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Voice No 26 – Mar 2019

For the Independent & Peaceful Australia Network

www.ipan.org.au

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* Beyond War - Education and Direct Action for a Peaceful World

* Rapid Public Response Arrangements to any imminent major military conflict, invasion or war

COMING EVENTS

US could ask Australia to host nuclear missiles

17th Jan 2019 by Prof Hugh White



What would we say if Washington asked to base nuclear-armed missiles, aimed at China, on Australian territory? It's not an entirely hypothetical question. Amid all the talk of a new cold war with China, the strategic logic of America's plans to withdraw from the

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty plainly suggests that such a request is a real possibility.

If the request comes—and it could come quite soon—Australia would face a truly momentous choice. If we agreed, our relations with China would face a crisis far, far worse than the recent chill from which the government has been working so hard to extract us. To refuse would be to abandon our ally in what everyone in Washington now sees as the decisive strategic contest of our time. Either way, Canberra's fragile effort to avoid taking sides in the epic contest over the future of Asia would be smashed.

READ ON

ABC News: 20th Feb 2019

Australian Government under fire over export of weapons system to war crime-accused Saudi Arabia



PHOTO: Oshkosh Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV) fitted with the EOS R400 Dual RWS with M230LF 30mm cannon and 7.62mm machine gun. (EOS)

The Federal Government is under fire for granting a licence to a Canberra company exporting a weapons system destined for Saudi Arabia, a country plagued by allegations of human rights atrocities committed as part of the controversial conflict in neighbouring Yemen.

- According to documents seen by the ABC, Australian weapons manufacturer EOS has struck a deal which will see its sophisticated weapons mounts supplied to Saudi Arabia

The ABC revealed this morning the Australian Government is providing tens of millions of dollars to Electro Optic Systems (EOS), which has designed a remotely operated vehicle-mounted platform that holds cannons, machine guns and missile launchers.

The ABC has seen confidential EOS board minutes which describe signing a Letter of Intent (LOI) for the sale of 500 remote weapons systems (RWS) units destined for the Saudi Ministry of Interior.

EOS is jointly owned by US weapons manufacturer Northrop Grumman, the fifth largest weapons trader in the world reporting revenues in excess of \$30 billion in 2018.



Media Release- 20th Feb 2019

IPAN Statement- Oppose weapons export & subsidisation by the Australian Government

The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) representing a cross section of community organisations across Australia opposes the government decision to fund and promote the export of weapons.

There is nothing admirable about aspiring to be in the world's top 10 arms exporters.

In January 2018, a decision to allocate \$3.8bn to support manufacturers of military equipment to export their products through EFIC (Export Finance and Insurance Corporation) was made by the Government. This led to expressions of disgust from the members of IPAN and many other community organisations including faith communities.

The Australian Stock Exchange listed company, Electro Optic Systems, has received more than \$30Million but that is just 1% of the total offered. Dozens more deals are being done.

Weapons technology including artificial intelligence is being subsidised by Australians and heading to Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. Both are involved in extraordinary abuses in Yemen, currently the "worst humanitarian crisis in the world".



PHOTO: A young survivor is carried away from the site of a Saudi-led air strike that killed eight of her family members in Yemen in 2017. (Reuters: Khaled Abdullah)

The Australian Government is subsidising and encouraging arms sales to Saudi Arabia which is prosecuting a war against the people of Yemen.

This must be stopped !

Please sign the petition below and please pass on to individuals, organisations and via facebook to help get thousands of signatures on this petition.

Thank you.

[SIGN PETITION](#)

Selling weapons to Saudi Arabia - your taxes at work.

by Margaret Beavis

There was a time when Australia championed the Arms Trade Treaty and was not spending billions subsidising weapons manufacturers. Currently we have a specific ministry promoting weapons sales, with overblown claims about employment. Concerns about the undue influence of the arms industry must be addressed.

How many Yemeni children have to die from the famine, before Australia stops selling weapons to the Saudis, who are coordinating the blockade that is causing mass starvation?

In November last year Save the Children reported that 85,000 children have died from acute malnutrition, and last week the UN reports the situation has worsened.

Not only does the Australian government boast of its weapons deals with Saudi Arabia, but also it has emerged the Australian government is heavily subsidising companies involved in these sales. For example, Electro Optic Systems, which makes weaponry enables remote operation of cannon, machine guns and missile launchers, received \$36 million dollars of taxpayer funds.

