

The Sydney Peace Foundation promotes peace with justice and the practice of non-violence and awards Australia's international Peace Prize. The Foundation is a partnership between business, media, public service, community, and academic interests. It is a not-for-profit organisation made possible by our Partners in Peace and by the support of organisations and individuals.

Non-Violent Protests Disturb Talisman Sabre

Peace campaigners protesting against the Talisman Sabre military exercises sent a strong message to the Rudd Government that they will not tolerate the waste of resources on rehearsals for war. A range of peace and environmental groups came together for the Peace Convergence for three days from July 10 to 13 to resist and disrupt Talisman Sabre.

The joint US-Australian Talisman Sabre military exercise ran from July 6 to 26 across northern Australia and centred at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area near Rockhampton, central Queensland.

In a powerful array of non-violent actions over three days, Peace Convergence campaigners blockaded, spoke, danced, staged vigils, sang, climbed fences, hung banners, and defied police and the military.

They entered Darumbal land with permission from the traditional owners.

In addition to the Peace Convergence, other groups of activists (mostly Christian pacifists) entered the military training area on several occasions to further disrupt the live firing exercise.

Jessica Morrison reported that after her group had spent a day and night in the area, they were found by US soldiers.

"We moved into the ritual that we'd planned, which was to remember the names of people who had died in Afghanistan, civilians and soldiers.

"We would read a name and age of a per-

son, then reply with 'Lord have Mercy'. Meditating on the needless deaths, mostly of people younger than us, amidst a military training area with guns in view was deeply powerful.

"As we continued to pray and remember, we were completely unprepared for what came next. Gently one of the US soldiers offered us a name of his friend. Our refrain was said through sobs as we shared in grief together.

"Suddenly there wasn't a them and us with war resisters and war participators, but human beings who grieved together, and sought solutions for our world," she said.

Preparing for war

Denis Doherty, National Co-ordinator of the Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition, said: "Talisman Sabre will cost over \$50 million. This is in the midst of an economic crisis and when a Australian National University poll showed that 70 per cent of the Australian people do not support more money being spent on the military.

"The practice invasions. They make Australia a greater target, they train our forces to take US orders, and they bomb unique locations on the edge of the irreplaceable Great Barrier Reef.

"Talisman Sabre is addressing threats that do not exist, while aggravating those that are rapidly advancing, including climate change, hunger, and crippling poverty," he said.

Disrupting live fire exercises

Two anti-war activists remained for 11 days in the Shoalwater Military Exercise Area until Sunday, 26 July, officially the last day of the joint Australia-US exercises. They then turned themselves



in and were escorted from the area by military police.

Yulanji Bardon and Emily Nielsen entered the base on the 16 July with five other activists in two groups. Five were arrested and charged with trespass.

They dodged helicopters, military dogs and avoided thousands of military personnel to remain in the military area, disrupting the live fire phase of the exercises.



Yulanji Bardon and Emily Nielsen



2009 Sydney Peace Prize

The announcement of the 2009 Sydney Peace prize recipient will be made on **Monday, 3rd August.**

The gala dinner and award ceremony will be held at Sydney University on **Wednesday, 4th November**

The City of Sydney Peace Prize Lecture will be held at the Opera House on **Thursday, 5th November**