

August 2021

KINGSTON PEACE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF KINGSTON PEACE COUNCIL /
CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

<http://kpc.gn.apc.org> www.facebook.com/kingstonpeace



Hiroshima events

Friday 6 August, Kingston

12 to 1pm, near Bentalls Centre entrance or side of Barclays Bank

We shall be repeating last year's successful vigil with boards and leaflets in the town centre. Please join us there.

8.15pm Canbury Gdns, Kingston

We shall gather by the river in Canbury Gardens (near the bandstand) for a short candlelit commemoration. The Mayor, Cllr Sushila Abraham, and her husband will attend our event. Please bring white flowers to float on the river, plus lanterns to line the path. If desired bring night-lights on biodegradable items such as half-grapefruit skins to float on the river.

If you are unable to attend our midday event, **London CND** are organising a Hiroshima commemoration event in **Tavistock Square, London**, on 6 August from 12 to 1pm. It will be co-hosted by Catherine West MP and London CND co-chair Hannah Kemp-Welsh, with speakers: Sabrina Francis, Mayor of Camden; Benali Hamdache, Green Party; Carol Turner, London CND-co chair; and Jeremy Corbyn MP (tbc).

There will also be a cultural programme including: Rev Nagase, chant and drumming; Hugh Goodacre, song and acoustic guitar; and the Raised Voices choir.

Alternatively, you will be able

Fairs and sales

Mon 30 Aug, 11am to 4pm

On the August bank holiday Carshalton Fair has been cancelled, but Maggie will hold a sale in her garage in Lower Ham Road, KT2 5BD (rear of 289 Richmond Road, Kingston KT2 5DJ).

Sat 11 Sept, 11am to 4pm

Ham Fair will go ahead, subject to final permission from Richmond Council, but in a much reduced and restricted form. KPC has a stall reserved.

Please contact Maggie on 020 8549 0086 or email: Maggie@galdor.co.uk if you can help with either event.

to attend this event online – see <https://www.londoncnd.org/>

Follow the same link to see details of a fast and days of action, organised by Trident Ploughshares from 6-9 August, to protest at the increasing dangers of another nuclear war and to raise public awareness of these dangers. With none of the nine nuclear weapons states having agreed to abide by the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, you are

/continued on page 2



In this Issue:- Page 2 Hiroshima events contd.; Reporting the government to the UN; Stop the Arms Fair
Page 3 Open Licenses: UK arms sales; Stop the Arms Fair contd. Page 4 Stop Arming Israel; Actions for
Palestine Page 5 KCRS AGM report; Kill the Bill Page 6 Diary Dates; Resumption of KPC meetings

Hiroshima events

Continued from page 1

invited to join in this programme of daily vigils, actions, rallies and commemorative events, in the Embankment Gardens (directly behind the Ministry of Defence, off Horse Guards Avenue) and in Whitehall.

Why we remember Hiroshima & Nagasaki

In 1945, the United States Air Force dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima, on 6th August, and then Nagasaki, on 9th August, with tragic and devastating consequences. Hundreds of thousands of people died, many instantaneously, others soon after from burns and shock, and yet more from the impact of radiation in the months and years that followed. By 1950, an estimated 340,000 people had died as a result of the two bombs.

Over the years we have gathered together to remember these horrific events, in the hope that through our campaigns the disastrous effects of the use of nuclear weapons will never be repeated.

However, 76 years on 13,000 nuclear weapons still threaten our survival, even though the majority of people in the world and their governments support an international ban on their development and use. Climate change and the global pandemic Covid-19 are just two examples of the actual threats we face as an international community today. We should be focusing on working together to deal with these issues, rather than spending billions on weapons of mass destruction.

Online exhibition

CND has an excellent online exhibition on the history of the development of the bomb and its dropping on Japan, with artefacts, testimony and art provided by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, and a reading list for obtaining further information.

You can visit it at <https://cnduk.org/hiroshima-and-nagasaki-cnd-exhibition-introduction/>

Reporting the government to the United Nations

CND is reporting the UK government to the United Nations for breaking international law.

The UK government has announced it will increase the number of nuclear warheads in its arsenal for the first time since the Cold War. A legal opinion commissioned by CND has confirmed this is a breach of international law.

As a signatory to the UN's nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the UK has committed to working towards disarmament. Instead, it is going the other way and getting more nuclear weapons, and during a pandemic no less!

CND is reporting the UK to the President-designate of the upcoming NPT Review Conference – a significant international summit to monitor progress, or lack thereof, of the treaty.

