



2025 Winter Issue

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CONTACT US:

Thank You
FOR ALL YOUR
CONTINUED SUPPORT
IN 2024

**Want to donate to
Ploughshares Calgary?**
We are now accepting donations
for 2025.

Email office@ploughshares.ca
for more information.



2025 MEMBERSHIP

RENEW OR REGISTER TO BECOME AN OFFICIAL MEMBER

With the new year upon us, we want to remind you to join now for just \$25.00 and become an official member of Ploughshares Calgary Society until December 31st, 2025.

Members can make an active contribution to the work of building peace in our communities and on our planet. Help grow our community and contribute your energy, resolve, talent, passion, and voice. Opportunities to stay informed, engage in dialogue, participate in and/or volunteer with our events, and more!



CALGARY INTERNATIONAL SPEECH CONTEST

Commemorating the 80th Anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki Days & 10th Anniversary of the UN Sustainable Development Goals

Calgary Floating Lanterns for Peace is thrilled to invite the brightest and most promising high school students from around the globe to participate in the Calgary International Speech Contest. The theme is **My Blueprint to Build a Peaceful and Sustainable World**. Your speech should reflect leadership and a vision for a better, sustainable world. Selected applicants will be invited to travel to Calgary to make a speech at the Calgary International Speech Contest and awarded a scholarship.

For more information and to apply, click [here](#).

NEWS ROUNDUP

The Fiscal Implications of Meeting the NATO Military Spending Target

Canada has committed to meeting NATO's 2% military spending target by 2032, but current projections show it will fall short by 0.42% by 2029, requiring nearly double the projected military budget by 2032. While the government can maintain a declining debt-to-GDP ratio, the increased military spending may prevent it from meeting its deficit-to-GDP target, with the deficit expected to rise above 1% by 2032.

To view the full document, click [here](#).

An A-Z Guide to the Long-Overdue Ceasefire Between Israel and Hamas

This long-overdue deal took effect on Jan.19, 2025. It is a three-phase deal, with the first phase including the release of 33 hostages by Hamas and Israel releasing 100 Palestinian detainees.

To view the full article, click [here](#).

A rapid ceasefire in Ukraine could lead Donald Trump into a Russian trap

President-elect Donald Trump's claim to end the war in Ukraine without strong security guarantees could lead to a dangerous situation for Ukraine. A rushed ceasefire could result in political disaster for Ukraine, stalling reconstruction and economic recovery, and allowing Russia to manipulate the situation for long-term control.

To view the full article, click [here](#).

World's Top Arms Producers See Revenues Rise On The Back of Wars and

Regional Tension Revenues from sales of arms and military services by the 100 largest companies in the industry reached \$632 billion in 2023, an increase of 4.2%.

To view the full article, click [here](#).

UN Approves New Study On Effects Of Nuclear War

"The new study, the first of its kind in 35 years, will examine the physical effects and societal consequences of a nuclear war on a local, regional and planetary scale, including, climatic, environmental and radiological effects, and impacts on public health, global socioeconomic systems, agriculture and ecosystems. It will lead to a comprehensive report, presented at the General Assembly."

To read the full statement, click [here](#).

NEWS ROUNDUP

Annual SDG Financing Gaps Measured in Trillions: FSDR 2024

According to the 2024 Financing for Sustainable Development Report “achieving the economic transitions needed to reach the SDGs will require investments at unprecedented scale”. FSDR 2024 finds that debt burdens and rising borrowing costs are large contributors to the crisis, reversing hard-won development gains, particularly in the poorest countries.

Estimates indicate that the annual debt servicing cost in the least developed countries (LDCs) will be USD 40 billion between 2023 and 2025. Today, LDCs spend 12% of their revenues on interest payments, and around 40% of the global population lives in countries where government spending on interest payments is greater than on education and health.

To view the full article, click [here](#).

Security Options for a Troubled World: CPG/CIPS Policy Conference

The CPG–CIPS policy conference, held during a time of global uncertainty, focused on "Security Options for a Troubled World" and featured six panels covering topics like nuclear arms control, AI in warfare, UN peace operations, the Outer Space Treaty, the Arms Trade Treaty, and Canada's role in global crises. Experts and policymakers discussed various security challenges and potential solutions, aiming to inform future actions in addressing global instability and providing a platform for dialogue on navigating these complex issues moving forward.

To view the full report, click [here](#). View the six recorded panels [here](#).

Security Choices: Nuclear Deterrence or Common Security

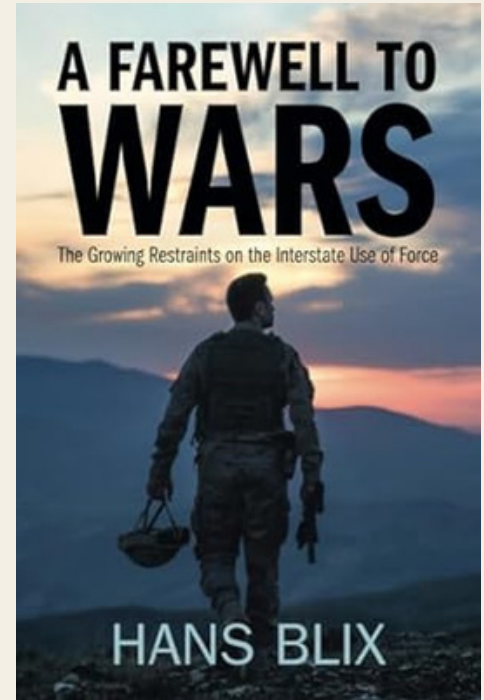
Critics suggest that nuclear weapons offer limited security and that their risks of catastrophic escalation outweigh their benefits, proposing a transition to non-provocative conventional defense strategies. Ultimately, the conversation calls for alternative security frameworks, such as "common security," to reduce reliance on nuclear deterrence and move towards disarmament through more effective conflict resolution and defense strategies.

