



## European Parliament Hearing on the „Human Costs of Uranium Weapons“ 14-16 May 2007 **SOLDIERS AFFECTED BY THE USE OF URANIUM WEAPONS?**

The Green Fraction in the European Parliament organized in co-operation with the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons a photo exhibition and hearing on the dangers of uranium weapons to civilians and soldiers in post-conflict areas. EUROMIL presented the views of European soldiers at this event.

Emmanuel **Jacob**, President of EUROMIL and Wim **van den Burg**, Chairman of the Dutch Military Trade Union (AFMP/FNV) demanded in the hearing military authorities to install necessary safeguards to protect soldiers from exposure to toxic uranium-oxide dust in mission areas. The numerous problems like post-mission diseases of operation veterans or lacking identification of areas where depleted uranium has been used were presented to the audience. European soldiers are also very sensitive to the health and environmental needs of the civilian population in post-conflict areas. EUROMIL thus supports the full ban on uranium weapons.

Gerard **Matthew**, US-veteran from the Gulf War gave in the hearing account on the numerous health problems he and his family have to face after Mr. Matthew had been exposed to uranium oxide during his service in the Gulf.

Dr. **Al-Ali**, oncologist from Basra, Iraq presented the desperate situation of cancer patients in Basra. Lack of medication and funding are the main cause that patients, that could otherwise be cured, have to face death by cancers like leukaemia or lymphomas. The remains of tanks, trucks or artillery pieces destroyed by DU ammunition during the last wars pose a permanent health hazard to the local population.

Medical doctors **Katsumi** (Japan) and **Fasy** (USA) presented the scientific and medical grounds for a ban on Uranium Weapons and described the adverse effects of uranium oxide on human health.

A growing number of European soldiers are deployed in areas where the use of Depleted Uranium Weapons has been documented. EUROMIL demands full medical screening of troops, clear identification of areas, where DU weapons were used, pre-mission briefings of troops on the known dangers of DU oxide and regular environmental impact assessment of contaminated areas.

