace and Nonviolence, 2012

A first Recreational and Cultural Day 2012 was organised by World without Wars in Tucuman, Argentina. This day marks the start of activities that we will carry out in different squares in our neighbourhood during 2012. With this nonviolent action we will celebrate the new generations. Our work which is disinterested, voluntary and based on solidarity, is dealing with the issue of creating a new consciousness in the direction of the construction of a world in peace and without violence for all human beings. We count on the support of the Department of Sport and Recreation of Tucuman city council.



## CZECH REPUBLIC

Czech base teams of World without Wars and Violence have been recently working on the topic of current tensions between Iran and Israel.

As part of educational activities, World without Wars co-organized a discussion entitled "Is it necessary to prevent Iranian nukes with a military strike?" The event took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2012 at the Law Faculty of Masaryk University in Brno. Speeches were given by four foreign politics analysts and experts on the Middle East, two of them supporting the military strike and two opposing it. The dominant topic of the discussion was if there is enough evidence that Iran is trying to develop a nuclear weapon and if the evidence can serve as a reason for a military strike. The event was attended by a few hundred students. A poll conducted at the end of the discussion showed that most of the audience disagree with a military strike against Iran.



▣ In the Non-Proliferation Treaty from 1970, non-nuclear states agreed not to pursue nuclear weapons in exchange for a promise of nuclear states to rid themselves of their nuclear arsenals. Now, more than 40 years later, the five nuclear states within the NPT still enjoy their privileged status and plan to invest hundreds of billions of dollars in modernisation of their nuclear arsenals in the near future. For every report that the IAEA could write regarding the non-compliance of Iran, there could be five more about the cynical non-compliance of the USA, Russia, the UK, France and China and their commitment to nuclear disarmament. Given this situation there is no wonder that India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea decided to stay out of the NPT and develop their nuclear arsenals.

Until serious talks on nuclear abolition begin, it is likely that international tensions will keep rising hand in hand with nuclear proliferation to other countries, especially those that believe that their best insurance policy for their survival lies in the possession of nuclear weapons.

### With an aspiration to avoid similar crises arising in various regions of the world and to prevent nuclear proliferation World without Wars and Violence calls on:

- all nuclear weapons countries to show good faith in their pursuit of nuclear abolition by giving up first-use policies, by decreasing the significance of nuclear weapons in their military doctrines, by de-alerting their nuclear weapons and by cancelling their plans to invest in modernisation of their nuclear arsenals;
- all countries of the world to support a ban on nuclear weapons, to make diplomatic efforts to commence negotiations of a Nuclear Weapons Convention or a similar treaty or set of treaties that would prohibit the production and use of nuclear weapons and provide mechanisms to abolish existing nuclear arsenals;
- all countries that produce nuclear energy to review their energy policies and explore possibilities of clean and sustainable energy sources that will gradually replace their dependence on nuclear programmes that go hand in hand with nuclear proliferation.

Nuclear weapons and a potential nuclear conflict are undoubtedly among the biggest threats to today's world. An Iran with nuclear weapons would increase this risk even further. World without Wars and Violence struggles against proliferation of nuclear weapons and strives for progressive nuclear abolition. History has shown us that the best way to disarmament comes through diplomacy rather than military intervention.

(1) <http://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/265501/iaea-iran-report-nov-2011.pdf>

(2) Including but not restricted to nuclear, biological and chemical weapons

# News from around the world

## CANADA

The non-violent challenge for students, “Run This Way” was presented during the Outaouais book fair in Canada on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. The “Run This Way” team shared a kiosk with the French Publisher “Editions References” who officially launched Silo’s last book, “Psychology Notes”. They met students, kids and parents. For the occasion, a collection of ‘Education for Nonviolence’ booklets was launched. The booklets are aimed for elementary and high schools students, parents and teachers.

A photo exhibition was organized which presented different moments of the World March for Peace and Nonviolence. Several students from various elementary schools and high schools participated in a workshop on the geography of peace and nonviolence. An informative booklet presenting the best moments of the World March for Peace and Nonviolence was presented to students and the general public. It presents several important concepts and values, a colour world map showing the World March route, and a glossary which allows students to study some of the vocabulary while gaining better insight into different issues such as: active nonviolence, war, humanism, treaties of non-aggression and the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. The non-violent challenge, “Run This Way”, also launched a booklet presenting the author Silo. Silo was a leader in Active Nonviolence and the humanist movement. He helped by opening new paths to the process of liberation and to comprehend the present moment and crisis. Silo passed away in 2010, but his work is still being discovered by new generations searching for meaning and ways to act in the world other than through manipulation and individualism.



