

Editorial

We are truly living through a period that is both crucial and difficult. The imperialist powers' drive for world domination and the great rivalries amongst them has created unprecedented danger of wars breaking out and spreading. After three big wars (Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq) and many smaller ones, new threats of fresh wars against Iran and other countries are on the agenda. This is a race for global supremacy, with the attempt to crush any country and any people having a different opinions or way of dealing with problems.

The offensive against working people and the popular strata has been generalized with the application of successive neo-liberal measures worldwide. All sectors of human life are being targeted: labour rights, social security, and collective labour agreements. The wealth-producing resources of countries, utilities and the social rights to healthcare, education, culture and sport are being handed over to big capital. Global organizations such as the IMF, the World Bank and the WTO openly intervene, extorting governments and countries. Poverty, hunger and misery are reaching explosive dimensions. At the same time that incredible wealth is being concentrated in just a few hands, huge sums of money are being spent on arms.

The attack on the Twin Towers in New York and on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001 has provided the pretext for this overall offensive on the peoples and countries of the world. The announcement of the so-called counter-terrorist campaign by the USA, with the support of many allies and governments, serves many purposes and has been used in order to unleash two new wars, against Afghanistan and Iraq; to target many countries that resist imperialist domination or do not align themselves with it; to overturn basic principles of international law, the Founding Charter of the UN and the Final Act of Helsinki, while "legitimizing" the principle of "might makes right"; to abrogate any positive international conventions and accords signed in the past few years; and to accelerate further militarization, set up new intervention forces, new Military Bases and the development of new weapons systems to intensify authoritarianism and repression inside countries and to pass new laws that restrict or abolish individual and democratic rights.

The shroud of terrorism that the new order is attempting to spread over the peoples in order to consolidate this barbarity is accompanied by the reinforcement of authoritarianism and repression within the countries. New laws abolishing individual and democratic rights are being enacted and enforced. A basic principle that prevailed in law — the presumption of innocence — is being replaced by the principle of the presumption of guilt, according to which everyone is guilty until his innocence is proven.

The new imperialist order that has been announced by the USA and adopted by the European Union and other powers is aimed at undermining the principles of international law that had been established after World War II. A general offensive has been launched in all parts of international and social

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An Urgent Appeal by the World Peace Council:

Say 'NO' to US Assault on the UN!

"One hundred nations in the UN have not agreed with us on just about everything that's come before them, where we're involved, and it didn't upset my breakfast at all."

— Former US President Ronald Reagan

"Will the United Nations serve the purpose of its founding, or will it be irrelevant?"

— US President George W. Bush

"There is no such thing as the United Nations.... If the UN Secretariat building in New York lost 10 stories, it wouldn't make a bit of difference."

— John Bolton, US Ambassador to the UN

Today, a fierce battle is raging behind closed doors at the United Nations. The issue, nominally, is over the reform of this 60-year-old international body: to make it more "efficient" and "effective," and less "corrupt" and "wasteful." But in reality, the fight is over the essence of the United Nations, over its soul and its historical mission. In a nutshell, the battle is over "corporatization" vs. "democratization" of the United Nations. The imperial powers are trying to replace the principle of "one country one vote" at the UN with that of "one dollar one vote" — the same way as they, like stockholders, control their own private companies. They are trying to make the UN a "lean and mean machine" that would best serve their imperial interests. And the rest of the world is fiercely resisting.

The issue of reform is not new to the United Nations. It started as early as 1946 — merely one year after its foundation — when new specialized programs on children, on refugees, on food aid, on population control, etc., were introduced. In the 1960s, a new round of reform was initiated, which focused on the internal coherence of the UN structure. Beginning in the 1980s, when, during the Reagan years, the United States began to withhold part of its assessed dues to the UN, yet another round of reforms was initiated, which focused on cost reduction and hiring policies. The present round of reforms, which began in 1997, during the first term of Kofi Annan, is a result of a deal with the United States, in which the US would resume full payment of its financial commitments to the UN in exchange for the implementation of deep-rooted reforms demanded by the United States and its allies.

Although the recent round of reforms is being once again pushed by the imperial powers under such apparently benign concepts as staff reduction, reigning in the UN budget, improving internal management, streamlining procedures and increasing structural coherence, all evidence point to the fact that this time, unlike all previous rounds, the issue is not simply over the form, structure and method of operation of the UN, but over its very essence and whose interests — the imperial powers or the rest of the world — it is going to serve in the coming years.

The Nature of the US-Imposed Reforms at the UN

The Outcome Document passed for the reform of the United Nations at the last Gen-

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Anti-war activists, including Rev. Jesse Jackson (L), Cindy Sheehan (3rd L), Rev. Al Sharpton (C) and actress Susan Sarandon (3rd R), march in Broadway with thousands of supporters in New York April 29, 2006, to protest the war in Iraq. The marchers demanded an immediate withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. —

Global Peace Movement Against Imperialist Policies

Alfred L. Marder
President, US Peace Council

Never before in our history have we such need to bring together in one united force all those struggling against the policies of the most arrogant, rightwing cabal that has seized control of our government to profit the banks and corporations. Policies aimed to erase all the social gains for which we have struggled these many years; policies aimed to wipe out the democratic rights embedded in our history; policies of military, economic and political dominance abroad. Policies formulated by neoconservatives with neofacist tendencies who had been waiting in the wings with their policies of pre-emptive strike and aggressive moves for regime change.

How do you explain the fact that the United States is spending over \$600 billion annually to modernize and upgrade its arsenal, including nuclear weapons? While the budget says \$436

billion, remember nuclear weapons are in the energy budget; intelligence is in a secret Black Box budget. This does NOT include monies for the Iraq War that now add up to \$400 billion. How do you explain that the US has almost 1,000 military bases around the world? For what? Against "terrorists? How do you explain that by the year 2008 the US will have 14 nuclear-armed submarines in the Pacific armed with 336 Trident 2 ballistic missiles with 2,000 nuclear warheads! Against terrorists? How do you explain that half of the US fleet of aircraft carriers is in the Pacific? Against terrorists?

Can anyone believe it is for the war against terrorism? Now the US Pentagon calls it officially a "Long War," expected to last 20 years! Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said in discussing 21st Century Defense Review plans: "We're trying to figure out how you

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Communiqué of the International Meeting against Foreign Military Bases Chania/Crete — February 25-26, 2006

Upon invitation of the Greek Committee for International Detente and Peace (EEDYE) and under the auspices of the World Peace Council (WPC) an International meeting of Peace Movements took place on 25th and 26th February 2006 in Chania on the island of Crete in Greece. Under the theme of the meeting "Foreign Military bases-threat to peace and security in the region" a fruitful and deep exchange of views and experiences took place amongst the ten organisations from respective number of countries.

The participants underlined their firm opposition to the presence of foreign military bases in their countries and worldwide, which constitute, amongst other issues, a clear violation of the sovereignty and independence of the respective states and a clear disrespect to the will and wishes of the peoples. Often there is even violation of national legislation and constitutions of the "host countries." They are being used for training and preparation of military interventions and attacks on other sovereign countries and peoples, being at the same time a permanent threat for any possible social or political uprising on national level.

The participants of the meeting observed the US naval and airbase of Souda, one of the biggest in the Mediterranean Sea and joined the massive protests of the peace loving people of Crete, in their demand to shut down this war and terror installation.

The region of the Balkans and the Middle East has moved since many years in the center of interest of the USA, the EU and NATO. Through wars and interventions, occupations and invasions, they want to secure the strategic interests linked with the energy resources and their roads. Borders are changing, new protectorates are being created, and countries are being dismembered, no matter the cost of lives and natural destruction.

The presence of US, British and NATO bases in Europe, the East Mediterranean and the Middle East are a daily threat to the daily life of our peoples. The foreign troops are enjoying almost absolute immunity for their criminal actions. The consequences are starting from the damage of the social life, terror on women and children, pollution of the natural environment and ending with spying on citizens lives, manipulation of the

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life with the aim of consolidating the interests of capital, abolishing and overturning all the gains made on the international and social levels. The basic principle that all countries and peoples have the right to choose their own path and that no one is permitted to intervene in their internal affairs is being trampled upon. Step by step, and at an ever-faster pace, the principle of “might makes right” is being established.

One of the most important aspects of this imperialist offensive is the effort by the United States and its allies to impose fundamental reactionary reforms on the UN in order to bring it more in line with today's imperialist world order. The basic strategy is to push for changes that either directly or indirectly would create the prerequisites for the UN to adopt an aggressive policy and share the responsibility for it. They want thus to legitimize the policy of war and intervention. In recent years in particular, they have been attempting to bring NATO into the UN as a “security mechanism.” The WPC is certainly opposed to these imperialist-imposed reforms. Our position is to defend the UN Charter against all such imperialist offensives.

The situation is, indeed, difficult, but imperialism is not invincible. We draw hope from the fact that great resistance is developing, the popular movement is showing an upswing, multiform movements are taking shape and the working people's and youth movement, amongst others, are regrouping. There is widespread contestation. In a number of countries, such as Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia, new paths are being blazed. Unprecedented anti-war, pro-peace mobilizations are taking place against the war on Iraq.

The struggle for peace under today's conditions must be more than ever linked with the struggle of working people and with social movements. It must be directly connected with the fight against the imperialist system overall so as to rein in its aggressiveness, to change the balance of political power and to overturn it. Immediate priority must be placed on solidarity with the peoples and countries, which, for varying reasons, find themselves targeted by the USA and its allies. Of particular importance to the peace movements is the struggle on the national level to seriously obstruct and to stop our own governments from taking part in imperialist plans.

Let all of us who are struggling for a just and peaceful world contribute to the organized struggle to reduce the blood that is shed unjustly, bringing a faster end to imperialist barbarity. ■

SAY 'NO' TO US ASSAULT ON THE UN!

(from p. 1)

eral Assembly meeting does not reveal by itself that a bitter struggle is going on behind the scenes over the UN reform project today. On the level of generalities, it seems that all parties agree, to one degree or another, with the general aspects of the reforms: everyone wants a more effective, more efficient, more transparent, less wasteful, less corrupt United Nations; everyone wants peace and security in the world, an end to terrorism, an end to genocide and violations of human rights; everyone wants complete elimination of the weapons of mass destruction; everyone wants sustainable socio-economic development; and above all, everyone wants a more unified United Nations.

However, as the saying goes, “the devil is in the details.” A closer look at the specifics of the situation reveals a serious dispute over priorities and the general direction of the reforms. These disputes are between two diametrically opposed views of the essence and the mission of the United Nations: one represented by the United States and imperialist allies, and the other by the G-77 and the Non-Aligned Movement. As an informed UN observer has recently noted, the “real goal” of the present US-backed reforms, unlike all previous ones, “is not merely to tinker with the organization's machinery,” it is a total “renewal of the United Nations.”

This “renewal,” so far as the United States and its Western allies are concerned, involves a return to the original “trusteeship of the powerful” concept that was behind the United Nations at its inception. When George W. Bush declares that, “the United Nations [must] serve the purpose of its founding, or will it be irrelevant,” he is in fact calling for a return of the United Nations to this initial concept and President Roosevelt's “ingrained belief in the rightful primacy of the strong” at the UN. It is based on this concept and the idea of transforming the UN into the global policeman for the imperialist powers that the United States is pushing for a specific set of reform priorities and directions at the UN today.

The Outcome Document targets almost every aspect of the UN structure and its operations. But the United States is forcefully pushing for reform in certain areas, blocking reform in certain other areas, and totally ignoring the issue in a third group of areas. On the whole, the US is trying to push the reforms in the direction of strengthening the policing and “law and order” functions of the United Nations — e.g., peace and security, counter-terrorism, “the right to protect,” etc.; undermining the UN's economic and social development and humanitarian assistance functions — through forcing budget cuts, shifting resources, imposing restructuring on certain UN bodies and agencies like the ECOSOC, UNCTAD, UNESCO, etc.; establishing more

super-power control over the UN budget and expenditures — through moving the control of the UN budget out of the hands of the General Assembly and placing it under the control of the Secretary General and the Secretariat, which it is more easily able to control; removing the undesirable mandates of the United Nations — especially targeted are those on the issue of the Palestinian rights — in the name of increasing efficiency, decreasing bureaucracy and better use of resources; etc. In short, US imperialism is trying to transform the UN into an efficient, NATO-like machinery serving the interests of the major powers; a “lean and mean” machine that is solely designed for rapidly responding to any threat to the “peace and security” of the major powers anywhere in the world.

