

ANNUAL REPORT 2008

The Norwegian Affiliate of IPPNW – Norske leger mot atomvåpen (NLA)
ADMINISTRATIVE AND ORGANISATORY MATTERS

Board

Tordis Sørensen Høifødt (Chair, Tromsø), John Gunnar Mæland (Vice Chair, Bergen), Per Wium (Treasurer, Oslo), Ellen Ann Antal (International Councillor, Oslo), Klaus Melf (Website Administrator, Tromsø), Jon B. Reitan (Oslo), Bjørn Hilt (Trondheim), Astrid Lygren (Membership archives, Oslo) and Dag Bruusgaard (Oslo).

Bjørn Hilt has been European IPPNW vice president until march 2008. He has been Chair of the International Board IPPNW (from 2006).

Student representatives

NLA has had student groups at all four Norwegian medical schools in 2008 (see point 5 below). Mari Jetlund has been national and international student representative in 2008.

Membership Journal

In 2008, three issues (26th year, approx. 1500 copies each) were printed. Trygve Berge, student in Oslo and Torbjørn Hugo, Oslo have been editors till 2008, when Carl Pintzka and Bjørn Lyngen, both students in Trondheim, took over. In total, approximately 70 medical libraries and Norwegian organizations in the Abolition 2000-network received the journal by mail, for free.

Webpages

NLA has the homepage www.legermotatomvapen.no. Klaus Melf has acted as Editor and webmaster.

Membership Archives

Astrid Lygren took over responsibility for membership archives in 2008. NLA is listed with 1180 members, whereof 136 did not pay the membership fee during the last four years; 30 not during the three last years, and 30 not during the two last years. A systematic work to check the correctness of the addresses listed in our archives has been done.

Archive routines

The archives of NLA are located at the Norwegian Peace Center at Lillehammer (NLA archives from 1982 till 1995). The Board has decided that the archives after 1995 should be limited to minutes from board meetings, annual reports, statute changes, membership journals and brochures. Personal archives are kept with the individual members, as before. Literature regarding NLA is currently being kept by Kirsten Osen. The Board has not followed up this issue in 2008.

Secretariat

Notifications of and minutes from board meetings are mainly being communicated by email. The secretariat has no employees.

Election committee

Anne Alvik, Ingvild Fossgard Sandøy, Tordis Sørensen Høifødt (from the board).

The Council

The Council of NLA in 2008 consisted of: Ulrich Abildgaard, Carl Birger Alm, Anne Alvik, Christian Borchgrevink, Odd Steffen Dalgard, Kjell Grøttum, Kurt Hanevik, Kristian Hagestad, Hans Asbjørn Holm, Kjersti Johnsrud, Einar Kringlen, Mons Lie, Eiliv Lund, Morten Bremer Mærli, Kirsten Osen, Alexander Pihl, Hans Prydz, Johannes Setekleiv, Ingvild Fossgard Sandøy, Hilchen Sommerschild, Otto Steinfeldt-Foss, Per Sundby, Helge Waal and Steinar Westin.

1) MEETINGS

Annual meeting 2008

The 2008 annual meeting was arranged Saturday February 23rd in Oslo. Program:

1. Missile Defense: The plans of the U.S., the role of Norway and NATO.

Contribution by journalist Trond Strand, Bergens Tidende (Norwegian Daily newspaper).

2. The Governmental Report to the Parliament on disarmament and nonproliferation.

Speaker: Kjetil Paulsen, Foreign Ministry.

22 doctors and students participated in the Annual Meeting.

Board meetings

In 2008, NLA has held ten board meetings; eight as telephone meetings and two where the board members met in person; on February 2nd, in association with the annual meeting in Oslo, and on December 6th, associated with the Council meeting in Oslo. Approved minutes from all the board meetings exist.

The Council meeting

The Board and Council held a meeting in Oslo on Dec. 6th. The main issue was related to the Governmental Report to the Parliament 27 (2007-2008): "Non-proliferation and disarmament". Bent Natvig from the Norwegian Pugwash Committee held the introduction, which was on the report content and on the work with the report. Torbjørn Graff Hugo, Medfred (student group), reflected on the experience from the lobbying work.

