

July - August 2026

KINGSTON PEACE NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER OF KINGSTON PEACE COUNCIL /
CAMPAIGN FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

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Hiroshima/Nagasaki commemorations

On 6th August KPC/CND will remember the dropping of the first atomic bomb, on Hiroshima, on that date in 1945. We shall hold a vigil outside the Bentall Centre in Kingston from noon to 2pm.

The Mayor of Kingston, Cllr Thay Thayalan, and the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Jane Lim, have

accepted an invitation to attend our candle-lit Hiroshima Commemoration later that day at Kingston Riverside, in Canbury Gardens, starting at 8pm. We shall, as usual, strew white flowers onto the Thames as a gesture in remembrance of the souls of the departed.

All are welcome to join us in these commemorations.



Another milestone!

Tonga has just acceded to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

This means there are now:

100 states in total that have either signed, ratified, or acceded to the TPNW, and made a legal commitment to end nuclear weapons once and for all, (75 states parties, plus an additional 25 signatories).

This is a significant commitment from countries that recognise how the continued existence of nuclear weapons puts all populations at risk - and who are working towards the total elimination of such inhumane and indiscriminate weapons.

Calling all readers!

Would you be able to help with editing Kingston Peace News? If you feel able to have a go at this, with some help of course, please contact Gill (see details on back page).

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Defence Investment and Military spending

Defence costs

Ongoing disputes within the Labour government over defence spending (ministers resign, will Burnham spend more or less than Starmer) seem to overlook one vital issue, namely just how hugely inefficient the MoD's budgetary control actually is and how many billions are regularly wasted.

There is an official body called the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority - NISTA for short - which is the watchdog for major departmental projects.

Private Eye reports that NISTA has put 'red' warnings - indicating that successful delivery of said project is unachievable because of inflating costs, delays or quality failures - on no fewer than 12 MoD projects. A further 27 projects are rated 'amber' which indicates 'significant issues'.

Compare this performance with the Department of Work and Pensions - a bigger budget than MoD but only one 'red' warning, or the Department of Health and Social Care - also a bigger spender than MoD - with no 'red' warnings.

Defence projects getting the red flag include one for a new warplane to be built jointly with Italy and Japan. Another is an air-to-surface missile for the US-supplied F-35 fighter which itself doesn't work properly.

Interestingly, in the case of the most costly MoD current project - Vanguard, the new generation Trident nuclear missile-armed subs - NISTA will not reveal the colour coding allocated to the project claiming national security reasons but, noted the *Eye*, 'presumably would if it were rated green.'

Perhaps the defence budget wouldn't generate so much political heat and lead to cuts in foreign aid, welfare spending *et al* if the MoD was just a hell of a lot better at procurement and not prone to high-cost, overly sophisticated systems that create low-performing weapons delivered late and out of date by the time they are unveiled.

Or, in the case of Trident, if they just cancelled it!

Phil Cooper

Military spending

As Starmer announces huge increases in military spending - including over £64 billion for nuclear weapons - a new report shows the Defence Investment Plan will actually result in job losses.

Research by the Transition Security Project shows that, while 10,000 extra jobs would be created by hikes to military spending by the year 2029/30, the impact of the cuts to critical public services to pay for it will cost twice that number.

Khem Rogaly, the co-author of the report, said: "The idea that military spending can provide a defence dividend is misleading: job losses will result from this latest funding settlement while the opportunity cost of military spending is sharp. Far more jobs are created when investing in public needs like health, education and addressing the climate crisis. This latest data suggests that the turn towards autonomous weapons and AI could also mean that military spending creates even fewer jobs per pound than before."

Not a single element of the government's nuclear programme has been cut from the Defence Investment Plan. In fact, spending on nuclear weapons is increasing as a share of the MoD budget.

International Conference Against War

Saturday 20th June

Stop the War Coalition initiated this Conference in Westminster Central Hall, but by the date of the event many trade union branches and peace organisations had backed the event and the number of speakers had increased, so that the organisers had to book an overflow room in Central Hall which speakers rotated through.