The struggle to defeat these US attacks on the UN has now become an integral part of the general struggle against imperialism. If the US succeeds in this criminal endeavor, a lot of hopes for the maintenance of peace will be dashed in the world.

The Need for Active Mobilization of the Peace Movement

During the past 60 years, all of progressive and peace forces, as well as the developing countries in general, have benefited from the existence and functioning of the United Nations. Despite all its problems, during the past 60 years the UN has been able to create a more balanced and more peaceful world than would have existed otherwise. It has provided the only international platform for the collective action and resistance of the developing countries against imperialism — how else could the Non-Aligned Movement and the G-77 have emerged on the world scene if it weren't for the United Nations? The UN has been and continues to be an important center of activity and influence for a growing number of antiwar, anti-proliferation and anti-imperialist Non-Government Organizations.

Today, in spite of all our past and present criticisms of the UN, we only need to imagine how our world would look if the United States managed to carry out its reforms and succeeded in turning the United Nations into a mere extension of its security arm. It would be a huge disaster for the world and a great set back for the global anti-imperialist movement if the UN were completely transformed into another NATO-like organization in the hands of the United States and its allies against the developing world and the remaining socialist countries.

Behind the apparently benign and routine appearance of the US-imposed reform of the United Nations lies a vast ocean that separates the two opposing sides this project. On the one side, are the imperialist powers — led by the United States — who seek to maintain and even strengthen their exploitative and oppressive hegemony over

the whole world, and on the other, are the developing nations, representing billions of human beings, who, in search of a better life that they deserve, are fighting for a just and equitable international order. One is fighting for maintaining, and even intensifying, the exploitative and oppressive status quo, and the other is struggling to change the present order of things. That is why for the great majority of the people of the world the struggle to save the United Nations is yet another struggle that is directly linked with their struggle against imperialism around the world. The unprecedented assault on the UN by the United States and its other imperialist allies is not something that the world peace movement can afford to ignore.

Let us also not forget that at the UN we are dealing with States, many of whom are political, economic and even military hostages to the US and other imperialist states. As a result, they may not be in a position to put up an effective fight because of their restrictions. A broad mass movement is therefore needed in support of the developing states in order to block the US assault on the United Nations today. There must be an urgent call for a global mass mobilization around the issue of the US-imposed UN reforms. Without a global mass mobilization against these reforms, the developing states will not have the needed strength to overcome the United States' complete takeover and reorientation of the UN.

Unfortunately, there are people who assume — even within the peace and anti-imperialist movement — that the struggle to save the United Nations against the US and its allies has already been lost. But this is no an accurate picture. There are bitter battles being fought at the UN, the outcome of which will determine the fate of many of our other battles for years to come.

We must make the struggle over the UN a high-priority item, an urgent issue that needs to be addressed urgently by the global peace movement. We must act as the bridge between the developing nations' struggles at the UN and the broad peace and anti-imperialist movement internationally. We must make the world aware of how important the UN is for the success of the international peace movement and what a disaster would befall on all of us if the US reform is carried out according to the US plan.

It is for this reason that the World Peace Council calls upon the global peace movement to get in the thick of the battle over the ongoing reform of the United Nations but also assume a leadership role in mass mobilization around the issue. We must get directly and actively involved in the developing countries' (G-77 and the Non-Aligned Movement) struggle to block the US-imposed reforms at the United Nations. We urge the global peace movement to join the “International Campaign to Save the UN Charter” initiated by the WPC at its Executive Committee Meeting in Brasilia on May 20, 2006. ■



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- Vietnam Peace Committee (VPC)

NO NUKES! NO WAR ON IRAN!

Jacqueline Cabasso*

Seymour Hersh's stunning article in the April 17 *New Yorker*, "The Iran Plans," revealed that the Bush administration has intensified planning for bombing Iran, and that U.S. combat troops are already in Iran preparing for military operations and recruiting local supporters from minority groups. *Of gravest concern, Hersh reported that the Bush administration is giving serious attention to the option of using nuclear weapons to attack buried targets.* Regardless of whether the nuclear issues can be resolved, the administration seems committed to regime change in Iran. President Bush has refused to rule out a U.S. nuclear attack on Iran if Iran doesn't halt its uranium enrichment activities.

An attack on Iran would be an act of aggression, barred by the UN Charter and prosecuted at Nuremberg. If executed, U.S. military action would apply the Bush doctrine of "preventive" war in an unprecedented way that would set the template for years or decades of regional and global violence, unrestrained by law. U.S. use of nuclear weapons against Iran would be an atrocious act violating the existing near taboo that has held since the U.S. devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. That would in turn make it far more likely that the weapons will be used elsewhere as well — including against U.S. cities. With the majority of the American people now opposing the war in Iraq, it's almost inconceivable that the Bush Administration could be planning to launch another illegal, immoral war.

But as Seymour Hersh revealed, "While publicly advocating diplomacy in order to stop Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapon, [the Bush Administration] has increased clandestine activities inside Iran and intensified planning for a possible major air attack.... Air Force planning groups are drawing up lists of targets, and teams of American combat troops have been ordered into Iran, under cover, to collect targeting data and to establish contact with anti-government ethnic-minority groups." *The Washington Post* independently reported that Pentagon planners are "contemplating tactical nuclear devices" to take out deeply buried underground targets in Iran.

With the risk of use of nuclear weapons climbing towards levels not reached since the darkest days of the Cold War, where is the public outcry? What happened to the massive anti-nuclear movement of the 1980s? Why has the anti-war movement been so quiet about nuclear weapons?

When the Cold War abruptly ended, activists and ordinary people everywhere collectively breathed a huge sigh of relief, hoping and believing that they had walked away from a nuclear holocaust, and putting nuclear weapons out of their minds. Meanwhile, deeply embedded in the military-industrial-academic complex, the nuclear juggernaut rolled on, as militarists in the Pentagon and scientists at the nuclear weapons labs conjured up new justifications to project the nuclear weapons enterprise into the future. In 1992, Colin Powell, then-Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, complained, "We no longer have the luxury of having a threat to plan for." In the early 1990's, "nonproliferation" — stopping the spread of nuclear weapons — was turned on its head. The new buzzword was "counterproliferation" — including the threat of a nuclear strike to dissuade other countries from even thinking about developing nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons that could threaten the United States or its allies.

During the 1990s, nuclear weapons — especially U.S. nuclear weapons — fell off the public's radar screen. Questions of

nuclear arms control, nonproliferation and disarmament became increasingly isolated from issues of concern to most ordinary people and increasingly relegated to elite policy circles. Credentialed "experts" redefined post-Cold War nuclear priorities almost solely in terms of securing Russian "loose

those funders still in the field, increasingly withdrew support for independent local and regional groups advocating for the abolition of, rather than U.S. control of, nuclear weapons.

Unchallenged by the arms control community, and oblivious to calls for disarma-

national missile defense system U.S. policy. Indeed, the Clinton Administration laid the groundwork for the Bush Administration's unilateral and aggressive foreign policy, in which the potential use of nuclear weapons is now being openly considered.

Thwarted in the national arena, U.S. disarmament groups gravitated towards international forums. They found, at the month-long 1995 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review and Extension Conference at United Nations Headquarters in New York, that the U.S. government, backed by a consortium of well-funded American arms control groups, was demanding indefinite, unconditional extension of the treaty, while barely acknowledging its disarmament requirements.

Tensions were high during the Conference, as many non-nuclear states expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of progress towards disarmament by the nuclear weapon states. They stressed the mutually reinforcing nature of the disarmament and non-proliferation obligations, and warned that an international system of nuclear apartheid was not sustainable. Frustrated and dismayed that the arms controllers were avoiding the "D" word — disarmament — dozens of NGOs from around the world adopted a comprehensive nuclear disarmament platform calling for the "definite and conditional" extension of the NPT and immediate commencement of negotiations on a verifiable treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons, with the treaty to be completed by the year 2000. By the end of the conference, hundreds of groups had signed the "Abolition 2000 Statement," and the Abolition 2000 Global Network to Eliminate Nuclear Weapons was born. Today, more than 2000 groups in over 90 countries are affiliated with Abolition 2000 (www.abolition2000.org).

In the run up to the U.S. attack on Iraq, premised in part on the wholly unsubstantiated

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nuke" and keeping them out of the hands of "rogue" states and terrorists.

Meanwhile, independent grassroots groups monitoring local nuclear weapons facilities were documenting and trying to put the brakes on U.S. plans to replace full scale underground nuclear tests with a new generation of high-tech experimental laboratory facilities and supercomputers. For the most part, this information was kept out of Washington, DC discourse by arms control lobbyists. As viewed from the corridors of power, apparently, it was desirable to dismiss the fact that nuclear weapons research and development was going forward, while overlooking evolving counterproliferation policies reliant on "credible" U.S. nuclear threats. To make matters worse, as the decade wore on, funding for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working for arms control and disarmament began to dry up, and

ment, the Clinton Administration squandered the historically unprecedented period of opportunity that appeared with the end of the Cold War. Clinton's 1994 Nuclear Posture Review was a blueprint for nuclear weapons business as usual. It was the Clinton Administration that in the mid-90s brokered the Faustian Bargain to replace full scale underground nuclear testing with the misleadingly named "Stockpile Stewardship" program, at that critical juncture, making the decision to massively reinvest in, rather than begin to dismantle the nuclear weapons research and production infrastructure. Clinton's 1997 Presidential Decision Directive-60 reaffirmed the threatened first use of nuclear weapons as the "cornerstone" of U.S. national security, and contemplated an expanded role for nuclear weapons to "deter" nuclear, chemical or biological weapons. And Clinton signed legislation making deployment of a



World Peace Forum 2006

June 23 – 28, 2006 — Vancouver, B.C., Canada

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No to Foreign Military Bases in Bulgaria! Yes to Peace!

Declaration of the National Conference on Foreign Military Bases

Organized by the Bulgarian National Council of Peace — Sofia, Bulgaria, 25 February 2006

On February 25, 2006, a National Conference with international participation took place in Sofia, Bulgaria. The Conference discussed the consequences of the eventual establishment of foreign military bases in Bulgaria, which is the direction of the negotiations conducted between the governments of the Republic of Bulgaria and the USA.

Eminent scholars and public figures from Bulgaria and abroad participated in the meeting, including Mr. Frank Bolou from Germany, Mr. Nikos Zokas from Greece and Mr. Ramsey Clark from the USA. Written messages were sent by Mr. Genadii Zjuganov, Chairman of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party of the Russian Federation, and by Mr. Orlando Fundora Lopez, Chairman of the Cuban Movement for Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples and President of the World Peace Council.

The discussion was focused on a series of important arguments against the disposition of foreign military bases in Bulgaria, which will constitute a serious threat to Bulgaria in several ways:

1. The sovereignty of the Republic of Bulgaria will be seriously harmed. The foreign military bases in our country will significantly impede the independence of Bulgaria's domestic and foreign policy. The permanent military presence of a foreign state will turn our country into trusteeship territory. In addition, the personnel of the foreign military bases will not be under the jurisdiction of the Bulgarian law, which is a direct violation of one of the most essential characteristic of a sovereign state — full jurisdiction over every person on its territory.

2. The establishment of foreign military bases on the Bulgarian territory will, in essence, lead to expropriation of certain parts of our country. Practically, the administration, management and use of these parts of our territory will be given to a foreign state. This raises a serious question: will it be ever possible, and to what extent, to free our territory from the integrated foreign military bases? Bulgaria will be turned into a permanent military firing ground for a foreign country.