2) ECONOMY

General

In 2008, the organization had an account in balance with an income of Nkr. 311.192,- and Nkr. 265.367,- in expenses. The largest incomes were a grant of Nkr. 100.000 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and membership fees (Nkr 178.000). Gifts from members: Nkr. 19.800,-. The largest expenses were the membership journal, European collaboration, support to other organizations within the IPPNW, and information material. Additionally NLA supports the IPPNW fund, which supports members and students who need travel support to international meetings, international student activities, the European Vice President (Bjørn Hilt till March 2008, followed by Cecilie Buhmann from Denmark).

At the end of 2008, NLA had an equity capital of Nkr. 474.091

Collaboration with Banco fund administration (Banco fondsforvaltning)

NLA collaborates with the fund administration, who gives a part of the surplus from those of their customers who want so, to NLA. In 2008, NLA received Nkr. 12.207,16 for 2007.

Membership fee to the IPPNW.

After request from IPPNW, NLA has in 2008 paid double membership fee (4 USD per member) to IPPNW.

3) CURRENT ISSUES AND PROJECTS

Governmental Report to the Parliament 27 (2007-2008) on disarmament and non-proliferation

NLA has worked for a White Paper on disarmament for a long time, without success. However, in August 2007, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed that work on such a report was initiated and that input was wished. The board submitted NLA's points of view October 31st 2007. The Governmental Report was presented in May 2008, was up for discussion (in which the MPI collaboration group participated) in the Committee of Foreign Affairs on Oct 10th, and was discussed/ handled in the Parliament on Nov. 11th. The report has been given high priority by NLA. The work with the report has been done in collaboration with The Norwegian Pugwash Committee and the NGO No To Nuclear Weapons (Nei til Atomvåpen/ NTA); see below. Five of the seven Norwegian Parliament parties state eliminating nuclear weapons as an aim.

Missile shields in Europe

At the annual meeting, this issue was decided to be given priority in the action plan for 2008. The current Norwegian coalition government has in its political platform expressed a clear scepticism towards the NATO/ USA plans for the establishment of a missile shield in Europe. However, the Government signed the NATO end document in Bucurest April 3rd -4th without reservations, which elicited disappointment and frustration.

Collaboration against nuclear weapons (The MPI-collaboration group)

The main 2008 issues for the collaboration between NLA, Pugwash and the NGO No To Nuclear Weapons (Nei til Atomvåpen/ NTA) have been missile shields in Europe and the Report to the Parliament 27 (2007/ 2008) Disarmament and Nuclear Weapons (see above).

The issue missile shield issue has been raised in meetings with the Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre in the Foreign Ministry 12.2., State Secretary Barth Eide in the Foreign Ministry 25.2, and with several parliament representatives, amongst others Dørum (V), 14.2. On April 1st, the group arranged a demonstration outside the Parliament, with an appeal by representative Ågot Valle (SV). The event was mentioned in the press and television media. On August 19th, the group visited the Polish and Czech embassies, discussing the technical and political cons regarding missile shields, which was elaborated in a letter sent to the embassies in advance (www.legermotatomvapen.no).

During the work with the report to the Parliament 27 (2007/ 2008) Disarmament and Nuclear Weapons, the organizations shared the issues amongst each other: NATO (NTA), missile shields (Pugwash), convention (NLA) and Nuclear Weapon Free Zones (MedFred/ students). A common comment regarding the report was made by

these groups towards several parliament representatives (www.legermotatomvapen.no), as well as was a separate comment from NLA with focus on a general ban on nuclear weapons. NLA/ Medfred has been represented in the group by Hans Asbjørn Holm, Kirsten Osen and Torbjørn Hugo. The group has held 6 strategy meetings.

NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty)

The former Norwegian Prime Minister, Gro Harlem Brundtland, was in 2008 invited to participate in an international commission (Japanese-Australian common initiative), established by the Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd. The goal for the Commission is to establish global consensus on nuclear disarmament before the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Revcon 2010. NLA argued in a letter to GHB the case for a roadmap to full nuclear abolition and pointed to the idea of a convention against nuclear weapons.

