



# VOICE

For the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network  
[www.ipan.org.au](http://www.ipan.org.au)

**Voice No 108**

**January, 2026**

Please share VOICE with organisational members and on your social media platforms but remove the "UNSUBSCRIBE" option at bottom of email before sending as if activated that would unsubscribe you.

## **In this Edition:**

### **IPAN Activities**

National Conference: Adelaide: 24-26th July, 2026

IPAN Media Release: 5th January, 2026: Illegal invasion of Venezuela by the United States must be condemned

IPAN Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

### **AUKUS Issues**

'High Probability of failure': Former top official's dire AUKUS warning by Matthew Knott

Revealed: Australia's secret Anti-Protest Force for US Department of War by Rex Patrick

National Day of Action against AUKUS and US Bases- Feb 21-22- See Action in Sydney

---

## **International Issues**

Stand with Greenland - Solidarity statement

Why Australia is investing in defence infrastructure at five military sites in the Philippines by Hugo Hudge (ABC news)

Venezuelan Solidarity Rally speech by Shirley Wilton

## **Democratic Rights/ Freedom of Speech**

Palestine Advocacy Network speaks up on the recently passed "Hate" Speech laws

## **Palestine/Gaza**

Broad Opposition to President Isaac Herzog visit by Palestine Advocacy Network

SMH full page advertisement: Australians for Humanity demand that the invitation to the President of Israel to visit Australia be withdrawn

## **IPAN Activities**

**IPAN National Conference 2026- Adelaide- 24-26th July, 2026**

**[BOOK NOW](#)**

---

The banner features a blue background with a collage of diverse people. At the top, the text 'IPAN NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2026' is written in large white letters. Below it, 'SPEAKERS | FORUMS | WORKSHOPS | NETWORKING' is listed in smaller white text. On the left, the IPAN logo (a globe with 'IPAN' above it and 'Independent and Peaceful Australia Network' around it) is shown, along with the website 'ipan.org.au'. In the center, the main theme 'TIME TO BREAK FREE FROM THE US' is displayed in large, bold, white letters with a blue outline, followed by the dates 'Adelaide July 24 - 26'. On the right, a list of topics is provided: 'TOPICS INCLUDE CLIMATE CRISIS, INDIGENOUS RIGHTS, AUKUS, PALESTINE, WORLD ORDER'. At the bottom, it identifies 'INTERNATIONAL KEYNOTE SPEAKER US journalist and filmmaker ABBY MARTIN' with a circular portrait of her and a movie poster for 'EARTH'S GREATEST ENEMY'. To the right of the portrait, it says 'More speakers to be announced'.

**Includes Climate Crisis, Indigenous Rights, AUKUS, Palestine, World Order/Disorder and the urgency to break free of the USA.**

**[Book now with this link](#)**

Guest presenter, Abby Martin, film maker of "The Earth's Greatest Enemy". Details of full speaker line up in next edition of Voice.

**IPAN Media Release: 5th January, 2026**

## **Illegal invasion of Venezuela by the United States must be condemned**

The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) calls on Prime Minister Anthony Albanese to unequivocally condemn the illegal invasion of Venezuela by the United States, which culminated in the extra-judicial kidnapping of the nation's democratically elected President, Nicolás Maduro and his wife and top adviser, Cilia Flores.

‘This act of aggression constitutes a flagrant violation of international law and the sovereignty of a peaceful nation’, said IPAN spokesperson, Ms Kathryn Kelly.

---

The international community is already voicing its opposition. Colombian President Gustavo Petro has alerted the world to the attack on Venezuela, and the Spanish Foreign Ministry has called for de-escalation and adherence to international law.

‘Australia must add its voice to this growing chorus of condemnation’, Ms Kelly said.

## **READ ON**

### **IPAN Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade**

#### **Inquiry into the Role of Australia's International Development Program in Preventing Conflict**

##### **I. Introduction and Executive Summary**

The Independent and Peaceful Australia Network (IPAN) is a network of organisations and individuals from across Australia, united by a commitment to a truly independent and peaceful foreign policy. IPAN welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry into the role of Australia's international development program in preventing conflict, as referred by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Senator the Hon Penny Wong.

This submission puts forward a paradigm shift: a Development as Defence doctrine. We argue that in an era defined by an escalating climate crisis, Australia's national security can no longer be guaranteed by traditional military alliances and defence spending alone. Instead, international development focused on climate resilience must form the core of our nation's security strategy.

As a network promoting peace and independence, within a social justice framework, IPAN is united by a commitment to promoting an independent, non-aligned, and peaceful Australian foreign policy. Our core belief is that genuine peace and security are achieved not through military means or geopolitical alignment, but through addressing the

---

root causes of conflict: poverty, inequality, injustice, and the climate crisis. We contend that Australia's international development program, or Official Development Assistance (ODA), can only be an effective tool for conflict prevention if it is fundamentally reformed.

[READ ON](#)

## **AUKUS Issues**

Sydney Morning Herald, 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2026

### **‘High probability of failure’: Former top official’s dire AUKUS warning”**

By Matthew Knott

Plans to develop a new class of nuclear-powered submarine for Australia and the United Kingdom under the AUKUS pact are likely to collapse because of the shambolic state of the UK’s submarine service, a former top British defence official has warned.