3. The national security of our country will be seriously jeopardized. Through foreign military bases, Bulgaria will become a target of military and terrorist attacks, from which our country was protected till now.

4. The use of foreign military bases for aggressive acts against other states will turn our country into an accomplice to aggression, together with a whole series of subsequent international legal responsibilities.

5. The relations of Bulgaria with a number of neighboring and distant countries will be seriously harmed. Specifically, our relations with the Russian Federation will be deeply damaged. The tension thus built up among the states will be a threat to peace in the region and beyond.

6. The foreign military bases will be an origin of public manifestations incompatible with the legal order and the public order.

Such bases unavoidably incite the appearance of prostitution, drug addiction and crimes. One should not exclude the possibility that the bases will turn into prisons and places for torture of political opponents.

7. The foreign military bases cause a serious environmental pollution to our country. The military base of Zmejevo is a clear evidence of that.

8. The foreign military bases will get our country into financial and material difficulties that will be unbearable today when Bulgarian people are suffering from hunger and misery.

In light of the consequences presented, the Conference persistently proposes that the Bulgarian government renounce the intention to give our territory for the establishment of foreign military bases. Neither the Government nor the Parliament should make such decisions that are so problematic and fateful to our country. The issue of the establishment of the foreign military bases, as well as the question of sending the Bulgarian army abroad, can only be decided by reference to the electorate, i.e., through a referendum.

The Government should not forget the lessons of history. Sixty-five years ago, another Bulgarian government linked our fate to the Nazi Germany, which was seeking world hegemony. It is well known what the consequences were for Germany as well as for Bulgaria and the Government that took such a fatal decision. By integrating us in the most inappropriate way to another state, which is also seeking world hegemony, the Bulgarian Government is once again exposing our country to the same risks as did the Government in 1941. Bulgaria should see its future not in confrontation with one or another country, not by participating in aggressive military blocs and alliances, but in the establishment and maintenance of stable friendly relations with all peoples. Peace and social justice both within the country and in the relations with other peoples should be a supreme value to Bulgaria.

We appeal to the Government of Bulgaria to show wisdom and a sense of responsibility before the people and the history. ■

RESOLUTION CALLING FOR A SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR DISARMAMENT

Meeting in Volgograd, Russia, on May 9, 2006 to commemorate the historic contribution of the Russian people to the ultimate defeat of fascism in the decisive Battle of Stalingrad, the Executive Board of the International Association of Peace Messenger Cities, so designated by the General Assembly of the United Nations,

Recalling that the founding mission of the United Nations was to prevent the scourge of war for future generations,

Recalling that the first resolution of the newly founded United Nations called for the abolition of nuclear weapons,

Deeply concerned by the wars raging in Iraq and Sudan, among others, with untold deaths and destruction, and the dangerous tensions surrounding the issue of nuclear weapons with Iran and North Korea,

Deploing the increased traffic and manufacture of conventional and small arms fueling conflicts globally, and the lack of agreement by nations to supervise and control illegal trafficking

Deeply troubled that the present international situation is rife with the potential for the outbreak of a global war with catastrophic consequences,

Resolve to call for the General Assembly of the United Nations to mandate a Special Session for Disarmament 4 as an introduction to an International Decade for Disarmament,

To encourage National Commissions for Disarmament to facilitate public hearings, meetings and conferences involving broad-based civil society to develop national programs for disarmament,

To develop a schedule for the involvement of the national commissions in the deliberations of the various departments, committees and agencies of the United Nations,

To direct this resolution to all Heads of States, Missions to the United Nations, Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to Non-Governmental Organizations and the media.

Growing Opposition to the US Bases in Japan

Tadaaki Kawata*

The US bases in Japan symbolically show that Japan is still dominated by and subordinated to the US. Even 60 years after the end of WWII, there are 135 US bases with 54,000 soldiers all over Japan including Okinawa (islands in the southern part of Japan) and even in metropolitan Tokyo. These bases cause serious problems over the lives of residents including destruction of environment including noise, plane crashes and crime. Furthermore, Japanese authority could neither limit any US activities nor capture criminals, since extraterritorial privileges are entitled to US military personnel. At the same time, expeditionary forces with a task of invading other countries are deployed such as the Marine Corp and aircraft carrier task force. Thus Japan is made a big fortress of US aggression and interference. However there is recently growing public opposition to the new plan to reinforce these bases under the new realignment of global US military presence.

New Realignment Plan of US Military Presence

Bush administration is now putting forward plans to arbitrarily strengthen the functions of US bases in. The plans include the construction of a new US Marine Corps base in Okinawa, the relocation of a new US army command to US Camp Zama in Kanagawa Prefecture (next to Tokyo), the deployment of a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to Yokosuka Base (near to the entrance of Tokyo Bay), and the relocation of a carrier-borne air wing to the US Marine Corps Iwakuni Air Station in Yamaguchi Prefecture (next to Hiroshima Pref.). The common aim of these plans is to dramatically enhance the strike capabilities of the US armed forces in Japan (Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps) in interventionist wars. What's more, outrageous plans are being made to force the Japanese public to pay additional costs for the realignment of US military bases in Japan (around \$26 billion).

All these moves have generated great public concerns even among those who are in favor of Japan-US military alliance and the US military presence in Japan. Opposition is developing throughout the country with concerned prefecture governors and mayors of cities and towns taking a lead, since the government and ruling parties are trying to impose the plan agreed upon with the US without consulting local authorities.

Iwakuni: Residents Say 'No' to US Forces Relocation

An overwhelming majority of residents of Iwakuni City in Yamaguchi Prefecture on March 12, 2006 rejected the planned relocation of a US carrier-borne aircraft unit to the US Marine Corps Iwakuni Air Station.

In the first referendum held on the realignment plan of US forces in Japan, nearly 90 percent of all voters, or 43,433 residents, voted against the relocation plan, while 5,369 voted for it. Voter turnout was 58.68 percent, clearing the requirement of 50 percent needed for the referendum to be valid.

Commenting on the referendum results at a press conference on the same day, Iwakuni Mayor Ihara Katsusuke stated that the city would continue to urge the government to withdraw the relocation plan. "It is important to send the government the residents' decision regarding their safety," he said.

The Japan Peace Committee had made



Atsugi Air Base Near Tokyo

an effort to bring success to the referendum in cooperation with a wide range of citizens. Yoshioka Mitsunori, chair of the local organization "Let's Check 'Nay' to the Acceptance

deployment of a US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier entails: (1) The danger of nuclear accidents and radioactive contamination in the Tokyo metropolitan area that could affect



Rally Surrounding Iwakuni Air Base

of US Carrier-borne Aircraft Association," issued a statement stressing that Iwakuni residents have won an "historic victory" by overcoming interferences, pressures, and

about 30 million residents. (2) Yokosuka will be further strengthened as a forward deployment base for US military intervention in any part of the world. This is more than likely

7,000 US Military Personnel Arrested in Japan Since 1973

The number of crimes committed by US personnel in Japan from 1973 to 2004 reached 6,933. Of these, 683 or about 10 percent were serious crimes such as murder, robbery, arson, and sexual molestation or rape. During the 5-year period 2000-2004, 461 cases were recorded of US personnel-committing crimes, including 31 felonies. Robbery came on top of these vicious offenses at 14, followed by 12 sexual assaults. There also were three arsons and two murder cases. Cases included a US soldier inflicting sexual violence and bodily injury on a woman in Sasebo City in Nagasaki Prefecture (January 2004); two US servicemen arrested on the spot for the attempted murder of two Japanese men in Morioka City in Iwate Prefecture (June 2004); and a US soldier abusing a Japanese woman at US Camp Zama in Kanagawa Prefecture (September 2004).

boycott campaigns. He stressed that the result gives a heavy blow to the Japanese and US governments.

Yokosuka: People Against Nuclear-Powered Aircraft Carrier

In Kanagawa Prefecture, peace activists, trade unionists, and local assembly members started off on a week-long march calling for the return of US military base sites on March 29, 2006. Kanagawa is burdened with the second highest concentration of US military bases after Okinawa. In the port city of Yokosuka, marchers called for opposition to the plan to deploy a US nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to the US Yokosuka Naval Base from 2008.

There are three dangers that the planned

judging from the fact that an aircraft carrier strike force was the first to be deployed in the US war against Afghanistan and Iraq. (3) Yokosuka Port will forever be used as the only foreign homeport of a US aircraft carrier.

The Kanagawa governor and heads of the prefecture's two cities that host US bases request that the government sincerely respond to local demands.

Okinawa: 35,000 Okinawans Rally Against New US Base Plan

About 35,000 citizens took part in a rally in Ginowan City on March 5, 2006 to urge the Japanese government to listen to Okinawans opposing the plan to construct a new US air base in the coastal area of Nago City (Henoko) in Okinawa Prefecture. This new US Marine Corps base, if constructed,

will destroy about ten hectares of the habitat of a rare species of dugong in waters off the US military facility.

In Okinawa, the government plan to construct a new on-sea base off the Henoko district of Nago City as the substitute for the US Marine Corps Futenma Air Station was thwarted by the residents' long and tenacious opposition. After this, the Japanese and US governments agreed to construct a base on the shoreline of US Marine Corps Camp Schwab. This plan, however, is sharpening the contradictions with local residents, and the struggle to block the plan is spreading throughout Okinawa.

With many placards reading, "We won't yield an inch anywhere in Okinawa for a new US base" in their hands, young couples with children, university students, and elderly people joined the rally held at a sandy beach.

Speaking on behalf of the rally's sponsors, Yamauchi Tokushin, former Okinawa Prefectural Government Treasurer, said, "Let us make the Japanese government realize that the magma is beginning to rise. This is what our rally is all about."

Mayor Iha Yoichi of Ginowan City, where the US Futenma base is located, said as follows: "In August 2004, a large US helicopter crashed at Okinawa International University and burned. In order to eradicate such accidents, the US forces must immediately stop flights over the residential areas located around the base. The danger of accidents we face must be removed. Both governments must heed the earnest wish of citizens and the Futenma base be closed and returned without delay."

Contradiction Deepening

A problem is not only the reinforcement of the US bases, but also the up-grade of the Japan-US military alliance which would involve Japan more into the US preemptive-attack strategy. For instance, the plan enables the Japanese Self-Defense Force (SDF) to take part in joint operations abroad with US forces. Both governments of Japan and the US confirmed that their military forces will further step up their integration by consolidating their command functions, the co-use of military bases, expansion of joint exercises, and integration of their intelligence and communication networks as well as their strategy and operations, in order to ensure that they can intervene together in conflicts around the world. Placing the SDF under US command as its supplementary forces to make Japan more subservient to the United States is the hallmark of the Japan-US military integration.

However all these moves can not but further deepen the contradiction with Japanese public opinion for peace. For instance, a recent opinion poll showed that majority is in favor of the peaceful Article 9 of Japanese Constitution, with which a US Realignment plan has become more and more incompatible:

"The Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes." "In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized."

* Tadaaki Kawata is a member of the Standing Board of Directors, Japan Peace Committee.

Communiqué of the Executive Committee Meeting of the World Peace Council

Brasilia, Brazil — 18-20 May, 2006

The Executive Committee of the World Peace Council concluded its meeting on 19th and 20th May 2006 in Brasilia, for the first time after decades in South America.

The day before the EC meeting, an International Seminar hosted by CEBRAPAZ, took place at the House of Representatives of Brazil, in which dozens of Brazilian MPs and 20 foreign guests from 13 countries analyzed the world situation and the need to strengthen the struggle for peace against war, occupation and imperialist domination.