READ ON

ABC News Wed 27th Feb 2019

Combat drones capable of deadly force set to join Australian military arsenal



A large drone designed for electronic warfare, which could eventually carry bombs, will be publicly unveiled today after being secretly developed with the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).

The unmanned system is roughly the size of a traditional jet fighter and was quietly developed in Brisbane by aerospace giant Boeing, in collaboration with the RAAF and the Defence Department.

The cost is unknown.

Last year former prime minister Malcolm Turnbull also announced

Australia would purchase six American-made unmanned Triton spy planes, which do not carry weapons, at a cost of \$7 billion.

Date Claimer!!!

Australia at the crossroads:

Time for an independent foreign policy

National IPAN Conference

Darwin, August 2nd – 4th, 2019



Topics Addressed include:

- US/China contention risking war in the South China Sea
- Ending US Marines in Darwin & the Force Posture Agreement
- Hosting of US facilities on Australian territory such as Pine Gap and North West Cape
- Millions of refugees fleeing the wars that Australia has supported and participated in
- Environmental damage from war and military activities
- Asia Pacific regional struggles against foreign bases
- Costs of war and military spending versus socially useful spending
- Militarisation of society, universities and manufacturing

Booking details to be announced

For more information contact IPAN at ipan.australia@gmail.com or Annette on 0431597256 or Bevan 0418697528

Join us in Darwin- Australian and International speakers-workshops for action
An independent and self-reliant Australian foreign policy IS possible

This year's IPAN conference is being held in Darwin as it is the centre for the most recent establishment of a foreign troop presence in Australia with the numbers of US Marines planned to rise to 2,500 and an undeclared strength of US air-force at Tindal and Darwin and US naval forces using Darwin Harbour.

The conference is being held in the ominous shadow of contention in our region between the US and China which might break out into hostilities at any time; and Australia is currently joined militarily 'at the hip' with the US military and their objectives.

Never has there been a more important time for Australia to pursue an

independent foreign policy for the economic well being and national security of the Australian people and that of our neighbours.

Let's keep Australia out of US wars !

Topic areas include:

- * Why Australia needs an Independent Foreign Policy
- * The extent of foreign military facilities in Australia
- * The impact of militarism on the environment
- * The costs of militarism to Australians

Speakers include international and Australian personalities such as Lisa Natividad from Guam, Richard Tanter, Robin Taubenfeld (FOE) and contributions over the internet from John Pilger and Abby Martin and Mike Prysner.

Click on **BOOKINGS**

General enquiries: Annette on 0431 597 256 or Bevan on 0418 697 528

ABC News

PFAS investigation at Darwin Airport finds environmental precautions 'disregarded'



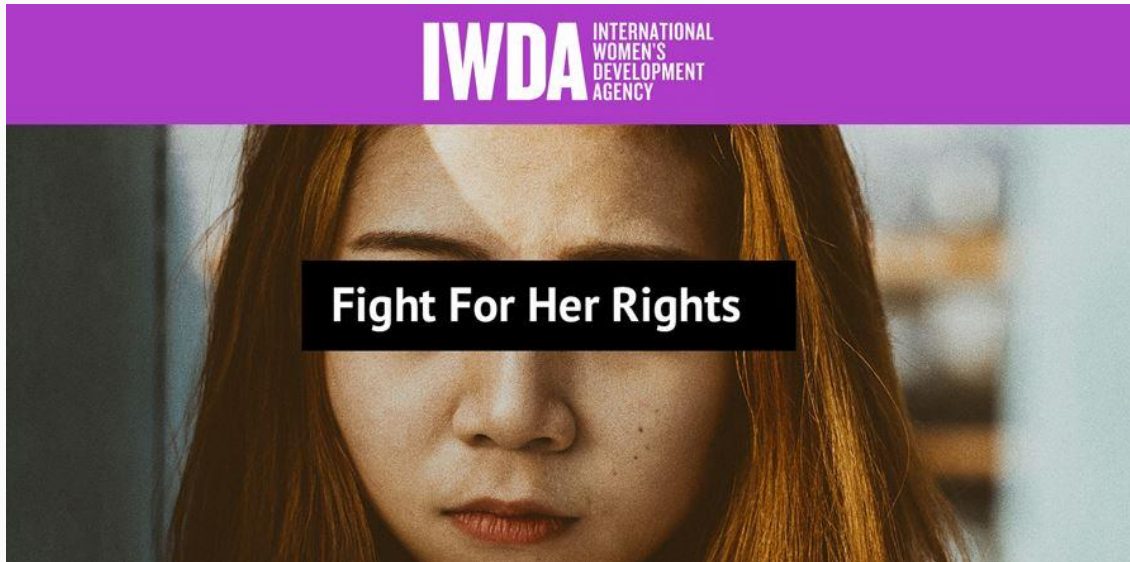
PHOTO Testing confirmed PFAS chemicals have made their way into the waterways around Darwin Airport and the RAAF base.

