

Journal of peace and understanding

APRED'S NEWS

Issue number eight – April 2008

Dedicated to confidence

Welcome and enjoy the reading !

I. This is a call for our next **general assembly Wednesday June 4, 19:30hrs, Swiss time, in our “chat room”**: [www.demilitarisation.org/chat room.htm](http://www.demilitarisation.org/chat%20room.htm). The annual report, the accounts and other documents will be available on our website a few days prior to the meeting.

II. APRED's news

APRED is functioning well, and several projects are in progress.

1. New publication on countries without army: regarding the publication in English of a new research on countries without army, this is a reminder that we have raised 32,000 Swiss francs out of the 40,000 budget. The first works confirm our option to focus on what these countries can do for peace and to make recommendations. The fact that they are able to function without armies is more widely known by now. Besides the informative work, however useful it may be, it is now necessary to get to a practical phase, how can the potential of these countries be used?

We are still looking for volunteers for this project (particularly a German speaking researcher for the Lichtenstein chapter), but also for funds (see the funding appeal).

2. The human right to peace: this right upon which APRED has insisted for several years is progressively gaining acknowledgement, confirming thus the correctness of our analysis. We are encouraging you to sign an excellent petition launched on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which can be found at this link: <http://www.ubuntu.upc.edu/index.php?lg=eng&pg=2&ncom=24>

3. Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan, read as follows : “*Chapter II. Renunciation to war. Article 9.1. Sincerely aspiring to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce to war as a sovereign right of the nation, or to the threat, the use of force as means of regulating international conflicts. 2. In order to reach the objective stated into the previous paragraph, it will never maintain ground, naval or aerial forces, or other means for potential war. The right of belligerence of the State will not be recognized.*” However, since the Korean war, Japan has maintained military forces. In fact, in 2006, it had the sixth military budget world-wide, raking below Germany but higher than Russia. From time to time, the Japanese government wishes to adapt the constitution to reality (instead of the other way around). A world solidarity movement with Article 9 has developed and a large peace conference will take place in Japan early May. The organizers insisted for APRED to be present and deliver a conference on Countries without Army. More information at <http://www.whynot9.jp>. We are still searching for resources to fund the trip.

4. For a Kosovo without army? Every time a new state emerges on the international scene, APRED wishes to intervene in order to encourage them to refrain from creating a military organ. As far as Kosovo is concerned, its constitution has been unfortunately adopted within six weeks and it will not be submitted to popular vote. Furthermore, it does not include the possibility of referendum of initiative. Consequently, our possibilities of action are very limited. APRED will however think during the next months about ways to be more prepared each time such occasion arises.

5. According to a rumour that appeared in spring, the Bolivian constitutional assembly would take up the abolition of the army. The rumour was however not confirmed. The proposed constitution which will be submitted to a popular vote on May 4th, includes a rather well-developed human right to peace, but the maintaining the army as well.

6. Christophe Barbey has done several constitutional studies in order to know the place given to peace in state constitutions. These studies included the countries without army, members of and candidates to the Security Council, new countries: Montenegro and East Timor, Kosovo, and as seen the new constitution for Bolivia. These studies, in French or English are available upon request. They will be soon published on our website.

III. Financial call

8,000 EUR are still needed for the research project on countries without army. Several organizations have been contacted. We are waiting for replies.

This project also creates more operational costs for the APRED overall budget. In order to assure a 20% work position, we would need 10,000 CHF per year. We would be happy to see if members participated, at least with a small instalment as a contribution to the budget.

Finally, the trip to Japan also needs around 2'000 CHF for participation costs.

We did make any financial appeal for the last two years so we are now counting on your generosity. Many thanks in advance.

For instalments in Switzerland, please use the instalment card attached, or our postal account number 17-625072-7.

For instalments from abroad, the bank account details are: bic « POFICHBExxx » or IBAN CH9009000000176250727

IV. The next issue of our bulletin will be published in the Fall.

With our best wishes for peace and accomplishment, we send you our best greetings.

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Flendruz, April 10, 2007.

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