

NO War Fair! NO APDSE! YES to Peace!

APDSE – The Asia-Pacific Death and Suffering Exhibition

An arms fair — the Asia-Pacific Defence and Security Exhibition (APDSE) — is due to open in Adelaide on 11 November 2008.

As we commemorate “the war to end all wars”, the arms industry will mark the 90th Remembrance Day by opening a “business-as-usual” trade fair. With the strong backing of the South Australian government, APDSE will promote the very weapons and technology that perpetuate warfare. It will make armed conflict, violence and suffering more likely by exhibiting and legitimising weapons as a commodity to be bought and sold for commercial gain. New weapons displayed at APDSE will inevitably lead to newer weapons to counteract them.

In 2007, US\$ 1,339 billion was used on military spending – the equivalent of 600 years of the UN’s budget. Australia’s military spending is over AUD\$ 62 million per day. These extraordinary expenditures on war and preparations for war divert the financial, human, technological and natural resources needed to resolve our real threats, such as poverty, hunger, climate change, and environmental degradation.

Rather than addressing these threats, weapons and wars aggravate them. War displaces millions of people, consumes vast resources and destroys our environment.

APDSE will not promote “Defence and Security”, but rather corporate profit at the expense of security. It will be a “Death and Suffering” exhibition.

In 1991 there was strong public outcry against AIDEX, the Australian International Defence Equipment Exhibition, in Canberra, which ensured that it was not repeated. APDSE represents the same wasteful trade in death and destruction.

The twentieth century saw two world wars, and the refinement of high technology industrialised warfare. Twentieth century wars caused the deaths of many millions of human beings, soldiers and civilians alike, and the suffering of millions of others. Let us remember the human cost of war, and turn our hearts and minds to preventing it, not promoting it.

We, the undersigned organisations and individuals, call on:

The South Australian Government to cancel APDSE and all future arms exhibitions, and to seek economic security through industries that promote life, not death;

The Australian Government to withdraw support from APDSE and all future arms exhibitions, and to support industries that promote sustainability and human security;

All foreign governments, especially those in our region, to boycott APDSE.