

NO War Fair! NO APDSE! YES to Peace!

APDSE – The Asia-Pacific Death and Suffering Exhibition

The campaign to stop the 2008 APDSE arms fair is a success!

An arms fair—the Asia-Pacific Defence and Security Exhibition (APDSE) — was due to open in Adelaide on 11 November 2008. The organisers have cancelled this arms fair claiming they expected public protests in opposition to this arms fair to be too overwhelming. This is a major victory for all Australians committed to peace. We now have the opportunity to ensure Australia never plays host to such arms fairs that promote and profit from war and suffering.

As we commemorate “the war to end all wars”, the arms industry planned to mark the 90th Remembrance Day with the world’s largest arms dealers in a “business-as-usual” trade fair. With the strong backing of the South Australian government, APDSE promoted the very weapons and technology that perpetuate, and profit from, warfare. New weapons displayed at APDSE would inevitably lead to newer weapons that make conflict, violence and suffering more likely.

The campaign to stop planned APDSE arms fair in 2008 is a success! We must now focus on the planned 2010 and 2012 APDSE arms fairs that profit from the production and use of weapons of war through which unacceptable and irreparable destruction is done to life, human rights, communities and the environment on which all life depends.

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.

Arms fairs such as APDSE do not promote “Defence and Security”, but rather corporate profit at the expense of security. They are nothing more than “Death and Suffering” exhibitions.

In 1991 there was strong public outcry against AIDEX, the Australian International Defence Equipment Exhibition, in Canberra, which ensured that it was not repeated. In 2008 APDSE has been cancelled due to public opposition - we can make sure Australia never again takes part in this 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 true human and environmental 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 and all state Governments withdraw support from 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 arms fairs.

Supported by these civil society organisations:

1. Adelaide Cross Campus Collective
2. Anti-Nuclear Alliance of W.A. (ANAWA)
3. Architects for Peace, Australia
4. Arid Lands Environment Centre (ALEC)
5. Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition
6. Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF)
7. Australian Peace Committee
8. Australian Student Environment Network (ASEN)
9. Blue Paper Project
10. Campaign Against Arms Trade, United Kingdom
11. Campaign for International Co-operation and Disarmament.
12. Commission for Mission, Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, Uniting Church in Australia
13. Communist Party of Australia
14. Corporate Watch, Australia
15. Doctors for the Environment Australia Inc.
16. Friends of the Earth Australia
17. Greenpeace Australia, Asia Pacific
18. International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.
19. Japanese for Peace
20. Locals Into Victoria's Environment (LIVE)
21. Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)
22. Ozpeace
23. Pace e Bene Australia
24. Pax Christi Victoria
25. Peace Organisation of Australia
26. Presentation Sisters, Wagga
27. Psychologists for Peace
28. Rail Division, Rail Train and Bus Union, Victoria.
29. Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in Australia
30. South Australian Friends' Regional Meeting of Quakers
31. Spirit of Eureka
32. Sydney Peace & Justice Coalition
33. The Australian Federation of University Women
34. War Resisters International, Australia
35. Women in Black, Adelaide
36. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Australia)