The government-owned firefighting service at Darwin Airport "disregarded" directives designed to prevent the release of potentially toxic PFAS chemicals into nearby waterways, an investigation has found.

Key points:

- The investigation was sparked by whistleblower allegations made by a former Darwin Airport firefighter
- It found Airservices' Darwin unit "failed to comply" with measures designed to manage PFAS chemicals on-site

- A spokesman for Airservices said the company "takes its environmental management responsibilities very seriously"



International Women's Day- March 8th

Petition: Stop domestic violence

Next Friday is International Woman's Day – the day when the world stands together for the rights of women and girls.

So far, our Fight For Her Rights petition has just passed 17,500 signatures. But today, we need your help...

Please share the petition now to help us reach our goal of 25,000 signatures to show the world that Australians believe NO man has the right to violence.

Because every 10 minutes somewhere in the world, a woman is murdered by her partner or a family member.

Please **share the petition on Facebook**

With acknowledgement to Pearls and Irritations: 14th Feb 2019

The US shouldn't go to war with China over Taiwan—and nor should Australia

by Prof Hugh White

Paul Dibb, in his [recent Strategist post](#), writes that America's strategic position in Asia would be fatally undermined if it didn't go to war with China if China attacked Taiwan, and that Australia's alliance with America would be fatally undermined if we didn't then go to war with China too. The conclusion he draws is that, in the event of an unprovoked Chinese attack on Taiwan, America should go to war with China, and so should Australia.

I think Dibb's premises are correct, but his conclusion is wrong. Failing to come to Taiwan's aid would seriously weaken and perhaps destroy America's position in Asia, and our alliance with America would be seriously weakened if not destroyed if we failed to support the US. But it doesn't follow that either America or Australia should therefore go to war with China to defend Taiwan.

READ ON

With acknowledgements to Pearls and Irritations - 20th Feb 2019

The Debate About Anzus and the Defence of Taiwan.

by Henry Reynolds

Last week Pearls and Irritations printed spirited contributions by Hugh White and Cavan Hogue about the future of Anzus and the American Alliance. They were both responding to an earlier paper in The Strategist, the in-house journal of the Australian Strategic Policy Institute, by Paul Dibb entitled "Australia and the Taiwan contingency."

As a result we should be both alarmed and pleased. Alarmed because Dibb writes with admirable clarity about, not just the need, but the necessity of following the Americans into any future conflict with China over the status of Taiwan even if no other American allies follow

along the same disastrous path. Is this the common view among key decision makers in Canberra? Is this the advice given to government? Is this what the Americans are told sotto voce in secret briefings? So yes we should be alarmed.

READ ON

Was the failure of the US-North Korea Summit talks caused by deliberate action of US National Security Advisor John Bolton ? Ex-Australian diplomat Richard Broinowski suggests so.

Former Australian Ambassador to South Korea Richard Broinowski says he has intelligence that national security advisor John Bolton stifled the summit – that was meant to focus on North Korea eventually dismantling its nuclear weapons – by adding an extra demand to negotiations.....“He said to Trump that ‘you should not just insist on them abolishing their whole nuclear arsenal, but getting rid of their biological and chemical warfare arsenal as well. According to Australian diplomatic sources, Donald Trump was said to be “unprepared” for such a demand, but put it to Kim Jong-un nonetheless. “But Kim was even less prepared, and Kim just said 'we can't talk about that, that's not on the agenda’. And Trump peremptorily stopped the discussion at that point. They didn’t even get to substantive talks,” Mr Broinowski added. North Korea had put that in exchange for partial lifting of sanctions it would dismantle its Yongbyon nuclear reactor and was ready to pledge in writing to permanently end nuclear and long-range missile tests.