Visit our stall (see back page for dates) to sign the petition, or sign online at

<https://cnd.eaction.org.uk/ReportUKNPT>

CND are hoping to collect thousands of signatures to back their cause. The report and the signatures collected will be presented to the President-designate ahead of the NPT Review Conference, which is expected to take place in January 2022.

Stop The Arms Fair

Every two years, the global arms trade comes to the Excel Centre in London in the form of the Defence and Security Equipment International (DSEI), one of the world's largest arms fairs.

It returns in September 2021. More than 1,000 arms companies plan to set up shop, marketing their ware to more than 30,000 attendees from around the world. This is where those who profit from war, repression and injustice do business. This is where we can stop them.

The arms fair runs from 14 to 17 September, and a programme of resistance is planned from 6 to 14 Sept, in the days before it opens, when equipment will be being delivered. (The Excel Centre is reached via Prince Regent or Royal Victoria Stations on the DLR.)

Each day will be themed (Palestine Solidarity, Climate Justice, Festival of Resistance, Migration and Borders and more) with talks, music, art, actions and

/continued on page 3

Open Licenses: Hiding the true scale of UK arms sales

As posted on Campaign Against Arm Trade's website

What is the total value of the UK arms trade? How much profit does the UK make selling weapons around the world each year to different countries? The UK government claims to have the most 'rigorous and robust' arms export controls in the world, but the truth is, it does not record enough information on arms sales to answer even these basic questions.

When media reports quote UK arms sales, they usually refer to arms licensed through a 'Single' Licence, which allows a company to export a fixed amount of specific equipment to one country, for two years. However, companies that register and fulfil certain conditions can qualify for exports under the 'Open Licence' system, which gives prior approval to export an unlimited amount of equipment from a range of categories, often to a long list of countries, and the license is valid indefinitely. **With no information on the specific quantity or cost of equipment exported, or on the companies involved, Open Licenses obscure the reality of UK arms sales, and prevent any meaningful scrutiny of the UK's involvement in arming violence around the world.**

In fact, CAAT estimates that **the majority of arms exports licensed by the UK government are likely to be supplied via these secretive licences**, which means official figures on UK arms exports only tell part of the story.

For example, since the bombing of Yemen began in March 2015, the UK has approved £6.8 billion of "single" licences to the Saudi regime, including licenses for aircraft, bombs and missiles. However, CAAT estimates that total UK arms exports to Saudi Arabia over that period amounted to **well over £20 billion**. In total, from 2010-19, the UK approved £40.7 billion in single licences for permanent arms exports; yet, over the same period, **arms export contracts worth £85.9 billion** were signed by UK companies, according

to the very limited information provided by UK Defence & Security Exports, see <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-defence-and-security-export-figures>

Aside from this yawning gap in transparency, the Open Licence system has other harmful consequences in the way it facilitates the arms trade. For example, **it allows the government to create the illusion of control** when it comes under public pressure, by halting new licences (for example to a country in conflict) while allowing the majority of sales to continue to flow, through existing Open Licences.

What is CAAT calling for?

CAAT and its supporters want to see a world without arms sales, where the UK does not profit from the sale of weapons that fuel conflict and repression. **As we work towards an end to the open license system** for exports of military equipment, we need:

- **Clear and transparent reporting** of arms exports across all types of licences, single and open.
- **No open licenses for the export of military equipment to countries in conflict or with poor human rights records**, to ensure effective scrutiny of the UK's role in arming abuses.
- **All existing licences – especially open licenses – to be suspended or revoked if conflict or human rights abuses occur**, not just stopping new licences.

The UK government may claim to be a global leader on transparency in arms exports, but as long as the widespread use of Open Licences continues, the true nature of the UK arms trade will remain hidden from scrutiny.

Read the full report here:

<https://caat.org.uk/publications/open-the-uks-secret-arms-sales/>

Stop The Arms Fair

Continued from page 2

workshops. There will be food, welfare support and a space to pop a tent, so be prepared to get involved! More information about action that you can take to stop the return of DSEI will be posted on the website

soon: <https://www.stopthearmsfair.org.uk/>, but if you want to get involved please send an email to info@stopthearmsfair.org.uk before then.

Stop Arming Israel

The media spotlight may have moved on since Israel's latest deadly attacks on Gaza, but the people of Palestine are still reeling from the lethal bombardments, and continue to endure the daily torment of living under a brutal military occupation, which is carried out with British weaponry and political support.

By the time of the ceasefire on 21 May the bombardment of Gaza had killed 232 Palestinians, including 65 children. It injured hundreds of people and left over 90,000 homeless and seeking refuge.