Torbjørn Hugo, MedFred (Norwegian IPPNW student group) participated in the NPT PrepCom in Geneva April 28th-May 9th together with Stine Rødmyr, NTA (No to Nuclear Weapons). Torbjørn established important contacts with ICAN Australia and with Africans working for the verification of Nuclear Weapons free zones in Africa. As a part of the work that the collaboration group does for the NPT and a convention against Nuclear Weapons, the group also participated in the meeting between Alyn Ware with the PNND group (Parliamentarians for Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament) in the Parliament on May 29th.

A convention against nuclear weapons

Since 2006, NLA has collaborated with the NGO No to Nuclear Weapons (Nei til atomvåpen/ NTA) and Pugwash in a Norwegian campaign for a convention banning nuclear weapons. Since 2007, there has been an ongoing discussion with the Norwegian Foreign Ministry regarding this through letters, meetings and newspaper articles. In a letter to the Foreign minister (18.09.08, with copies to the Norwegian UN delegation in New York and Geneva) NLA has brought forward the ICAN and IPPNW arguments that a convention on the contrary would strengthen NPT.

Medical peace work in the curriculum

Work to have more teaching on disarmament, human rights and conflict solution implemented in the medical study plans has been given priority in 2008 Klaus Melf has coordinated the work, and one student and one doctor in every of the four University cities will gather more information as well as lead a dialogue with the universities.

ICAN, www.ican.org; see above (convention against nuclear weapons)

Small arms: NLA has also in 2008 worked with finding resources for the international work against uncontrolled proliferation of small arms; the IPPNW campaign "Aiming for Prevention/ Small Arms Campaign". Christin Ormhaug and Bjørn Hilt participated at a meeting in Copenhagen 22.01.08 in order to raise funds at the Danish Foreign Ministry together with Ime John, co-president in IPPNW, and Cecilie Buhmann and Anton Aggernæs from DLMK, A new grant application regarding economic support will be presented to the Norwegian Foreign ministry in 2009.

Dialogue seminars: NLA participates in a collaboration to continue the IPPNW-program for dialogue seminars with decision makers in the nuclear weapons states and the NATO. In 2008, there have been meetings in India, Moscow and Brussels. Bjørn Hilt participated from NLA i New Dehli in association with the World Congress in March and in Moscow in December.

Nuclear Weapons Inheritance Project (NWIP): The project, which is organized by IPPNW aims at establishing a dialogue with students in the Nuclear weapons states regarding their attitudes to inheriting the nuclear weapons. Norwegian students have been less active in NWIP in 2008. One student, Sara Shah, participated in a dialogue seminar in Brussels in 2008.

Highly enriched uranium (HEU): IPPNW/ ICAN took initiative to an action where the use of highly enriched uranium in research reactors and for medical use is being discussed; regarding a switch from the use of highly enriched to low enriched uranium to a far extent as possible. The board has sent a note on the Norwegian situation to IPPNW/ ICAN with a copy to the Norwegian Medical Association and the Norwegian Foreign Ministry 12.07.08.

The IPPNW World Congress in New Dehli 7.-11.03.08 From NLA, 4 doctors and 8 students (2 from each University) participated. The students arranged a separate student conference before the main conference. NLA participated in arranging a workshop on the development of peace- and health aspects in the medical study plans. The workshop gathered participants with introductions from Germany, India and Sri Lanka.

Information Strategy

In 2007, work on a new brochure on the medical effects of nuclear weapons started. The work with the brochure has not been continued in 2008, due to capacity reasons.

Collaboration with other organizations

NLA is still associated with the Norwegian Peace Council and the Norwegian Peace Centre. The collaboration with No To Nuclear Weapons (Nei til Atomvåpen/ NTA) and The Norwegian Pugwash-committee on Nuclear weapons questions has been continued in 2008 (see above). The collaboration with “Mayors for Peace” campaign has been continued, but without any major activity in 2008.

Meetings/ arrangements

- Gunnar Westberg, at that time the IPPNW President i IPPNW, participated on behalf of NLA at the Oslo conference “Achieving the Vision of a World Free of Nuclear Weapons” arranged by UD og the The Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority (NRPA) in collaboration with Nuclear Threat Initiative and Hoover Institute 26.-27. 02.08.
- NLA was co-arranging a demonstration outside the Parliament together with NTA og Pugwash 01.04.08: “Missile shields are not an April’s Fool”/ “Rakettskjold er ingen aprilspøk.”
- Torbjørn Hugo participated for NLA/ Medfred in the NPT PrepCom 28.04. – 09.05.08 in Geneva.