After a very fruitful and rich discussion upon the agenda of the EC and about the main tendencies in the current world situation, having taken into account the growing peace movement and its actions all over the world and the new threats and dangers to world peace and security, the EC reached and publishes the following statement:

The meeting of the WPC Executive Committee in Brazil, in Latin America, truly constitutes a special moment in the history of our organization, taking place as it is during a period when great contradictions are intersecting in this region in the most telling way.

On the one hand imperialist aggressiveness is accelerating and intensifying, creating serious threats on our planet. At the same time, however, the peoples' movements for peace are growing massively all over the world against it.

The WPC is welcoming today the developments taking place on this continent. We could thus say that the heart of progressive mankind, and therefore the heart of the peace movement, the WPC, beats in Latin America — in Cuba, in Venezuela, in Bolivia, where their peoples, defying imperialist intimidation, are finding and blazing new paths to the peoples' benefit; likewise, in Brazil, where the government is defending world peace and the Latin American integration. The WPC reiterates its demands for the lifting of the US blockade against Cuba and for the release of the five Cuban political prisoners from the US prisons.

This is being proved also by the growing peoples' movement in the whole Latin America witnessed as well during the massive demonstrations at the summit of the peoples of America in Mar de Plata, Argentina (November 2005) and the World Social Forum in Caracas, Venezuela (January 2006).

The attention of the world humanity is these days focused on Iran, which we cannot examine in isolation from general developments. To a great degree, it is linked to the overall imperialist policy, first and foremost by the USA, which is trying in many ways to impose global domination to control the wealth-producing resources of the planet and to subjugate any country or people that put up resistance.

These very days we are reminded to some extent of the situation prior to the war against Iraq. A propaganda campaign has been launched to familiarize public opinion with the issue and to justify a new war. The immediate and essential task of the peace movements, the peoples' movements and naturally the WPC, is to mobilize the peoples to denounce pre-emptive war policy and thus to stop a new war, deeply linked with the demand for immediate withdrawal of all occupation forces from Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine. The WPC is witnessing in this regard that the mobilisations of the

anti-war movement can result in pressure to the governments.

Today it becomes even more eminent to denounce and fight back the nuclear blackmail and threats of the US administration, which could end in a total disaster with unending consequences. The WPC considers it to be a provocation by the USA, which, along with its main allies, is the biggest nuclear threat to mankind, to present itself as being the protector of humanity from the nuclear danger. The WPC reiterates



its demands for the abolition of all nuclear weapons, and the stop of creation of new ones. The WPC rejects and condemns the pre-emptive war doctrine of the US administration in this context.

The USA is trying to abuse the United Nations as an instrument for legitimizing their plans and domination. However it faces difficulties and contradictions. In cases where the USA cannot impose its will on the UN, "willing allies" appear, good for any violation of International law and UN principles. The WPC is underlining the urgency to fight back the plans to incorporate NATO into the UN system, thus effort at the same time to wash the biggest war machinery (NATO) clean from all its crimes and interventions.

WPC will promote a campaign to rally broader forces around the struggle against war — for a world order of peace and justice based on the founding charter of the UN.

At the same time we are witnessing a further militarization of the EU, whereas its major forces are competing with other Imperialist forces for the control of markets and resources around the world. In total discordance with the will of the peoples in Europe, the reactionary content of the "EU Constitution" is being applied step by step in all spheres of life, despite the "NO" in the French and Dutch Referenda.

WPC will strengthen the cooperation with other social and peoples' movements against the neoliberal policies. Over the past year widespread privatizations and the deregulation of services have been promoted with growing urgency and pressure in order that conditions might be created for the multinational corporations to engage in yet greater plundering of social wealth. Common actions and initiatives for the cuts in military budgets are becoming more and more important as a common ground for peace and other social movements.

Likewise the USA and its allies are challenging even the will of peoples expressed in elections or referenda. The WPC denounces by principle all interventions such as in Palestine, Belarus, Cyprus and Zimbabwe and the prohibition of elected state leaders

and officials to travel abroad.

Africa is the target of new economic and political interference and exploitation by old and neo-colonial rulers, aiming in the further plundering of its resources and at the same time ground for distribution of new markets. The WPC denounces the imperialist imposition of economic sanctions on countries that do not comply with the wish of the powerful, with the pretext of lack of democracy, violations of "human rights" and underlines the sovereign rights of each people for self-deter-

The WPC supports the peaceful and independent reunification of the Korean peninsula and expresses its solidarity with the Korean people in their fight against the military presence of US troops on their soil. The WPC firmly opposes the acceleration of the integration of Japan in the military plans of the US strategy and the reinforcement of the US bases in Japan.

The Executive Committee expresses its profound solidarity with the Palestinian people, in its ongoing suffering from the western backed and tolerated Israeli occupation. We reaffirm our support to the only possible solution of the conflict with the establishment of an independent State of Palestine in the borders of June 1967 and with East Jerusalem as its capital. We demand the complete withdrawal of Israeli troops and the release of all political prisoners.

The WPC is committing itself to strengthen even more the coordinated efforts for the removal of all Foreign military bases, which constitute a violation of the sovereignty of the countries wherever they are located and a daily threat to the respective region and peoples. We denounce furthermore the common military exercises of the USA in various parts of the world.

Despite the negative tendencies and contradictions, the WPC is expressing its strong will and optimism that the situation described above, is not a one-way street. As much everyday, the peoples' conscience is growing, along with the understanding that this can not be the future of mankind, there will be more and more prospect to create a peaceful and just world without war, nuclear weapons and imperialist domination. The peoples' struggles in each and every country with the coordination on regional and international level can and will open new roads for peace and the benefit of the vast majority of humanity. The WPC will contribute to its best level to this. ■

More about the WPC

Executive Committee:

The Assembly of the WPC in its last meeting elected a 39-member Executive Committee composed of the respective member organizations from the following countries:

- Asia and the Pacific:** Australia; Bangladesh; India; Japan; DPR Korea; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Vietnam.
- Africa:** Angola; Congo Brazz.; Congo Dr.; Senegal; South Africa; Tanzania; Zimbabwe.
- Middle East:** Egypt; Iraq; Palestine; Syria; Yemen.
- Americas:** Argentina; Brazil; Canada; Costa Rica; Cuba; Dominican Republic; Mexico; Panama; USA; Venezuela.
- Europe:** Cyprus; Czech Republic; France; Germany; Greece; Portugal; Spain; Turkey.

Regional Coordinators:

Mexican Movement for Peace and development MOMPARE (Regional Coordinator for the Americas); Vietnam Peace Committee VPC (Regional Coordinator for Asia & the Pacific); Egyptian Peace Committee (Regional Coordinator for the Middle East); Portuguese Council for Peace and Cooperation (Regional Coordinator for Europe); Congo Peace Committee (Regional Coordinator for Africa).

Co-Presidents:

Argentina (MOPASSOL); India (AIPSO); Palestine (PCPJ).

Honorary Presidents:

Romesh Chandra; Evangelos Mahairas.

THE CUBAN REVOLUTION: STILL HERE

Manuel E. Yepe*

At the beginning of the 90's, when the Soviet and the Eastern European socialist systems were crumbling, many specialists forecasted the imminent fall of the Cuban Revolution.

But such a happening did not take place, because the vast majority of Cubans support the project and do not want it to be reversed. I will try to explain why.

First of all, the Revolution in Cuba fulfills and strongly upholds Cuban national independence, cultural identity and social justice, three very dear goals for which Cubans have fought and died since 1868.

Secondly, because the Cuban Revolution was, neither a result of the Cold War, nor a Revolution imported from abroad.

Thirdly, because the Cuban political system operates in a way in which citizens truly participate day after day in decision making. This has enhanced a participative culture in Cuba, very different from the ways politics work in other parts of the world.

And last but not least, because in their everyday life Cuban people evidence and feel important advantages prompted by the revolutionary process. This is due to the increasing social mobility experienced by the Cuban population as a whole during the last four and a half decades.

The Revolution that triumphed on January 1, 1959, the one we are still engaged in, was not an accident; it was not an isolated event. It was the logical consequence of a long history of battles that finally led to true and creative self-determination. Only then our aspirations were attainable, when we Cubans added to our ideals and spirit of sacrifice the element that made us sufficiently strong: the unity of our people. Unity was something lacking in previous independence and revolutionary movements in Cuba.

In the 19th Century, when Cuba and Puerto Rico were the only colonies under Spanish rule in America, Cuba faced three basic trends of thought. One that called for collaboration with Spain through reforms of colonial rule; another one candidly requested the island's annexation to the newly born US empire, and the third, composed by the healthiest and most revolutionary forces of the island: those who saw in independence the only viable path and went ahead to conquer it.

The first tendency practically disappeared in Cuba and can be found only in very scarce Euro centrist minds. The second is the basis of present anti independence, pro American thought promoted by antirevolutionary ideology. The strength of this way of thinking cannot be measured by emigration tendencies which are basically related to economic circumstances and similar to the emigration patterns of all underdeveloped countries.

There is no doubt that the independence wars fought along the second part of the 19th Century cleared the trail that was to be followed by subsequent Cuban generations in order to fulfill the dreams and aspirations of the founding fathers.

When Cuba defended as it still defends its integrity and its right to self-determination, the original ideals that were born during the anti-colonial wars are being kept alive.

Fierce criticisms about the failure of Cuban socialism, singing the requiem of its economic system, would be valid if the Third World, or at least Latin America, presented an encouraging economic and social scene against which Cuba could not stand comparison.

But the opposite is the case. Cuba continues to lead the continent, including the US, on the basic indicators of education, health and equity, despite the blockade imposed by

the US, despite the need of high defensive expenditures in order to face aggressions, despite the denial of foreign credit, despite the great power of its enemies and despite the fact that Cuba has been experimenting a transition to socialism, on its own basis but learning from models and conceptions experienced in other countries, with its positive and negative events.

Cuba presents First World level indicators for most basic human rights, compared to the devastating regional spectacle of countries sunk in misery, unemployment, hunger and desperation. Cuba is the only country in the region where illiteracy, beggarliness, social violence, childhood and old aged helplessness and other social disgraces are not present in its population.

Cuban expenditure on health, as a percentage of gross domestic product, is higher than any country in the hemisphere except for Canada and 34% higher than the United States.⁵ Cuba's health policy has been characterised as a dual policy of equity and priority for vulnerable groups.⁶ Although the country's health policy is less than faultless, important lessons remain to be learned. Despite tremendous scarcity, the country has managed to achieve enviable health indicators through a focus on primary health care

Cuba is precisely the confirmation of the viability of socialism as a socio-economic system for developing countries of Latin America. Capitalism has failed completely in almost the entire region in the basic task of providing human beings with a decent life.

That is precisely the reason why Cuba is such a feared example: because it threatens today's main dogma, the inevitability of capitalism as a system.

What worries the US ruling class about Cuba is not the democratic question (for they always applaud unpopular military coups against inconvenient governments to safeguard their illegitimate interests). It is not a question of legislation (the Patriotic Act violates many basic democratic principles). It is not certainly the practice of a death penalty (the US leads by far the way in the Western hemisphere). And it is not human rights or civil liberties (tortures in US prisons in Iraq, Afghanistan and in the Guantanamo Naval base confirm this).

To find an intelligible explanation for the singularity of the treatment meted out to Cuba it would be necessary to search along different paths.

One basic reason would undoubtedly be the Cuban commitment to persevere with the socialist system proclaimed in 1961. From the point of view of capitalist fundamentalism, Cuban socialism is a serious anomaly to be corrected and Cuba put back on the right track, fully integrating our country into planetary market oriented globalization.

As it has been for nearly one half century, there are still experts indicating that the Cuban system is on the way to falling apart. But the truth is that the worst phase of the crisis of the 90's (the so-called Special Period) now passed; the economic indicators have been improving day after day.

Cuban international currency reserves increased in 2004 by 1.48 billion US dollars with a surplus of 176 million in current account and an increase of one billion US dollars in the Capital account.

The country exported goods for 2.200 billion US dollars in 2004, which is 500 million more than the previous year, while tourism earned 2.3 billion US dollars.