A report in the *Independent* on 22 May revealed that despite supposedly strict UK arms export rules, UK-produced equipment appears to have helped fuel the conflict.

Israeli forces used advanced F-35 fighter jets, 15% of whose components were manufactured in the UK, with arms producers boasting that the 'fingerprints of British ingenuity' can be found on dozens of these key components. They have also used F-16 fighter jets and Apache helicopters, both of which, the UK

government has previously admitted, 'almost certainly' include UK-made components.

Oliver Feeley-Sprague, Amnesty International UK's military, security and policing programme director, said: "Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups are committing numerous war crimes in this terrible conflict, and the UK must ensure it is not party to these crimes with its arms sales. Ahead of a full review of UK arms sales to the region, ministers should immediately halt all military exports to Israel or any third country which could be using UK-supplied components to incorporate into weaponry supplied to Israel.

"We've called on the UN Security Council to impose a comprehensive arms embargo on Israel, Hamas and other Palestinian armed groups, but deadlock at the UN means countries such as Britain must act sooner rather than later. In particular, UK ministers must say whether UK technology is still being used in the Israeli military drone programme – something that came to light as long ago as 2006 but is still largely shrouded in secrecy."

Actions for Palestine

Some KPC members took part in recent events organised by Richmond and Kingston Palestine Solidarity Campaign (RKPSC).

On Sunday 27 June they held a stall in Richmond, remembering the deaths of 67 young innocent children in the latest Israeli atrocity. This was a very moving event, at which photos of all 67 children were displayed and their names and ages read out.



It was a huge success, garnering a lot of sympathetic interest. The whole event was enhanced greatly by the participation of some students from General Union of Palestinian Students (GUPS) who

not only brought the signs which were originally made for the recent Downing St demonstration, but were a real asset in every other way.

On Saturday 10 July, RKPSC held a stall outside Kingston's Sports Direct store, as part of PSC's national campaign against Puma. Puma sponsors the Israel Football Association (IFA), which operates in illegal Israeli settlements on land stolen from Palestinians. By sponsoring the IFA, Puma is giving it international legitimacy and helping to sustain the infrastructure of illegal Israeli settlements.



Kingston Community Refugee Sponsorship

Annual General Meeting, 24 June 2021

I attended the KCRS AGM as a representative of Kingston Peace Council/CND, as we are members of the scheme.

Annual report

The objects of the charity as set out in its constitution, for the public benefit, are:

“The relief of poverty and the preservation and protection of health of those seeking asylum or granted leave to remain in the UK who reside or wish to reside temporarily or permanently in the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames or the surrounding area by providing aid, accommodation, support and education and by facilitating the integration of refugees and asylum seekers into the wider community.”

During the 2020/2021 reporting period, the charity has concentrated on the following:

- continuing fundraising to the point where their free reserves now comfortably exceed the upper limit of expected costs of supporting a refugee family;
- obtaining Local Authority and Home Office approval for them to proceed with resettling a refugee family;
- continuing to search for accommodation and build connections with potential landlords in the area.

They are awaiting the recommencement of resettlement flights following the Covid-19 pandemic, and obtaining Home Office approval.

Their cash reserves exceed the minimum threshold required by the Home Office when considering whether to approve a Community Sponsorship group.

Good news

- after very many months, KCRS has been able to satisfy the local authority with respect to safeguarding;
- a well-intentioned local landlord has offered a flat in the Berrylands area – very few things need to be done to bring it up to standard (eg a smoke alarm), so KCRS will soon be able to accept a family.

Isik Oguzertem, the Director of Refugee Action Kingston (RAK) said it has been found that integration outcomes are poorer for families sponsored under Community Sponsorship schemes than for those who did not come under such schemes, and he will be keen to learn of KCRS’s experiences. It is hoped that KCRS will be able to work with and support RAK.

The meeting ended with a showing of ‘Roots’, a short animated film by Inscape Animations.

Gill Hurle

Kill the Bill

Extracted from CND’s website

In spite of huge protest from civil society, a vibrant movement on the streets, and opposition from all political parties except the Conservatives, the *Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill* passed its Third Reading in the House of Commons at the beginning of July, and will now go back to the Lords.

The Government had sounded a tactical retreat in late March over the progress of the Bill, after the outraged public response to the policing of the vigil for Sarah Everard. Although thousands turned out on May Day to protest the Bill, including CND, the Government placed it back on the legislative calendar in mid-May and restricted time for debate.

The result was that the 300 page Bill was passed by 365 to 265 votes after less than a day of debate in the Commons, with hundreds of amendments from opposition parties not being voted on. Even some Tory MPs are unhappy with the way it was handled.