- Meeting with Alyn Ware in PNND (Parliamentarians for Non-Proliferation and Nuclear Disarmament) in the Parliament 29.05.08.
- Meeting arranged by the Peace Council, supported by NLA 11.06.08, with Hans Blix as main speaker.
- Jon B. Reitan participated in meeting in Hiroshima, 5.- 6.08.08.
- NLA, NTA and Pugwash co-arranged a meeting 24.10.08 with Foreign minister Jonas Gahr Støre "The Norwegian vision of a Nuclear Weapon free world., How should it be done?"/ "Norges visjon om en atomvåpenfri verden. Hvordan skal det gjøres?"
- NLA, The Norwegian Peace Initiative, NTA, SV and Pugwash arranged a meeting "How to stop the US missile shields in Europe?"/ "Hvordan stoppe USAs rakettskjold i Europa?" 08.11.08 during the Globalization Conference in Oslo.

Publications/ media/ letters

Several papers are sent to the press, but not published. Only the published ones are included below.

Miscellaneous media

- Klassekampen (newspaper) 20.10.08: Helge Hagelund, Kirsten Osen and Bent Natvig, "Norway and Disarmament"/ "Norge og atomnedrustning."
- Dagsavisen (newspaper) 23.10.08: Kirsten Osen and Hans Asbjørn Holm: "Gro works against Nuclear weapons"/ "Gro jobber mot atomvåpen."
- Press release from the Annual Meeting 24.02.08: "Doctors warn against missile shields". The relationship between the superpowers is more tense than ever. Missile shields create insecurity. / "Leger advarer mot rakettskjold. Forholdene mellom atommaktene er mer spent enn på lenge. Rakettskjold skaper mer utrygghet".
- Press release on the demonstration against missile shields 01.04.08 (also mentioned in the National news broadcast, "Breakfast TV", and two daily newspapers (FrokostTV, Dagsrevyen, Bergens Tidende og Dagsavisen).
- Press release 09.04.08 with comments after the NATO meeting in Bucurest.
- Press release 19.08.08 about the embassy visits regarding missile shields.

Letters from NLA

- Letter to Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre 11.4.08 on NPT and convention.
- Letter to Jonas Gahr Støre 10.6.08 on the cluster weapon ban, congratulation letter.
- India-US agreement, protest letter signed by NLA 11.08.08.
- Letter to Jonas Gahr Støre 18.09.08 on the relationship between a convention and NPT; with copies to the Foreign Ministry UN-delegation in New York and Geneva.
- Letter to Gro Harlem Brundtland 14.10.08. Short reply from Gro Harlem Brundtland, referring to the Foreign Ministry as a contact channel regarding this matter.
- NLA signed the IPPNW-letter to Obama og Medvedev, 23.12.08.

4) THE STUDENT GROUPS

Medfred Oslo

The activity during the last year has mainly consisted of arranging theme evenings and to participate in national and international meetings. We have arranged a movie evening and lectures on nuclear weapons, missile shields and human rights. We have also participated in meetings at the Nobel institute, several students participated in the committee arranging the demonstration against missile shields on April 1st in Oslo, and we were represented at the meeting in the Foreign Affairs Committee on the report to the Parliament on disarmament and non-proliferation. Students from the Oslo group has contributed to the member journal, with which student Trygve Berge worked till April, and we have sent travel letters from the IPPNW World congress to the Journal of the Norwegian Medical Association. We participated in arranging the national student conference in Bergen and sent participants to the annual meeting and the Board meeting in Oslo. Internationally, we have sent students to the World Congress in India and the European Student meeting in Amsterdam. Trygve Berge has been the group Chair and there have been 5-10 students in the group. The number of student members has declined somewhat due to exchange participation and some students have had their final exams. Unfortunately, we have not recruited new members actively this year. For the next year, we wish to strengthen the recruitment, have regular meetings and strengthen the regular contact with the Board. Additionally, there will be a strong focus on the arrangement of European Student Conference in Oslo in 2010.