The country also received about one billion US dollars by means of family remit-

tances from Cubans abroad.

In March this year, the Government announced that the minimal salary had been increased from 100 to 225 pesos with a benefiting one million 685 workers, with a raise in the average monthly salary of all the population from 282 to 312 pesos. The pensions of one million 949 retired persons and other recipients of social security assistance were also increased and new raises are to come.

Simultaneously, the Cuban peso has increased its value biz a biz most foreign currencies and imports of consuming goods are expanding in correspondence with the growth in buying capacity due to the augment of salaries.

Most of the social development programs seemingly forgotten since the beginning of the nineties —housing, transportation, electrification, among them— have been retaken, while all hospital, policlinics, pharmacies, school buildings are being remodelled or repaired along the island.

Good results in oil prospecting and production, sustained increases in tourism,

both in number of visitors and efficiency in the operation of facilities; good prices for our nickel and our cobalt in the world market, among other developments such as excellent trade, investment and cooperation agreements with China, Venezuela, Brazil, Canada and other nations, have contributed to the present successful image now exhibited by the Cuban economic strategy,

Despite the amazing 46 years old media campaign against the Cuban Revolution, renewed and intensified by the present US Administration in recent years, the Cuban Revolution is still here and relations between the people of both countries are as respectful and friendly as ever. Cubans are extremely happy and proud about that.

* Manuel E. Yepe is Secretary of the Cuban Peace Movement, an NGO existing since 1949 with consultative status before the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations Organization. Ex-Ambassador, lawyer, economist and social scientist, he is also Adjunct Associate Professor at the Raul Roa Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana. He has served as Director General of Prensa Latina Latin-American News Agency and Vice President of the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television, as well.

CUBA CONDEMNS INJUSTICE AGAINST CUBAN FIVE IN SECURITY COUNCIL

Addressing the U.N. Security Council on May 30, 2006, Cuba outlined the high cost of innumerable terrorist acts against the island over the last 45 years — almost all of which were organized from U.S. territory.

According to a Prensa Latina report, the condemnation was made by Ambassador Ileana Núñez, who is responsible for negotiating on Cuba's behalf before the United Nations, and occurred during a public meeting of the Security Council on Threats Caused by Terrorism. Without taking into account the high economic cost to her country, the Cuban diplomat reported that 3,478 Cubans had died and another 2,099 been injured as a direct consequence of these acts. She stressed that rather than prevent and repress terrorism against Cuba, U.S. authorities have held five Cubans in prison in a state of kidnap after a panel from the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta ruled to reverse their sentences.

The Five had simply attempted, with exceptional altruism and courage, to obtain information on terrorist groups located in Miami to prevent violent attacks and save the lives of not only Cubans, but also Americans, explained the ambassador.

Núñez added that an example of this continued double standard by the United States in its so-called war on terrorism was the fact that Washington will not carry out its international obligation to put to trial or extradite the well-known international terrorist Luis Posada Carriles.

Statements of Ileana Núñez Mordoche (Cuba)

Ileana Núñez Mordoche said that, for more than 45 years the Cuban people had been the target of countless terrorist actions, most of them masterminded and organized from United States territory with the support, protection and funding of that country's successive Governments. As a consequence, the Cuban people had paid a high cost in human lives, a total of 3,478 people having died and another 2,099 having been severely injured. The economic losses had also been very high. With full impunity, in Miami and other cities in the United States, funds to carry out terrorist actions were provided and collected; the bank accounts that financed terrorism were openly and regularly operate; terrorists were recruited; and the purchase of weapons and the use of territory were allowed for those who financed, masterminded and committed terrorist acts against Cuba.

She said that, instead of preventing and punishing terrorism against Cuba, the United States authorities held Gerardo Hernandez, Ramon Labañino, Fernando Gonzalez, Antonio Guerrero and René Gonzalez hostage in that country's jails, after the Court of Appeals of the Eleventh Circuit of Atlanta had decided unanimously to reverse their sentences and order a new trial, overturning the one upheld by a Miami-based crooked court, without the guarantees of due process. Those five Cuban youths had only been trying to obtain information about terrorist groups based in Miami in order to prevent their violent actions and save the lives of Cuban, as well as United States, citizens.

New information had been revealed about United States double standards in its so-called international campaign against terrorism, she said. The United States continued to fail to meet its international obligation of judging and extraditing the infamous international terrorist Luis Posada Carriles, whose extradition had been requested by Venezuela. That terrorist's impunity was perpetuated by judging him as a "simple" illegal immigrant, despite the fact that the United States Government itself had acknowledged that he was a dangerous terrorist.

Cuba had informed the Counter-Terrorism Committee about the terrorist activities of that and other individuals and organizations, as well as about the protection provided to them by the United States Government, she said. The Cuban Government reiterated its request to the Committee to carry out an evaluation of that information, presented in documents S/2002/15, S/2004/753 and S/2005/341, among others. That would contribute to the halting of impunity that those who carried out terrorist attacks against Cuba enjoyed on United States territory. It was impossible to eliminate terrorism if only some terrorist actions were condemned, while others were silenced, tolerated or justified, or if the issue was simply manipulated in order to promote certain political interests. In order to advance, all manifestations of terrorism must be condemned and punished in any part of the world, without excluding State terrorism under any circumstances.

Antiterroristas, 2006-05-31

India-China Friendship Year: Celebration Begins

Anil Rajimwale

All India Peace and Solidarity Organization

The year 2006 is being celebrated all over the country as the India-China Friendship Year. A number of programmes are proposed to be organised in this connection in the coming months, e.g., seminars, symposia, visits, exchange and sharing of opinions and experiences, cultural events, exhibitions, distribution and exchange of literature and other material, exchange of delegations between the two countries, etc.

Seminar in New Delhi

In this connection, a two-day seminar was organised in the Kerala House, New Delhi on 8-9 March 2006 by the All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation (AIPSO). The Seminar was divided into five basic themes and corresponding sessions: 1) The New Dimensions of India-China Relations and its Positive Impacts, 2) India-China Relations-Key Factors for Peace and Stability in Asia, 3) India-China Relations- Past, Present and Future, 4) India-China Economic Relations-Perspectives and Directions, 5) Geo-Politics of South Asia, Role of India and China.

A big delegation of the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament (CPAPD) has come to India in connection with the present phase of celebrations, led by Liu Jingqin. The delegation attended the Seminar.

A wide spectrum of political leaders attended the first and inaugural session on March 8, 2006. Among those who attended were the Chinese CPAPD delegation led by Liu Jingqin; A. B. Bardhan, general secretary of the CPI; Prakash Karat, general secretary of the CPI (M); G. Devarajan, secretary of the AIFB; D. P. Tripathi, general secretary of the NCP; Nilotpal Basu, MP, general secretary of the AIPSO P. Shiv Shankar, former minister of external affairs; Manish Tiwari, secretary, Indian National Congress, Rajiv Ranjan of RJD and others.

The general secretary of the AIPSO, Pal-lab Sengupta, introduced the foreign guests and the speakers. He also dwelt upon the subject and the themes and the programmes of the Seminar. The session was presided over by Muchkund Dubey, former foreign secretary, government of India.

In his speech, Liu Jingqin dealt with the importance and new contexts and dimensions of the India-China friendship. He said that the AIPSO and the CPAPD were working to strengthen peace, friendship and the genial atmosphere between the two countries. Both India and China had ancient civilisations and traditions, and the contacts between them dated back more than two thousand years. They were among the first to win independence in Asia, and about 52 years ago, they developed the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. Since the beginning of the 21st century, the cooperation friendship between the two countries was growing rapidly. The "dragon" and the "elephant" were now working together, and its impact was being felt. The border problem was being discussed and gradually moving towards solution as an strategic aim, providing political basis for the resolution of the problems of history. People to people contacts were increasing, and economic ties were growing steadily. Mutual trust was the foundation for such economic and other cooperation. Great opportunities were opened up by the economic development. The relations between India and China were friendly and cooperative. A.B. Bardhan pointed out that the problems of history and conflicts have been left behind, and India-China cooperation was developing in a spirit of friendship

and people to people relations based on the new economic growth. Chinese economy was growing at a fast rate, and so also that of India. China was achieving great successes in the field of building economic base of socialism, and developing infrastructure. Trade between the two countries was growing gradually. At the same time, he pointed out the dangers from the spread of the MNCs in the two countries: in India, they were growing rapidly, and he thought, in China too they are a big presence. He also pointed out the dangers from American imperialism and its machinations. It would like to play one Asian country against the other in order to further its designs including in the nuclear field.

Prakash Karat emphasised the economic and market growth in China and the growing economic exchange and cooperation between the two countries. China's economy was modernising and its trade with Asian countries including India was on the road of a steady increase.

Anand Sharma, Minister of State for external affairs, government of India, who could not attend the Seminar due to Parliament session, sent a Message of greetings. His Message said that the government of India attached great importance to developing relations with China. As the two largest developing countries with rapidly growing economies and a combined population of one-third of humanity, positive developments in India-China relations were of great significance for global peace, stability and development. He wished all success to AIPSO in its endeavour.

The second day of the Seminar (9 March) saw detailed, scholarly and fruitful discussions on the various aspects of India-China cooperation, particularly in the economic field. The veteran leader of the world peace movement Romesh Chandra also spoke at the Seminar, and even presided over one of the sessions.

Sumit Chakravorty traced the whole history of the India-China relations since independence and liberation stage by stage. He opined that India and China were emerging as the key centres of the Asian and world politics, had covered lot of distance and were now concentrating on the economic development, particularly China.

India-China Cooperation in Asia

The vice-president of CPAPD Liu Jingqin presented a detailed and interesting paper on "Development of China and India and their Cooperation — An Important Factor Safeguarding Peace and Stability in Asia". He underlined that the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament, since its founding in the 1980s, had always to the culture of peace as advocated by the U.N. The CPAPD opposed the policies leading to arms race, warfare, environmental degradation and other problems.

China was pursuing a peaceful path of economic development. Although it had achieved enormous successes, China with a large population and poor economic foundation, still remained the largest developing country in the world. More than 26 million people in the rural areas still are living in acute poverty in that country, and the number of the urban poor was more than 22 million. China's economic path of development was based upon the trend of the world economic development. The World Bank figures reflected the growth in China, and it has greatly increased its GDP and per capita income. The paper pointed out that over the years, China had followed an industrial path with higher technology content, better economic returns and increased production. China is actively following regional secu-

urity and economic dialogue with the ASEAN, Japan, South Korea, Shanghai Cooperation Organisation and other forums. The "universal world" principles of Dr Sun Yat-sen and non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi were the cornerstone of India-China relations. "Sino-Indian cooperation will lead Asia to a new century of peace, stability and prosperity," the paper said. Liu Jingqin lauded the economic path of development followed by India, and praised its high growth rate and the 10th five year plan. Both India and China had "brought the Asian economy to the fast lane."

The bilateral trade between India and China in 2001 was more than 3.5 billion dollars; it had hit 18 billion dollar-mark in 2005. China had become the second largest trading partner of India after the US. This, according to Liu, would contribute to the prosperity of the Asian economy as well.

Peaceful development and peaceful coexistence had helped China build a prosperous, powerful, democratic, civilised and harmonious modern country contributing to world progress and civilisation.

The other Chinese panelists pointed to the growing Chinese participation in India, and Indian participation in Chinese economic activities. For example, they pointed out that the firms like Infosys, Reliance; others in the auto and computer fields were investing in China on an increasing scale. This was welcomed by the Chinese delegation. Besides, people to people contacts were growing. Tourism and tourist exchange was on the rise. Visits to the places of historical

importance and cultural exchange were assuming greater importance.

India had become China's largest trade partner in Asia. The leaders of the two countries were discussing issues like UN reforms, economic reforms, eradication of terrorist threat and new global economic order.

This is how the "Asian Century" was being promoted. The Chinese delegation also emphasised that China was playing an increasingly active role in the WTO and in the process of globalisation, which was crucial for the world economy.