## ITALY



### Milan – “We are all Greeks”

February 18<sup>th</sup>, International Day of Mobilization | Members of World without Wars and Violence, the Humanist Party, the Community for Human Development, Convergence of Cultures and Silo’s Message organized a demonstration in the central square of Milan with the title “We are all Greeks”, in solidarity with the people of Greece affected by the monstrous and destructive measures approved by the Greek Parliament with the imposition of the European Commission, the European Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The protesters also denounced the situation that other European countries are going to be experiencing in a short time.

Members of the Greek community in Milan, informed by Facebook, participated in the initiative.

### Rome – Nonviolence Award 2012

On March 15<sup>th</sup> in the Province of Rome, the initiative “Nonviolence Award 2012”, launched by World Without Wars and Violence, Greenpeace and Convergence of Cultures has started. It will culminate on October 2<sup>nd</sup>, International Day of Nonviolence.

The award, presented in the Di Liegro Hall, will have a category dedicated to associations, schools and individuals who can document their training projects or resolution of conflicts based on nonviolence as a methodology of action and a photographic category entitled Gandhi.

In the website [www.premiodelanonviolenza.it](http://www.premiodelanonviolenza.it) it will be possible to vote for projects and photos during the entire month of September in order to choose the winners that will be awarded on October 2<sup>nd</sup>.

There was also an interview on a local TV.

### Milan – Documentary “The Economics of Happiness”

On March 16<sup>th</sup>, the base team “1100pazzi” showed the documentary “The Economics of Happiness” by Helena Norbert, which illustrates—in the name of respect for the man—the most environmentally sustainable way to eradicate the dramatic consequences of frenzied capitalism.

The event was attended by some members of other associations such as Zeitgeist, SCEC Project, Gas, Decrease. The debate revealed a number of alternative proposals on how to eliminate the profit system, replace it with another one based on resources, and find alternative currencies like the SCEC and multilateral barter.

# News from around the world

## GREECE

### Through the nightmare I have a dream

After the end of the World Forum for Peace and Nonviolence in November, in Heraklion, Crete, a small group of people came together and organized a network called "Through the nightmare I have a dream". The idea of this network is to create an open platform for different kinds of nonviolent activities by individuals or organized groups that will permit them to promote their activity, ending up with a united, confronting and creative message in front of the economic, psychological and physical violence of the Greek regime.

The aim of the network can be synthesized in 3 points: a) unite existing activities b) give a new nonviolent revolutionary background to activities that are already in process and wish to have a more clear orientation and c) create new activities in this direction.

The whole initiative is at the very beginning and for the moment has focused on the city of Heraklion with the aim to spread gradually all over Greece. For the moment the new platform has initiated the following actions:

- › In cooperation with the Heraklion Chess Club we have made a series of chess and non chess events from the 3<sup>rd</sup> till the 8<sup>th</sup> of January during the "Grand Prix Chess Festival", mainly orientated towards children with the general concept of "think better to have a better world".
- › In the youth festival organized by different student groups at the University of Heraklion (photographic, cinematographic, astronomy, dance, computer, music, farming etc.) the idea of the network was presented. The next step is the organization of a festival under the title "Through the nightmare I have a dream" giving a way out and creative responses to today's crisis through all these different ways of expression.
- › Two new networks for education and nonviolence, one for secondary schools and one for universities are now starting to develop.
- › Gathering information for activities all over the city that have the same direction as the network. All these activities, together with new ones that are in the process, will be presented to the website that will work like the activist portal to the city.



### Photo Competition "Peace Is"

The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the international photo competition Peace is underway! It started on March 1<sup>st</sup> and participants from all parts of the world can submit their photos until August 31<sup>st</sup>.

The subject of this edition is "Peace Is – Peace is NOT", according to which each participant can submit between 1 and 4 pairs of photos, expressing what is and what is not peace for them, while emphasizing the contradictions of the present world social conditions.

The pairs of photos must be submitted at [www.eirinieinai.gr](http://www.eirinieinai.gr).

There are 2 categories: adults, and students up to 18 years of age. The competition is organized by World without Wars members from Greece.



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