People travelled from across the world, from the USA, Canada, France, Germany, Switzerland, Spain, Italy, Denmark, the Netherlands and more. More than 2,600 anti-war activists were spread across the two packed halls. The atmosphere was electric and the political impact will be just as powerful.

For a recording of the Conference see <https://www.youtube.com/live/YOVqOJ1iU58>

And Phill Gittins, Education Director of World BEYOND War reports here:

<https://worldbeyondwar.org/world-beyond-war-takes-part-in-international-conference-against-war-in-london/>

A Physicist's Argument Against Rearmament

On 23rd June CND hosted an in-person Q&A event with bestselling author, philosopher and theoretical physicist, Carlo Rovelli, discussing his new book, *85 Seconds to Midnight: A Physicist's Argument Against Rearmament*. (published by Penguin (£9.99)).

Carlo's book is a vital intervention to stop the threat of nuclear war. It follows in the tradition of two critical manifestos urging peace. The first is *The Manifesto to the Europeans* signed by Albert Einstein in 1914, urging for peace at the start of

World War One. The second is the *Russell-Einstein Manifesto* of 1955, published at the start of the nuclear arms race, calling for the world to put humanity first and abolish nuclear weapons.

Today, Carlo's own manifesto couldn't be more relevant, given the world we are living in now.

Watch the Q&A on CND's YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Ce1K_QD9Kk and read in the Guardian an interview with Carlo about his motivation for writing the book: www.theguardian.com/books/2026/jun/25/

Farnborough International Airshow

Farnborough International Airshow (FIA) is held every two years, alternating with DSEI, and is one of the largest weapons fairs in Britain. FIA is very important to the arms trade's public image and lobby. It is run by Farnborough International Ltd - a subsidiary company owned by the ADS group. ADS describes itself as "the Premier Trade Organisation for all companies operating in the UK Aerospace, Defence, Security and Space industries". This year the official strategic partner is none other than...Barclays Bank.

In 2024, over \$105 billion in commercial deals were announced - a figure organisers are eager to surpass this year. The UK government is also increasing its presence at the show - the Ministry of Defence, UK Export Finance, and the Department for Business and Trade will be all under one roof, helping arms companies expand their reach.

FIA 2026 runs from 20–24 July and is officially the largest ever. They expect over 120,000 visitors, an even higher number than in 2024. Every chalet is sold out. A sixth exhibition hall has been added to accommodate the increase in demand.

BAE Systems, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and Raytheon are among the 1,500+ exhibitors at the show, and it will feature an increased presence from the United States, responsible for almost a million deaths in its 'forever wars' since 2001. Delegations from countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt, Turkey, and Bahrain are routinely invited, despite their record of human rights abuses and military aggression.

This year's FIA includes a Technology and AI theme, boasting that this can create "safer" and

"more efficient" military operations. The militarisation of AI aims to increase the speed and reach of deadly targeting across Gaza, Iran and Lebanon - killing more civilians with continued impunity.

On 24 July the FIA will be offering students and under-21s free entry to their "Pioneers of Tomorrow" exhibition and careers event. This public day, marketed as a "family day out", is allowing weapons companies to try to obscure their genocidal profiteering through blatant public relations manoeuvring and manipulation.

As our government continues to put billions towards weapons, recently promising £63 billion for nuclear submarine and warship development in its "Defence Investment Plan", **Campaign Against Arms Trade (CAAT) will be saying NO to this Horror Show.**

Here's what CAAT is planning for 20th July:

Peace Day Camp A full day of action at the gates of the airshow. Food, water and suncream provided.

Leafleting Tens of thousands of civilian aviation workers will walk through those gates with no idea what is being sold beside their aircraft engines and flight simulators. We'll make sure they leave knowing.