86% of Venezuelans oppose US military intervention, 81% against US economic sanctions imposed in Venezuela- local polling shows



According to a study conducted in early January 2019 by the local polling firm Hinterlaces, 86 percent of Venezuelans would disagree with international military intervention. And 81 percent oppose the US sanctions that have gravely hurt the South American nation's economy.

This poll was conducted before the Donald Trump administration launched a political coup in Venezuela on January 23, attempting to replace its government with a right-wing opposition that has made it clear that it seeks to impose neoliberal capitalist economic policies.

Hinterlaces is led by the independent pollster Oscar Schemel, who has experience studying numerous elections in Venezuela and has a pro-business perspective.

Sydney and Brisbane protests calling for US hands off Venezuela



Aid trucks to Venezuela set on fire by provocateurs of US-supported opposition not by Venezuelan National Guard as claimed by the western pro -US press



Provocateur throws Molotov cocktail at aid trucks which were subsequently set alight.

The video in this article shows the sequence

View

**UN Court ruling concluded that the UK had no
rightful sovereignty over the Chagos islands;
their leasing to the US Defence Department was,
therefore, invalid**

by Richard Stone

A recent United Nations International Court of Justice legal ruling about the sovereignty of the Chagos Islands has set alarm bells ringing in US-led centres of defence and security provision with allies.

The legal decision concluded the UK had no rightful sovereignty over the islands; their leasing to the US Defence Department was, therefore, invalid.

The Chagos Islands, however, include Diego Garcia, which has been used by the US since 1973 for strategically-placed intelligence facilities linked to the Southern Ocean Defence Plan, covering the South Atlantic and Indian Ocean.

It remains a matter of interest, therefore, how US-led western allies respond to the legal verdict.

READ ON



With your help, our partners are out and about. PeaceBus has been activating the summer in the southern states. #WagePeace assisted associates with digital campaigning. Pasifika has continued to train leaders in the volatile and unrelenting context of West Papua. **A Peaceable Sovereignty** supported First Nations connection to Country near the Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area. We hope you will read these stories and be inspired. Your contributions go a long way directly supporting activists on the ground.

Margaret Pestorius

For our web site [VIEW](#)



Pax Christi
Scholarships
to Cover Conference
Registration Fee for
A Just and
Ecologically

**Sustainable Peace,
Melbourne, 23-24 April
2019**

For details of eligibility for a scholarship [READ ON](#)

For application form [CLICK](#)



Ngara welcomes John Pilger Wednesday 10 April, 2019



Ngara Institute has announced that renowned activist, journalist and film maker John Pilger will speak at Cavanbah Byron Sports Centre at 7 pm on 10th April, 2019: Breaking the silence: Q & A with John Pilger on propaganda inside the Australian bubble: false enemies, real threats and heroes unsung.

Book now: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/an-evening-with-renowned-author-journalist-documentary-maker-john-pilger-tickets-57263066373>

**PALM SUNDAY RALLY
FOR PEACE AND REFUGEES**

IT'S TIME.



**JUSTICE
FOR
REFUGEES
PEACE NOT WAR
BRING THEM HERE**

**2PM SUNDAY 14TH APRIL
SPEAKERS' CORNER - OUTSIDE PARLIAMENT
END OF GEORGE ST, BRISBANE CBD**

SEE FB EVENT 'PALM SUNDAY RALLY FOR PEACE AND REFUGEES' FOR LIST OF ENDORSING ORGANISATIONS



RAPID Public Response Arrangements to any imminent major military conflict, invasion or war

In the event of an imminent major military conflict, military invasion or war actually breaking out, IPAN organisations in the following states, urge everyone to rally :

In Melbourne, outside the State Library in Swanston St, Melbourne, from 5pm that evening- bring banners and placards - family and

friends

In Adelaide, on Parliament Steps at 4.30 pm that evening – bring banners and placards – family and friends.

In Newcastle, at the Clocktower, Hamilton, 4.30pm that evening- bring banners and placards and tell family and friends

In Canberra, on the median strip at the corner of London Circuit and Northbourne Ave.

COMING EVENTS SUMMARY:

Hobart: Friday, 8th March, 12 for 12.30-2pm, WILPF (Tas) celebrating International Women's Day at Parliament House, Hobart with Ms Chris Henderson, National President of WILPF (Aust.) speaking on the critical changes occurring in relation to peace and freedom; and exciting action being taken at national and international levels.