The Bill is a disaster for fundamental democratic liberties. It will introduce sentences of up to ten years in prison for ‘intentionally or recklessly causing public nuisance’ as part of protests. It gives the police a host of new powers to put conditions on protests to control ‘the noise generated by persons (*even a single person*) taking part’.

The Bill fits in with the wider trend that has become clear in recent months of authoritarian policy-making. Last autumn’s ‘Spy Cops’ legislation extended protection for police officers who commit crimes whilst infiltrating protest movements.

It is vital we continue the movement to Kill the Bill. Nothing less than our freedom to protest depends upon it – as well as the rights of other communities. If the Bill comes into law, our ability to oppose the UK’s nuclear weapons will be seriously impaired.

KINGSTON PEACE
COUNCIL / CND

Subscription rates:

£8 annually,
£10 family membership,
£3 unwaged

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Disclaimer: The views
expressed in this edition are
not necessarily those of
Kingston Peace Council/CND

Subs and newsletter

Is your membership subscription overdue? See the code at the top of the address label on this newsletter – the year followed by the month when your membership expires, eg 202012 means your sub was due at the end of December 2020. Or, if you pay by standing order, please check that you are paying the correct amount. See panel above for rates and Treasurer's address (cheques to Kingston Peace Council/CND). If you would like to receive your copy of Kingston Peace News by email, please contact Gill at gill@gillhurle.plus.com

Dates for your Diary

First Wednesday of every month 6.30pm for 10 mins Black Lives Matter vigil outside York House, Richmond Road, Twickenham, opposite the Shell garage and next to the Human Rights installation. All welcome.

Wed 4 Aug 6.30pm Afghanistan – A war that should never have happened, an online discussion assessing the damage of the occupation, looking at the future for Afghanistan and assessing the West's strategy in the region. Speakers include **Tariq Ali**, noted writer and filmmaker; **Phyllis Bennis**, fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington DC; **Malalai Joya**, activist, writer and politician from Afghanistan.
See <https://actionnetwork.org/groups/stop-the-war-national>

Thu 5 Aug 8pm Railway Roots Benefit Gig for Musicians for Peace & Disarmament, The Railway Inn, Portslade (nr. Brighton). Robb Johnson and his folk group Railway Roots with guest singer, MPD Patron Frankie Armstrong. Live and online, book at www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/164621785191

Fri 6 Aug 12-1pm KPC Hiroshima vigil in Kingston, see page 1.

Fri 6 Aug 8.15pm KPC Hiroshima riverside commemoration, see page 1.

Fri 6 Aug 12-1pm London CND Hiroshima event, see page 1.

Fri 6-Mon 9 Aug Trident Ploughshares events, see www.londoncnd.org/

Sat 21 Aug, 4 & 18 Sept 11am-2pm KPC stall in Kingston Marketplace. If you can help for an hour, please contact Angie on 020 8399 5537 or angecooper47@hotmail.com (Note there will be no stall on 7 August).

Mon 30 Aug 11am-4pm KPC garage sale. See page 1.

Contact 020 8549 0086 or email: Maggie@galdor.co.uk if you can help.

Mon 6 to Tue 14 Sept Stop The Arms Fair actions, see page 2.

Sat 11 Sept 11am-4pm KPC stall at Ham Fair. See page 1.

Contact 020 8549 0086 or email Maggie@galdor.co.uk if you can help.

Sun 19 Sept Commemoration of the life of Harald Molgaard, provisionally arranged for Richmond Green. As mentioned in our July newsletter, the planning of this event by Richmond and Kingston PSC was dependent on Covid restrictions. Hopefully full details will be available in the September newsletter.

Resumption of KPC meetings

It has been suggested that we could resume our monthly meetings in person from September.

Although the Government has lifted all Covid restrictions, the Kingston Quaker Centre is remaining cautious and requests that hirers wear face coverings in communal areas of the building, maintain safe distancing of at least one metre between individuals, regularly wash hands and use hand sanitiser, maintain effective ventilation of each room and, particularly, wipe down surfaces before and after use. And until further notice, the kitchen will not be available for use.

The Premises Committee will be reconsidering in August full opening of the Meeting House, when the up-to-date situation regarding Covid 19 prevalence will be known.

Could KPC members please let me know (my details are in the blue panel on this page) how they feel about meeting again in person, a) if the above restrictions are in place, and b) if these restrictions are lifted. Alternatively, we can continue holding our meetings online, although unfortunately that means those of you without internet access cannot attend.

Gill Hurle