Talks & Workshops Speakers and creative workshops connecting the weapons on show to the conflicts they fuel - Gaza, Iran, Yemen, Lebanon - and highlighting links between the arms trade and UK Government.

Join CAAT: Meet at 9am on Farnborough Rd near the Netley Street junction (GU14 6AY), then afterwards nearby. (See Diary Dates, P4)

**KINGSTON PEACE
COUNCIL / CND**

Subscription rates:

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

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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 202601 means your sub was due at the end of Jan 2026. Or, if you pay by standing order (code 300000), please check that you are paying the correct amount. See panel above for rates and Treasurer's address (cheques payable please to Kingston Peace Council/CND). If you would like to receive your copy of Kingston Peace News by email, please contact Gill at gill@gillhurlle.plus.com

Dates for your Diary

Sat 18 July 12 pm National march - Tell the new PM: end the genocide. Marking two years since the International Court of Justice (ICJ) released its Advisory Opinion stating categorically that Israel's entire presence in the occupied Palestinian territory is unlawful. Disgracefully, the British government has still not even issued a formal response, it allows the arms trade with Israel to continue as well as facilitating Israel's illegal settlements and other ongoing crimes against Palestinians. Assemble in Russell Square.

Sats 18 July, 1 & 15 Aug 11am-1pm or 2pm KPC stall in Kingston Market Place. If you can help on any of these days, please contact Rosemary (for 18 July) on 020 8399 2547 or Angie (for August) on 020 8399 5537 / angecooper47@hotmail.com

Mon 20–Fri 24 July Farnborough International Airshow (see P3). Contact Rosemary (020 8399 2547 / rosemaryadd@btinternet.com) if you would like to meet up.

Thur 23 July 6-8pm Wars, Inequality and Poverty: Ways Out of the Vicious Circle, online Summer Conference jointly hosted by Uniting for Peace and Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace. To register: <https://ufpgamip-summerconference2026.eventbrite.co.uk>

Thur 23 July 7-8.30pm Effects of a nuclear attack on Faslane – CND joint webinar. Scientist Hugh Irvine will discuss his new study on the impact of a nuclear attack on the Clyde naval base at Faslane. To register, see <https://cnduk.org/events/>

Thur 6 Aug KPC/CND Hiroshima/Nagasaki commemorations (see P1): 12-2pm Vigil in Kingston town centre; 8pm Ceremony in Canbury Gdns

Sat 8 Aug The Big Ride for Palestine, starting from Paddington Station. Fundraising for the Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA) the Gaza Sunbirds, this event is a wonderful way to get some exercise and enjoy the weather, while meeting like-minded supporters from around London. To sign up as part of the RichKing Team, contact branch@richkingpsc.org

Tues 11 Aug 8pm KPC/CND meeting via Zoom. For joining instructions contact Gill, gill@gillhurlle.plus.com or Hilary hilarymevans@btinternet.com

Sat 15 Aug 2-4pm (approx.) Join London Campaign Against Arms Trade for a walking tour of arms companies. Assemble from 1.45pm outside Boeing (see below). This will introduce people to some of the companies which are responsible for much death and destruction globally, plus the government body that is responsible for arms exports and the uniquely evil company that is Palantir. Route of tour:

1. Boeing: Boeing Defence UK 25 Victoria Street London SW1H 0EX
2. BAE Systems: Headquarters Stirling Square 6 Carlton Gdns SW1Y 5AD
3. UK Defence and Security Exports, Old Admiralty Building, Admiralty Place, London SW1A 2DY
4. Palantir, 20 Soho Square, Floor 3, London, W1D 3QW

More details via <https://caat.org.uk/events/merchants-of-death-2026/>

Mon 31 Aug 10.30am-8pm Carshalton EcoFair. KPC/CND will have a stall for the main part of the day, selling items of bric-a-brac, secondhand books (very popular) and plants. Please contact Maggie on 07770 558547, 020 8549 0086 or Maggie@galdor.co.uk if you can help in any way.