[READ ON](#)

---



AFP Assistant Commissioner for AUKUS Sandra Booth at a US naval station. Image: AFP

Michael West Media, 5th January 2026

## **Revealed: Australia's secret Anti-Protest Force for US Department of War**

by Rex Patrick

As public concerns over the AUKUS alliance rise – with expanding US bases in Australia and Donald Trump's belligerent conduct, FOI documents reveal the Government is secretly expanding its 'US Department of War Protest' Force. **Rex Patrick** reports.

Most people won't be aware that the Australian Federal Police (AFP) has established a new command.

Headed by Commissioner Krissy Barrett, our national police force is made up of five regional commands (Northern, Eastern, Central, Southern and Western) and a number of functional commanders dealing variously with crime, fraud and corruption, cyber operations, counter-terrorism and special investigations, and protective security. No surprises there – the AFP structure is well established and pretty much what you would expect.

But now there's a new AFP "AUKUS Command", established with little fanfare and headed by AFP Assistant Commissioner Sandra Booth.

---

## READ ON

This is a text block. You can use it to add text to your template.

**National Day of Action against AUKUS and US Bases Feb  
21-22**

---

**NO TO AUKUS!**

**NO WAR**

**AGAINST CHINA!**



## International Issues

### Stand with Greenland

[SIGN HERE](#)



To the people of Greenland:  
*"We stand with you.*

*We will not let Greenland be treated as a property deal or a bargaining chip. **It is your home and your nation.***

*The threats of a single bully will not decide your future – **only you will.***

*Humanity has fended off corrupt autocrats countless times, and together, **we have what it takes to resist intimidation.***

***We will do what we can to get our leaders to stand up against coercion and draw the line.***

*This is our commitment. You are not alone."*

[SIGN HERE](#)

ABC News, 15th January, 2026

## Why Australia is investing in defence infrastructure at five military sites in the Philippines

by Hugo Hodge



Australian soldiers participated in amphibious landing and assault exercises in the Philippines during Exercise Alon in 2025. (Department of Defence)

Australia's defence spending this year is set to include infrastructure projects at five military bases in the Philippines.

The bases are all located on the island of Luzon, in proximity to the contested South China Sea and self-governing Taiwan — two major flashpoints in regional relations.

The investments come as Australia and the South-East Asian nation are expected to sign a new pact to increase collaboration between their defence forces.

**READ ON**



## **Speech by Shirley Winton at Venezuelan Solidarity Rally- Melbourne**

### **People of Venezuela and Australia need independence from the US.**

I'm on the unceded land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation. I stand in solidarity with the First People's 230 years long struggle for sovereignty, self-determination and liberation from colonialism.

Two weeks have passed since the US invasion of Venezuela and abduction of Venezuelan President Maduro and Celia Flores. In that 2 weeks Trump, the mouthpiece and engine for US imperialism, has escalated threats of invading Iran and Greenland. Openly interfering to overthrow other countries' governments. (We've experienced this US interference here already in the 1975 coup of the Whitlam government.)

#### **READ ON**

### **Democratic Rights/ Freedom of Speech**

## **Palestine Advocacy Network speaks up on the recently passed "Hate Speech" Laws**

### **Media Release: Palestine Advocacy Network: 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2026**

The passage of new federal hate speech and “hate group” laws marks a dangerous escalation in the suppression of political dissent in Australia and represents the most serious threat to protest rights in generations.

Rushed through Parliament under the guise of urgency, the legislation enshrines anti-Palestinian racism in our laws. It was passed without proper scrutiny, without due process safeguards, and without genuine consultation with civil liberties organisations, affected communities, or human rights advocates. Despite repeated warnings, Parliament chose speed over scrutiny and fear over democratic principle. This was clearly a deliberate choice.

These laws dramatically expand state power to police speech, association, and protest. Their vague definitions and broad enforcement mechanisms create a chilling environment in which political advocacy – particularly pro-Palestinian organising and opposition to Israel’s genocide and apartheid – is criminalised. Racism in all its forms must be confronted wherever it occurs. But exploiting tragedy to divide the community, to justify sweeping, ill-defined restrictions on protest and political expression is harmful, counterproductive, and deeply dangerous. Everyone has the right to live free from fear, to gather in community, to speak the truth, and to practise their faith in safety.

[READ ON](#)

## **[Palestine/Gaza](#)**

### **Broad Opposition to President Isaac Herzog Visit By Palestine Advocacy Network**

The Australian Government’s invitation to Israeli President Isaac Herzog has prompted widespread opposition across civil society, including from multiple non-Zionist Jewish organisations, Palestinian advocacy groups and legal experts. Critics cite findings by the UN Commission of Inquiry that Herzog has engaged in rhetoric amounting to incitement to genocide, now referenced in proceedings

before the International Court of Justice, and warn the visit risks breaching Australia's obligations under the Genocide Convention and inflaming community tensions. Significant protests are expected if the visit proceeds, including substantial Jewish participation, reflecting deep concern about the political, legal and social consequences of hosting the Israeli head of state.

### **SMH Full page advertisement**

## **Australians for Humanity demand that the invitation to the President of Israel to visit Australia be withdrawn**

Full details [HERE](#)

*[www.ipan.org.au](http://www.ipan.org.au)*

**Email: [ipan.australia@gmail.com](mailto:ipan.australia@gmail.com)**

---