To view the full article, click [here](#).

INFOTAINMENT

A FAREWELL TO WARS. THE GROWING RESTRAINTS ON THE INTERSTATE USE OF FORCE

A Farewell to Wars is a monumental work about interstate use of force and armed intervention in the domestic affairs of others. Author and Swedish diplomat Hans Blix, draws long historical lines up to the World Wars, and then concentrates on the period after 1945. His conclusion is the world is moving away from the crudest forms of warfare. The incentives for interstate use of force are diminishing; the restraints are growing; and conquest of territory has become old-fashioned. Armed interventions are on the decline as well. Instead, states exert pressure and influence by other means, e.g. by sanctions, covert operations and cyber-attacks.



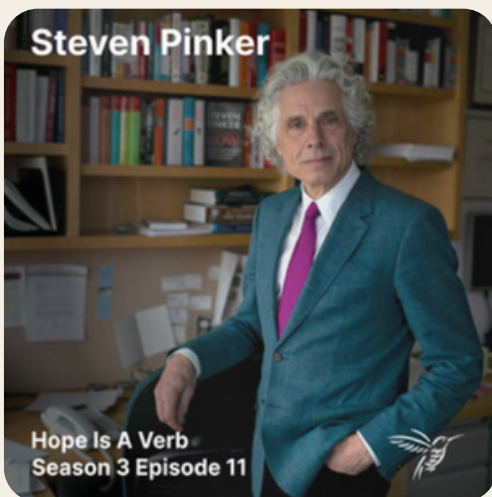
This is Han Blix’s comprehensive summary analysis of issues of war and peace. To visit the full review by Sverre Lodgaard click [here](#).

STEVEN PINKER: WHY PROGRESS IS POSSIBLE

Steven Pinker, author of 12 books, is an experimental psychologist who conducts research in visual cognition, psycholinguistics, and social relations. Currently Johnstone Professor of Psychology at Harvard, he has won numerous prizes for his research and his teaching.

This podcast episode offers a perspective about the current state of the world. Including topics such as: why longstanding peace never makes headlines; the best metrics for human progress; the decline of mental health in rich countries; the problem with word police; changes in social norms; why today’s election in the US is better than 1968; the cognitive illusion perpetuated by mass media; how graphs and data can help change beliefs; designing better institutions to help drive more progress; and the power of reasonable hope.

To listen to this podcast episode, click [here](#).



UPCOMING EVENTS

FEB
8

Ending Poverty Together Workshop

CrossRoads Church (Range Road 275 Red Deer, AB)
\$15. 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM.
Information and registration [here.](#)

FEB
13

Friends for Human Survival café dialogue led by Saima Jamal

Aggüdo coffee shop (338 Tenth Street NW)
Free. 5:00 PM.
Bring one great idea for how to build unity in diversity in Calgary

FEB
18

**WEBINAR- Trump's second term:
NATO, War, and the Economy**

Free. 11:00 AM.
Information and registration [here.](#)

FEB
26

Ploughshares Community Feedback Meeting

Parkdale United Church. (2919 8 Avenue Northwest Calgary, AB)
Free. 7:00 PM.
Save the date! Details & [Eventbrite registration to follow.](#)

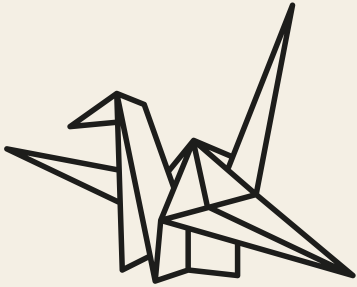
MAR
12

Religion, Diversity, and Civic Literacy with Dr. Erin Reid.

Parkdale United Church (2919 8 Avenue Northwest Calgary, AB)
Free. 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM.
[Eventbrite tickets coming soon.](#)

GOOD NEWS

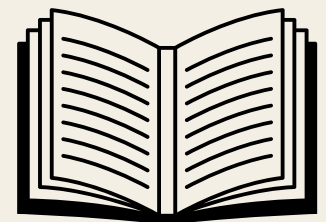
Japanese Organization Nihon Hidankyo was presented with the Nobel Peace Prize on December 10, 2024. The prize was awarded for their efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and for demonstrating that nuclear weapons must never be used again. Founded in 1956, they aim to promote the social and economic rights of all Hibakusha and to ensure that no one ever again is subjected to the catastrophe that befell the Hibakusha. ([The Nobel Prize](#))



2024 appears to be the year in which the smallest percent of children have died since the dawn of humanity.

For most of human history it is estimated that about half of newborns died as children. Such deaths are becoming much less likely. In 2024 it is estimated that about 3.6 percent of children died before age 5. ([The New York Times](#))

Literacy has vastly increased over the past decade; it is now estimated that 90 percent of the world's people are literate. Kristof says "Every three seconds, another person becomes literate." ([The New York Times](#))



Extreme poverty is decreasing.

It is defined as having less than \$2.15 a day. Historically most people lived in extreme poverty. In 2024, an estimated 8.5 percent of the world's people were estimated to be in such dire straits.

([The New York Times](#))

Thailand became the first country in Southeast Asia to hold legal same-sex weddings on January 23, 2025, with more than 1,000 marriage registrations in a single day. ([CBC](#))