Other participants also made active and fruitful contribution as panelists. There were active interventions by many of those who attended the Seminar. The presentations by Venu and Varadarajan were noteworthy in that they also referred to many of the dangers that were inherent in world situation, particularly those emanating from the US, and the need to guard against many dangers in Asia. Many participants also pointed out the need for solidarity with and the support to the peoples of Iraq, Iran and other countries.

Concluding the discussions, the CPI Central Secretariat member D. Raja laid particular emphasis on the growing dangers from US imperialism, colonialism, globalism and neo-liberalism to Asia and the world. He referred to the conflicts not only in Iraq and Iran but also the Middle East, the Palestine, in Latin America and the rest of the world.

The Seminar ended in an atmosphere of great enthusiasm, thanks to the efforts of the AIPSO. ■

PRESS STATEMENT

**Tobias Pflüger (Member of European Parliament)
Strasbourg, 16th May 2006**

Member of the left-wing faction (GUE/NGL) of the European Parliament, Tobias Pflüger, responds to the waiver of his parliamentary immunity by the European Parliament:

Today, a clear majority of the Members of the European Parliament voted for the report from Francesco Speroni of Lega Nord, in which the waiver of my immunity was requested. A broadly based coalition of conservatives, liberals, social democrats, Greens and right-wing extremists made up the majority for this proposal. The GUE/NGL group stood united against this politically motivated waiver of immunity. Some mere few members of other factions had the courage to vote against the recommendation of the faction leadership.

The practice of the European Parliament showed, up until now, an underlying trend not to waive the immunity of Members of the European Parliament in political matters. That basic trend has been reversed by today's decision and the waiver of immunity has been reduced to a plaything to be implemented against unpopular viewpoints.

The matter dealt with an explicitly political case: I am accused by the Munich Public Prosecution Office of having committed offences during a demonstration, whilst I requested information from police officers about the particulars of an arrested participant of that demonstration. I had identified myself to the officers as a member of the European Parliament. I was reported by two police officers half a year after the alleged offence.

It is the fourth round of preliminary proceedings (1999, 2003, 2004, 2005) placed against me by a particular public prosecutor's office in Bavaria ("Staatsanwaltschaft München I") following my participation in the protests against the Munich Conference on Security Policy. I was acquitted by the court in Munich in 1999. The proceedings in 2003 were closed and I was apologised to later by the police force for having been brutally arrested in year 2004.

Today's decision, made by the majority of the European Parliament, has given the green light to this political persecution. Were a Member of Parliament in Belarus to be continually investigated by a particular public prosecutor's office due to his participation in protests, the European Parliament would surely have castigated this kind of political persecution. However, in the meantime, double standards have come to make up the usual tools of the trade of the majority in the European Parliament.

The conduct of the social democrats and the Greens is evidence of their incapacity. I would like to expressly thank my faction GUE/NGL and all its members for their considerable support. The erosion of the freedom of opinion and freedom of assembly in Germany and in the EU still continues on, as this case is only one of many.

Of course, I will again participate in the protests against the Munich NATO Security Conference in February 2007. I await the legal proceedings composed as, after all, I have nothing to "accuse" myself of, other than give my support to a demonstrator who had been brutally arrested.

Notes from Around the WORLD

MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE COORDINATING BUREAU OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT

Purajaya, 27-30 May 2006

NAM/MM/COB/SOM/5(Rev.1) 29 May 2006

As agreed by the Drafting Committee on 29 May 2006

Draft Statement on the Islamic Republic of Iran's Nuclear Issue

1. The Ministers reiterated their principled positions on nuclear disarmament and non proliferation reflected in the Final Document of the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Putrajaya, Malaysia from 27 to 30 May 2006. They considered the developments regarding the implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

2. The Ministers reaffirmed the basic and inalienable right of all States, to develop research, production and use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, without any discrimination and in conformity with their respective legal obligations. Therefore, nothing should be interpreted in a way as inhibiting or restricting this right of States to develop atomic energy for peaceful purposes. They furthermore reaffirmed that States' choices and decisions in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear technology and its fuel cycle policies must be respected.

3. The Ministers recognized the IAEA as the sole competent authority for verification of the respective safeguards obligations of Member States and stressed that there should be no undue pressure or interference in the Agency's activities, especially its verification process, which would jeopardize the efficiency and credibility of the Agency.

4. The Ministers welcomed the cooperation extended by the Islamic Republic of Iran to the IAEA including those voluntary confidence-building measures undertaken, with a view to resolve the remaining issues. They noted the assessment of the IAEA Director-General that all nuclear material declared by Iran had been accounted for. They noted, at the same time, that the process for drawing a conclusion with regard to the absence of undeclared material and activities in Iran is an ongoing and time-consuming process. In this regard, the Ministers encouraged Iran to urgently continue to cooperate actively and fully with the IAEA within the Agency's mandate to resolve outstanding issues in order to promote confidence and a peaceful resolution of the issue.

5. The Ministers emphasised the fundamental distinction between the legal obligations of States to their respective safeguards agreements and any confidence building measures voluntarily undertaken to resolve difficult issues, and believed that such voluntary undertakings are not legal safeguards obligations.

6. The Ministers considered the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free zones (NWFZs) as a positive step towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament and reiterated the support for the establishment in the Middle East of a nuclear weapon free zone, in accordance with relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. Pending the establishment of such a zone, they demanded Israel to accede to the NPT without delay and place promptly all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards.

7. The Ministers reaffirmed the inviolability of peaceful nuclear activities and that any attack or threat of attack against peaceful nuclear facilities — operational or under

construction — poses a great, danger to human beings and the environment, and constitutes a grave violation of international law, principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and regulations of the IAEA. They recognized the need for a comprehensive multilaterally negotiated instrument, prohibiting attacks, or threat of attacks on nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

8. The Ministers strongly believed that all issues on safeguards and verification, including those of Iran, should be resolved within the IAEA framework, and be based on technical and legal grounds. They further emphasised that the Agency should continue its work to resolve the Iranian nuclear issue within its mandate under the Statute of the IAEA

9. The Ministers also strongly believed that diplomacy and dialogue through peaceful means must continue to find a longterm solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. They expressed their conviction that the only way to resolve the issue is to resume negotiations without any preconditions and to enhance cooperation with the involvement of all necessary parties to promote international confidence with the view to facilitating Agency's work on resolving the outstanding issues.

Putrajaya, Malaysia
30 May 2006

Mongolia

800th Anniversary of the Mongolian State

This year Mongolia marks the 800th anniversary of the Great Mongolian Statehood. UN welcomes the effort undertaken by the Government of Mongolia to celebrate this event and invites Member States to take part actively in the events to be organized by Mongolia in celebration of this anniversary and has adopted agenda item 42 during its 60th session Plenary of UN General Assembly .

According to the series of celebration activities, the Union for Peace and Friendship of Mongolia has planned to organize "Convention of World Mongolians" dedicated to the 800th anniversary of the Great Mongolian State, under the auspices of the President of Mongolia, which will be held between 2-6 August, 2006 in Mongolia. The UFP is going to invite about 100 delegates from more than 20 countries to these celebrations. In addition, the Union for Peace and Friendship of Mongolia is also inviting some of its friends, partners and colleagues from peace and solidarity organizations and friendship societies who are in close cooperation and relationship with us. This will be one of the biggest peaceful gathering of the of world Mongolians.

"Flower World" Fair in Ulaanbaatar

Union for Peace and Friendship jointly with its People's Diplomat Club have organized big scale fair of Flower, between 29 May – 1 June, 2006 in celebration of Mothers and Children's Day. Many governmental organizations and NGO's, individuals and business agencies were involved in this peaceful event. In framework of this fair many kind activities have been organized: flower show, peace and friendship association's open programme to the embassies in Ulaanbaatar, consultancy for cultivation of flowers and exchange of experience among cultivators. Three days broad circles of public in Ulaanbaatar enjoyed exotic flowers environment.

During the opening ceremony of the fair Ambassador D.Tsakhilgaan, President of the Union for Peace and Friendship, Mongolia said that mongolian peace-loving people are expressing through flowers their wish to live in peace harmony, make their own efforts to promote ideas of Peace friendship and cooperation among world humanity. ■

MOCA DECLARATION Continental Peace Conference

March 20 – 23, 2006 — Moca, Dominican Republic

The Continental Peace Conference was held from March 20th to March 23rd, 2006 in Moca City, Dominican Republic.

This event was carried out within the framework of the 20th anniversary of the constitution of the Dominican Union of Journalists for Peace, conducted by its founder, Lic. Juan Pablo Acosta.

The Continental Peace Conference was presided over by the president of the World Peace Council, Lic. Orlando Fundora López. Iraklis Tsavdaridis, member of the secretariat of this noted organization, also participated in representation of the WPC.

There were 12 delegates from Cuba, Haiti, Panama, USA and Greece.

We formulated a program for days and hours, including master papers that addressed current topics of great world interest; highlighting the dangers that threaten humanity in the current unipolar world, dominated by the US imperialism.

The participants agreed that humanity has never been so threatened and attacked as it is now; politically, socially and economically threatened; attacked on its material and spiritual security, and on its longings for development and on its habitat.

The current unipolar world, with only one superpower imposing its selfish interests on the rest of the planet, shows in all its cruelty the predatory nature of the prevailing capitalist order and the vital need of replacing it by a new fair and humane order.

The greatest danger to world peace comes from the purposes of the US imperialism for total military, economic and political dominance of the world, including the imposition of its neoliberal agenda on other nations.

The current need for information forces us to rethink on the obligation of carrying out efforts that, regarding information, would strengthen the development of awareness and of world public opinion in favor of the worthiest yearnings of humanity.

The delegates denounced the danger entailed by the foreign military bases anywhere in the world, which are

enclaves of violating the sovereignty and the security of the peoples.

We denounce the use of Guantánamo military base as a torture and crime center. The most basic human rights of the people illegally imprisoned in that territory occupied by the USA against the will of the Cuban people are violated there.

We denounce the process of expansion of US military bases in Latin America and the Caribbean: Puerto Rico, Manta, Aruba, Curazao, and Comapala.

The discussions and analysis on foreign military bases that took place in the meeting in November 2005 in Havana, will be taken up again in Ecuador in 2007.

Moreover, we condemn the militarization of the European Union and the expansion of NATO, which represent part of the hegemonic plans of imperialism.

We condemn the US military presence in the south of the Dominican Republic, with troops estimated between 600 and 1,200 soldiers, which is considered a threat to the Dominican Republic and to the region. We demand their immediate withdrawal.

The participants in the Continental Conference in Moca demand the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Haitian territory so that they could, freely and democratically, reconstruct their country and work for the welfare of their people.

We denounce the evident purposes of the USA of attacking Iran, on their desire to control oil in the Middle East and to dominate this strategic area of the world.

We condemn the use of any type of weapons and the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons in the aggressive purposes of the United States against that country.

The delegates call for the total abolition of nuclear weapons in the world on the bases of article 6 of the NPT.

The delegates express their solidarity with the Iraqi people and the resistance that they carry out against the occupation of their people.

We demand the immediate withdrawal of all the foreign troops from Iraq, the ceasing of war crimes and the estab-

lishment of peace and independence in that country.

The participants in this Conference condemn the criminal blockade that the USA has imposed on Cuba for more than 45 years, affecting all the sectors of the population, in spite of the fact that the blockade is condemned in the general assembly of the United Nations every year.

We demand the liberation of the five Cubans kidnapped in the USA, who have remained in jails of that country for eight years for fighting against terrorism. They and their families are victims of the most flagrant violations of human rights by the US government.

The Continental Peace Conference greets the Venezuelan initiative of creating ALBA as a mechanism of real collaboration among Latin American countries, in opposition to the FTAA that is a mechanism of interfering and of exploitation against Latin American countries.