Contact: Linley Grant: mgr70303@bigpond.net.au

Adelaide: Waging Peace Exhibition: November 2018 – April 2019- FREE at UNISA's MOD Museum, North Terrace adjacent Morphett Street Bridge, Adelaide: Tue-Thu: 12pm 'til 6pm; Fri: 12pm 'til 8pm; Sat-Sun (public holidays): 10am 'til 4pm; Mon: Closed

Brisbane: UAW's International Women's Day Dinner, Friday 8th March, 2019, 6pm for 6.30pm at Queensland Council of Unions Building, Level 2 at 16 Peel St, South Brisbane: Guest Speaker: Jo-Anne Bragg, CEO, Environmental Defenders Office.

Mullumbimby: Ngara Story Lovers: Sunday, March 10, 4.00pm-5.30pm, Mullum ex-servicemens club: Hear tales from Athol Compton, Michael Pelmore, Gill Lomath, Dave Rawlins and Jenni Cargill.

Melbourne: Melbourne Unitarian Church on Sunday 17 March at 11am, 110 Grey Street, East Melbourne, 3002: Forum: Australia needs a Bill of Rights: *"Australia is the only Western liberal democracy that does not have a Bill of Rights"*. This event is supported by a range of community, legal and religious organisations. Speakers include Prof. Rob Watts (Professor of Social Policy RMIT); Prof. Gillian Triggs (former President of the Australian Human Rights Commission) and Julian Burnside QC. Following our speakers, workshops will facilitate community participation.

Lunch provided. For catering purposes, please RSVP
admin@melbourneunitarian.org.au

Adelaide: IPAN (SA) Annual General Meeting: 6pm - Wednesday 20 March 2019, 25 Murray Street, North Adelaide.

Mullumbimby: Politics in the Pub: Wednesday, 27th March, 7.00 - 8.30pm, Court House Hotel; "The way of the reformer is hard: Gough Whitlam's activist government, its obstruction and dismissal, lessons for today".

Newcastle: Hunter Peace Group is screening: the documentary Venezuela- the shadow agenda, introduced by Dr Steve O'Brien. Friday 29th March, 2019 at 6.30pm, 3rd Floor Newcastle Trades Hall.

Contact Lynda on 02 4952 9346

Byron Shire: Ngara Institute, the People's Think Tank, is announcing that outspoken activist and renowned film maker and journalist, John Pilger at Cavanbah Byron Sports Centre at 7pm on 10th April, 2019. Breaking the silence: Q & A with John Pilger on propaganda inside the Australian bubble: false enemies, real threats and heroes unsung”.

BOOK NOW <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/an-evening-with-renowned-author-journalist-documentary-maker-john-pilger-tickets-57263066373>

Brisbane: Palm Sunday Rally for Peace & Refugees- **Its Time:** 2 pm, Sunday 14th April, Speaker's corner, outside parliament, end of George St, Brisbane CBD. Justice for Refugees; Peace not war; Bring them here.

Melbourne: Fair Go for all.. Conference, Wednesday 10th July 2019 9:00 – 4:00pm, Coburg Greek Orthodox Church, Community Hall, 23-29 Victoria Street, Coburg 3056. Come and discuss what's gone wrong, what sort of 'welfare' services and society we want and how we can get there.

Lead speaker: Rob Watts, Professor of Social Policy, RMIT University.

All states and territories: PLAN NOW for delegates to attend :
IPAN National Conference: Darwin, Charles Darwin University, Casuarina Campus, 2-4th August 2019

"Australia at the cross-roads- time for an independent foreign policy"

For more events see the IPAN website; www.ipan.org.au

Voice is produced and edited by the Media Group of the IPAN co-ordinating committee. It is produced for IPAN affiliates to:

- *provide a medium for communication of their campaigns and activities*
- *provide a medium for discussion of issues central to IPAN's objectives*
- *provide affiliates with details of co-ordinating committee activities, media releases, lobbying activities and other actions taken on behalf of IPAN*
- * provide information on issues/events relating to IPAN's objectives*

Contributions to Voice, in information or comment, should be emailed to :

ipan.australia@gmail.com and limited, if possible to 200 words.

The Media Group takes editorial responsibility for choice of content and is responsible to the IPAN co-ordinating committee. **Disclaimer:** Voice publishes a range of articles which reflect the broad movement for an independent and peaceful Australia but not all articles will necessarily reflect IPAN's position."

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