Medfred Trondheim

During spring 2008, there was some activity in the group, and we held four movie evenings. We wanted that all students should be able to pop in and take a break with us, at the same time as the student group informed on NLA and MedFred – and our work. This has been a good way to recruit new members, and during the autumn, four new movie evenings were held.

We participated with three students at the national student meeting in Bergen, and participated in the street action against the NATO missile shield. At the student meeting, we were involved in the work with the medical study plans, and at the same time took some responsibility to follow up and drive forwards the work with recruiting Norwegian Mayors for the project “Mayors for Peace”. Some work has been done locally in Trøndelag county, and this will continue throughout the year.

Some time after the autumn studies started, we had a small recruitment campaign towards the youngest classes at medical school. We were positively received, and afterwards received a request to hold a talk at the international student festival in Trondheim (ISFIT). the preparations for this were done before Christmas, and at the end, the students, Bjørn Hilt and Cecilie Buhmann were allowed to participate with a workshop on medical peace work at ISFIT.

Cecilie Horvei has been leading the group, and there have been 8-10 active students throughout the year. Forwards on, the work will be focused on establishing a stable student group, and increasing the number of members. This is in particular relevant

regarding the fact that the student group has said that it wishes to participate actively in arranging the European Student Conference in Oslo during spring 2010.

Medfred Bergen

During the spring 2008, the main issue was to arrange a national student meeting in Bergen in April. This had not been done before, but was a long wished arrangement in order to connect the student groups. Bergen, Oslo and Trondheim were well represented, with over 20 participants, unfortunately no students from Tromsø were present. We held lectures and workshops on issues such as the core IPPNW issues, the nuclear power states and local group activities. We also performed a successful street action against the NATO missile shield, after first having had a brilliant introduction to the missile shield case by BT (daily newspaper) journalist Tor Olav Mørseth. The result of the action was not only increased attention on the case, but also a full page of newspaper coverage in Bergens tidende and 500 protest letters to Foreign minister Støre.

After the national student meeting, both engagement and group feeling had experienced a real booster, which was followed by a debate on whether the Bergen group could take responsibility to arrange a European Student conference if all the Norwegian student groups could collaborate. This discussion turned even more relevant after more students, among them two from Bergen, participated at a conference in Amsterdam in November. At the end, Oslo was chosen as location for the arrangement, and the Bergen group promised to take a large part of the responsibility for the arrangement.

Otherwise, the autumn was used to try to recruit new members for the local group. At the time, the students were not very engaged. However, after several attempts, we ended up with 2-3 new members from the new student class. We regard this to be a great success, since we have not been able to recruit new members during the previous years. Altogether, the group now has 9-10 members. Ashraf Pkzad is still Chair. The main priorities forward on, will still be the work with the student conference and with implementing disarmament and peace work in the medical study plans at UiB.

Medfred Tromsø

This year, the board of Med.Fred-Tromsø has consisted of Petter Dahle (MK-06) Chair, Axel Lupton (MK-06) account, Anette Midtgard (MK-06) secretary, Johannes Stenberg (MK-06) board member, Ragnhild Fagerland (MK-06) board member og Mari Kaspersen (MK-07) committee Chair. We were elected at the annual meeting of Med.Fred-Tromsø 2008.

Since the annual meeting, the board has arranged two movie evenings for students at the university, with the films "Dr. Strangelove" and "A day without war". We have had a nice atmosphere during the evenings. After Christmas, Johannes and Anette represented our group at the IPPNW student conference in Amsterdam, and brought home new ideas and impressions. The board was informed on the contents of the conference, before we watched the movie "Atomic cafe" during a social board event. This is a movie we want to show to other students during the autumn. During the year, the board has met approximately once a month, and distributed tasks and planned new arrangements. Towards the summer, we plan to arrange a grilling session at the

campus, where we also will hand out flyers etcetera. Altogether, there has been an active year for the group, although recruiting new members is a huge challenge. During the year to come, we will hold movie evenings, lectures and perform new attempts at recruitment from the new class of students.

Tromsø, March 2009
Tordis Sørensen Høifødt
Translation: Ellen-Ann Antal