We also express solidarity with the Venezuelan people and demand the immediate ceasing of every kind of US aggression against the revolutionary process in that country.

The delegates also greet the collaboration of Cuba in the fields of education and health, not only in Latin America and the Caribbean, but also in the countries of other continents where Cuban professionals also carry out their noble mission.

The participants in the conference greet the next world peace forum that will take place in Vancouver, Canada, next June and call to promote the participation of all peace-lovers.

The Continental Conference carried out in Moca considers that the current circumstances under which the world lives forces peace fighters and all men and women of good will, to unite themselves on a single purpose: to use all the possible means to develop a culture of peace and to make everybody aware that while there is illiteracy, hunger and exploitation, while the aggressions of the US imperialism against any country remain unpunished, there will be no peace.

Continental Peace Conference
Moca, March 23rd, 2006

Peace NEWS

The Greek Peace Movement

The initiative undertaken by EEDYE, in cooperation with the Cretan peace committees and under the auspices of the World Peace Council, to organize an International Meeting of Peace Organizations and Movements against the Bases, in Hania, Crete on 25-26 February 2006 had great impact internationally.

On the first day, a Conference was held with the participation of representatives of peace movements from Mediterranean and Balkan Countries that have foreign military bases on their territory. On the second day, a Pan-Cretan mobilization took place outside the US-NATO base at Souda. The Conference focused on the topic "Foreign military bases: a threat to peace and security in Greece country and the broader region." Taking part in the event were the representatives of nine foreign organizations, dozens of mass organizations, university and high school students' associations and Trade Unions from Crete.

Events expressing popular opposition to the foreign bases were also held in other parts of Greece, where there are such bases. With speakers from EEDYE and KETHA (former officers of the armed forces), several events were organized in Preveza, where there is an AWACS base; in Kavala, where NATO maintains a naval base; and in Larisa, location of a NATO headquarters. The events ended with a brief conference held by EEDYE on 5 May 2006 in Athens, at the Panteion University. The speakers were: Zivadin Jovanovic, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Yugoslavia; Tobias Pflüger, MEP from Germany; Stefan Gaidadief from the National Peace Council of Bulgaria; Dimitris Kaltsonis, Member of the Secretariat of EEDYE; Yiannis Douniadakis, Rear-Admiral (retired); and Ariel Dakaz from Cuba.

Huge anti-war demonstrations were organized by EEDYE in cooperation with PAME (The All-Workers Militant Front). In Athens and other Greek cities (Thessaloniki, Larissa, Patras and Piraeus) on 15 March 2006, marking the anniversaries of the imperialist attacks on Yugoslavia, Afghanistan and Iraq.

On 25 April 2006 more anti-war demonstrations took place, mainly in Athens and Thessaloniki, to protest against the arrival of the US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, who held talks with the Greek government on the US attempt to set up a so-called "alliance of the willing" against the people of Iran on the pretext of that Country's nuclear program.

Throughout the month of May, multi-form events were also held in more than thirty towns and cities all over Greece on the initiative of EEDYE. These events were devoted to the solidarity of the Greek peace and anti-war movement with the peoples being targeted by the imperialists, including the peoples of Cuba, Iran, Syria, the PDR of Korea and Palestine, but also with those peoples whose countries are under occupation (Afghanistan and Iraq).

The May events culminated in the Marathon Peace March held on May 14 with 10,000 people taking part.

An important feature of all these events was the mass participation of the people, mainly youth, along with the spirit, dynamism and confidence of the peace-fighters in Greece that the negative balance of power existing today can be shifted through the efforts and struggles against the imperialist powers!

COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE INTERNATIONAL MEETING AGAINST FOREIGN BASES

(from p. 1)

consciences, youth prostitution, displacements of population, drug trafficking etc.

After a thorough analysis, convinced that humanity has never been so threatened and attacked as it is now by imperialism and its policies, the meeting condemned:

- The so-called war on terror, aiming in the re-distribution of spheres of economic and political influence
- The growing wave of violence and social injustice that causes multiple sufferings to the great majority of the world population, which is manifested in aggressions, preemptive wars, economic exploitation
- The current versions of the imperialist strategy ending up in new military bases or new-type enclaves such as the use of ports and airports, advanced operative sites and cooperative security facilities.

The International meeting furthermore denounced:

- The ongoing occupation of Palestine, Afghanistan and Iraq and parts of Cyprus, Syria (Golan) and Lebanon (Sheba farms)
- The new NATO doctrine and the militarization of the EU
- The "Greater Middle East Plan" and the interventions of the USA, EU and Israel in the internal affairs of countries

GLOBAL PEACE MOVEMENT AGAINST...

(from p. 1)

conduct a war against something other than a nation-state and how you conduct a war in countries that you are not at war with." Is this the war against terrorism?

We know the reasons used to invade Iraq. We know of the natural treasure of the Middle East, recognized after World War II as the real prize of victory, when the US was able to eliminate Great Britain, Germany, and France in the control of oil!

Yes, oil is certainly a driving force, but observe the strategic value of Afghanistan and Iraq. In alliance with Israel and the complicit Arab countries, the US has moved directly into the Middle East. They have bases in Georgia, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Turkistan, and Turkey. They have enveloped Russia on the west with Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, and now her southern borders. US policies are aimed, as National Security Advisor Brezinzki said, "to reduce Russia to a third rate power." What about China? Not only does she face the fleet in the Pacific, about 37 bases in Japan, and 37,000 US troops in South Korea, but now Afghanistan.

What role does the US contemplate against China as it seduces India with enticements as recognizing her as a nuclear power, despite the fact that India has not signed the Non-proliferation Treaty that forbids providing nuclear technology or material?

In Iraq, the United States is building 14 "enduring" bases. The Marine base in Anbar "resembles a slice of US suburbia: Subway and pizza outlets; football field; Hertz rent-a-car outlet; swimming pool; movie theater; two bus routes — 15-20 miles square."

Do US polices ignore its backyard? Take Haiti, for example, where it kidnapped an elected president and created chaos in that impoverished country, a country it had invaded and held so long. The US has sent 800 troops into the Dominican Republic poised at the border of Haiti. There are demonstrations and protests in the Dominican Republic, another country it had invaded and controlled, eliminating the elected president, Juan Bosch, and installing a dictator, Juan Berlinguer.

I attended the World Social Forum in Caracas, Venezuela a few weeks ago and had the privilege of sharing a platform with the leaders of the peace movements of practically all of

• The modern concentration camps such as Guantanamo and Abu Graib and the Israeli prisons on Palestinian soil

• The secret prisons and CIA-flights

• The growing military presence of USA and the EU in Africa with the objective, among others, of controlling mineral resources

• The plan to deploy new US Military Bases in Bulgaria and Romania

• The growing and illegal militarization of Japan and the use of Okinawa military bases to control Asia and the Pacific

• The Manta Base of Equador as a complementary project of the "Colombia Plan" against the Bolivarian Venezuela and the peoples of the region

• The presence and use of British Bases in Cyprus, which is violating every sense of International law

• The submissive governments of the region which are cooperating willingly with the Imperialists, offering them bases and support for their plans

• The "Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which keeps the countries with foreign bases under complete "guardianship"

The participants of the meeting declared:

- their organisations' determination to fight against all kind of foreign military presence, demanding the dismantlement of all existing foreign bases

• their solidarity to the just causes of the peoples fighting for independence, freedom and social justice

• their support to the establishment of an independent State of Palestine, based on the UN resolutions and the borders of 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital

• their will to continue systematically the efforts for common actions with other social organizations and movements, raising conscience and awareness allover the world for all the above mentioned

• their readiness to support the campaign of the WPC till the World Confrence against Foreign Military bases in Equador, March 2007

The Foreign Military bases are a constant threat to Peace-Shut them down now!

Chania, 26th February, 2006

Participating Organizations:

- Palestinian Center for Peace and Democracy
- Anti-imperialist League of Belgium
- Turkish Peace Association
- Belgrade Forum for the world of Equals
- Portuguese Council for Peace and Cooperation
- German Peace Council
- Peace Committee of Lebanon
- Cyprus Peace Council
- Peace Council of Syria
- Greek Committee for International Dé-tente and Peace (EEDYE) ■

the Latin and Central America countries and the Caribbean. Imagine my feelings, for we all knew that in Bolivia the first indigenous Indian was elected President in 500 years! Venezuela, Uruguay, Chile, Argentina, Brazil and, of course, Cuba have rejected US interference, NAFTA and the free trade policies that have so damaged their economies and impoverished their people, and have elected popular leaders and parties. Each speaker started off by declaring, "Imperialism is not invincible."

US Imperialism! For those who find it hard to accept that term, I refer you to none other than former US President Jimmy Carter, who deplores, and I quote: "the quest for American imperial dominance." Here is what he said on November 20th: "There are determined efforts by US leaders to exert American imperial dominance throughout the world. These revolutionary policies have been orchestrated by those who believe that our nation's tremendous power and influence should not be internationally constrained..."

The only rational explanation for Washington's almost 1,000 military bases, the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, the threats against North Korea and Iran, troops in Colombia and now Paraguay, the increased research and development of new more deadly weapons and systems for space superiority, is to continue its role as the planet's sole superpower against all possible competitors — China and European Union — and to extend US military, economic, and political hegemony throughout the world to create a 21st century American empire. A drive to exploit the peoples of the world and their resources for the super profits of the Halliburtons, GEs, and Citi Banks.

Unlike in previous empires, these piratical parasites are determined that no crumbs will fall on the tables of the workers in our country. Like their counterparts throughout the world, US workers must contribute to the coffers of these modern day robber barons.

The drive for dominance has aroused a counterforce of people, worldwide and in our country. Never before have we had such a large peace movement. Never before at such an early stage, three years into a war that was initially supported by the people because they accepted the lies of immediate threat by weapons of mass destruction, have we had as we do now the majority of Americans opposed to the war, declaring

that it was a mistake. Never before have we had such a global movement united against these imperialist policies that affect them so sharply. The people's movements advancing in Latin America, the backyard that US interests controlled for so many years, is a dramatic example of this potential.

Imperialism is not invincible. But as Ricardo Alarcon, the Speaker of the Assembly in Cuba, warned on the same platform, "Yes, imperialism is not invincible, but like a wounded beast, it can create great damage."

What does this mean for us in the United States? While we have the majority of people with us, we are suffering from the historical lack of political leadership. The Democratic leadership, in the main, finds itself unable to escape its complicity in supporting the war. That leadership lags considerably behind the people. This lack of political support makes the task of the grassroots movement more complex, more difficult.

We cannot ignore the approaching November elections where we must force candidates to speak for the return of the troops and the end of the occupation. We must find common ground with all progressive forces.

The struggle for economic justice is the struggle against the war. The struggle to uphold the Constitution and protect our civil liberties is the struggle against the war. The struggle to protect the rights of workers to organize is the struggle against the war. The struggle for the rights of immigrants is the struggle against the war. The struggle against the war is the struggle for justice, here and abroad. One struggle, indivisible.

If we are able together to force a retreat by the Bush administration in Iraq and Afghanistan, it will have profound repercussions. In the Middle East, Israel will be forced to reexamine its policies as they realize they will not be able to count on a weakened Empire. Those democratic forces in the Middle Eastern countries where the US has installed or maintained compliant ruling circles will be emboldened by the retreat of the empire. It will open up new possibilities everywhere as the people realize their own strength and ability to change their societies.

Yes, the beast can still create great damage, but we have our responsibilities too. We can build the US Peace Council by building local Peace Councils. We can, we must, march and protest against the war!

The people are with us. We can win! ■

Canadian Peace Congress Re-established

The Canadian Peace Congress, (CPC) a founding member of the World Peace Council, (WPC) in 1949 was formally re-established at a Conference in Edmonton on April 8th, 2006. The Conference took place at the Edmonton Centennial Public Library and was attended by twenty delegates from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia.

The Conference opened with written greetings from Honorary President Reverend John Hanly Morgan. Following a moments silence for fallen peace fighters conference delegates discussed reports on the work of the Regina Peace Council, the Edmonton Peace Council the Saskatchewan Peace News, and Congress participation in the International Conference Against Foreign Military Bases and the Secretariat of the World Peace Council Secretariat in Havana Cuba November 2005. Pending its formal re-establishment the Canadian Peace Congress renewed its membership in the World Peace Council at the Havana meeting and resumed its seat on the Executive Committee of the WPC.

Conference delegates recalled and paid tribute to leaders of the Canadian Peace Congress notably founding President Dr. James G. Endicott (1949-71). Veteran members of the Congress in attendance included, Harry Strynadka, Jean and Merv Rogers, Harry Bowring and Vi Sykes. The Conference agreed to prepare a brief history of the Congress, which played a leading role in peace, disarmament, anti-imperialist and anti-colonial struggles for more than forty years. It was also agreed to establish an honor role of Congress peace activists to commemorate their contributions.

Delegates concentrated all of their attention on the current struggle for peace. Delegates discussed CPC support for the concentration tasks of the World Peace Council, namely the struggle for nuclear disarmament, the abolition of foreign military bases, resisting the imperialist attacks on the UN Charter and to promote international solidarity with global anti-imperialist struggles.

A pre-conference discussion document said, "Canadian foreign policy is being moved further to the right by the Harper Conservatives. Deeper integration in US imperialism's plans for the "New America Century" as a junior partner is being implemented. Canadians reject Harper's plans to send our youth to their death (in Afghanistan) and other US wars. The document called upon the Government to remove Canadian troops from Afghanistan, to withdraw from NATO, to reject U.S. Missile Defense (weapons in space), to strengthen and defend the UN Charter and to use Canada's natural resources for peaceful purposes.



The delegates agreed to make their immediate concentration task full support for and participation in the World Peace Forum in Vancouver from June 23-28, 2006. The World Peace Forum is a global peace gathering with participation of more than 175 Canadian and international peace groups, religious groups, trade unions and peace personalities from all continents representing a broad spectrum of movements for global peace and justice. A small sample of participant/supporters includes; the City of Vancouver, the International Association of Peace Messenger Cities, Mayors for Peace, Association of Physicians and Medical Workers for Social Responsibility, the Canadian Auto Workers Union, the Pugwash Conference, the World Peace

Council, the Cuban Movement for Peace and People's Sovereignty, Japan Council Against A and H bombs, United States Peace Council, the Canadian Peace Alliance, Council of Canadians, United Nations Association in Canada, Project Ploughshares, Quakers, the World Federalists, Vancouver and District Labour Council, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver Parks Board, International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives (KAIROS), the Canadian Unitarian Council, the Union of Spiritual Communities of Christ.

Forum themes are varied covering all aspects of the struggle for peace. The World

Recognition was paid to the steadfast support of such organizations as the Association of United Ukrainian Canadians, the United Jewish People's Order, the Finnish Organization of Canada, the Federation of Russian Canadians, the Carpatho-Russian Organization, Mine Mill and Smelter Workers Union, United Electrical Workers, United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union and many others. All groups formerly part of the Congress which are still active will be contacted and invited to renew their participation and membership in a re-organized Congress.

The Conference lauded the work of the Saskatchewan Peace News and its editor, Cathy Fischer, for its long and consistent history of publishing in the cause of peace. The Conference greeted the proposal of the Edmonton Peace Council to establish a Canadian Peace Congress website www.peacecongress.ca, where the work of the World Peace Council and the Councils of the Canadian Peace Congress and local councils of the Canadian Peace Congress can post articles and campaign information. The website will have links to WPC affiliates and other peace organizations and offer interactive email. The meeting greeted the news from the World Peace Council that it will resume publication of its Peace Messenger and completely augment its international website.

Delegates renewed the Congress membership in the Canadian Peace Alliance, the largest coalition of peace-supporting organizations in Canada, which the Congress helped to found during the upsurge of disarmament activism in the 1980's.

An interim executive was elected. Reverend John Hanly Morgan, honorary President, Blyth Nuttall Co-chair, Peter Gehl Co-chair, Darrell Rankin, liaison with Canadian Peace Alliance, Cathy Fischer, editor Saskatchewan Peace News, and Don Currie, member of the executive of the World Peace Council. The interim executive will function until the next Canadian Peace Congress convention where a new executive will be elected. ■

NO NUKES! NO WAR ON IRAN! (from p. 3)

ated claim that Iraq had an active nuclear weapons program, a new anti-war movement began to coalesce, with a heightened sensitivity to the domestic impacts of the "war on terror," including attacks on immigrants, and drastic cuts to social services for the poor. The first National Assembly of United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), in June 2003, presented an opportunity to reclaim nuclear disarmament as a peace and justice issue, and to reintegrate it into the broader anti-war movement. A proposal from U.S. Abolition 2000 groups to make nuclear disarmament a UFPJ priority was adopted, with little discussion or controversy.

It was striking, however, that several delegates voiced objections to the effect that "nuclear disarmament is the Bush agenda!" They were referring of course to the Bush administration's pre-emptive war doctrine, carried out against Iraq and threatened against North Korea and Iran. They had no idea that the United States maintains a 10,000 warhead nuclear arsenal, with some 2,000 of them on hair-trigger alert. They didn't know that the U.S. had drawn up contingency plans for using its own nuclear weapons in Iraq. They didn't know that the U.S. is spending nearly \$7 billion a year to maintain and upgrade its nuclear warheads and many billions more to modernize their means of delivery. This turned out to be the tip of an iceberg, exposing a vast lack of awareness in the new anti-war movement — reflecting the

general lack of public awareness — about the realities of U.S. nuclear weapons and their central role in its "national security" policy. And it marked the beginning of a continuing internal education process within UFPJ, with over 1,300 member groups, the largest anti-war coalition in the United States (www.unitedforpeace.org).

In August 2004, on the 59th anniversary of the U.S. atomic bombings of their cities, the Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, urged on by the aging "Hibakusha" — survivors — in their cities, launched the Mayors for Peace Emergency Campaign to Ban Nuclear Weapons. Revisiting the Abolition 2000 agenda, they presented their "2020 Vision," a timetable for the elimination of nuclear weapons by 2020, which they would bring as a demand to the NPT 5-year Review Conference in May 2005.

By the time they got to New York, well over 500 Mayors from 32 countries — 65 of them from the U.S. — had signed onto the Mayors' campaign statement. On May 1, the day before the 2005 NPT Review Conference began, Abolition 2000 and United for Peace and Justice joined forces as 40,000 people marched past United Nations headquarters in New York City and rallied in Central Park. The Mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and dozens of Hibakusha carried the lead banner, which read: "End the War in Iraq. Abolish All Nuclear Weapons. NO NUKES! NO WARS!" Behind them, spirited anti-nuclear and anti-war activists filled more than 13 city blocks.

In January 2005, a handful of representatives from Abolition 2000 and UFPJ had persuaded the Global Anti-War Assembly at the World Social Forum in Brazil to incorporate a call for the abolition of nuclear weapons into its final declaration, and to endorse the May 1st demonstration for a nuclear weapon free world. This marked a new phase for the World Social Forum, in which anti-nuclearism and anti-militarism are starting to be articulated as important elements of corporate anti-globalization efforts.

Today, the Los Alamos and Livermore National Laboratories are engaged in the latest variant of their ongoing arms race. Now, while the United States accuses Iran of seeking nuclear weapons and President Bush declares that a nuclear-armed Iran would pose "a grave threat to the security of the world" — the same language he used prior to attacking Iraq, the Labs are working on competing designs for a new warhead, and a new facility to manufacture them. The Labs reportedly could have their preliminary bomb designs ready as early as September.

With no apparent sense of irony or responsibility, Ambassador Linton Brooks, head of the National Nuclear Security Administration, began a recent presentation on the future of the U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile: "First, I assume that the United States will, for the foreseeable future, need to retain both nuclear forces and the capabilities to sustain and, if necessary, modernize those forces. I do not see any chance of the political conditions for abolition arising in

my lifetime, nor do I think abolition could be verified if it were negotiated. Second, I see no conflict between our plans for our own nuclear weapons and our strong support for nonproliferation."

In 1946, the great humanist social critic, Lewis Mumford, wrote: "You cannot talk like sane men around a peace table while the atomic bomb itself is ticking beneath it. Do not treat the atomic bomb as a weapon of offense; do not treat it as an instrument of the police. Treat the bomb for what it is: the visible insanity of a civilization that has ceased to worship life and obey the laws of life."

For the massive April 29, 2006 March for Peace, Justice and Democracy in New York City, the words "No War on Iran!" were added to the May 1, 2005 "No! Nukes! No Wars!" lead banner. Nuclear weapons have delivered themselves back to the anti-war movement. Our challenge and our promise now is to grow from an anti-Iraq war movement into a mature, truly anti-war movement, which demands in no uncertain terms the global elimination of nuclear weapons and a new concept of global (not "national") security based on human needs and ecological values.

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International Conference of Victims of Agent Orange

Hanoi, Vietnam — March 28 – 29, 2006

Final Appeal:



Agent Orange/dioxin held in Hanoi, Vietnam on March 28th and 29th 2006, make the following appeal to the international community:

We have discussed the effects of Agent Orange contaminated with dioxin and other toxic chemicals on human life and health, and the sufferings of those affected. Based on this exchange of views, we unanimously confirm the following:

1. During the war waged in Vietnam, the US chemical companies manufactured and supplied millions of litres of toxic chemicals disguised as defoliants or herbicides. Those chemicals contained high levels of dioxin. They were an utterly lethal substance.

2. Those toxic chemicals destroyed the environment, millions of acres of forests, leading to an imbalanced ecology, great loss of timber resources and the disappearance of several animal species as well as precious forest vegetation. As a consequence, natural disasters such as flood, erosion and drought have become more common and impacted severely on agriculture, the main source of subsistence for South Vietnamese residents.

3. However, the worst effect of those toxic chemicals is the harm to human life and health of those exposed to them. Victims of Agent Orange/dioxin and other toxic chemicals consist of:

Millions of Vietnamese living in their homes and members of the liberation armed forces, and those working for the former Saigon regime and armed forces, an ally of the US at that time.

Various investigations and scientific studies (frequently with participation of foreign and American scientists) have demonstrated that Vietnamese victims have suffered a variety of serious diseases – even far more and worse than the dioxin-related diseases listed by the US National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine between 1994 and 1995. In addition, many female victims have experienced reproductive problems. Many of them have been deprived of the ability to bear children and to experience the joy of being a mother. The most painful effect, however, is that Agent

Orange/dioxin has already harmed the next generation of children and will do the same to the following ones. Many children have been born without the experience of war but have deformed bodies and can never enjoy the simplest experience of happiness — that is to live as an ordinary human being.

For the above-said reasons, victims of Agent Orange/dioxin and their families are among the poorest



and most unhappy of the society. Many thousands of victims have died without justice for themselves and their families.

The fact that there are large numbers of Vietnamese victims suffering from various kinds of serious diseases, is understandable for they have been living in areas sprayed by Agent Orange/dioxin.

Many thousands of soldiers and officers from the United States, the Republic of Korea, Australia, and New Zealand were also contaminated by Agent Orange/dioxin while involved in the Vietnam War. They have consequently suffered many serious diseases, which caused enormous sufferings to their loved ones. Several countries have recognized the health effects of Agent Orange/dioxin and other toxic chemicals and paid for medical and other treatments for affected veterans. Nevertheless, many others do not have those entitlements and still have to fight for recognition, compensation and justice.

Apart from those affected by Agent Orange/dioxin in Vietnam, many in Gagetown, Canada and other countries also connect their illnesses with the use of

Agent Orange/dioxin. Their conditions are similar to those of the Vietnamese and other victims and they have therefore participated in this international conference of victims of Agent Orange/dioxin so as to express their solidarity with the affected people and their struggle for justice.

The contamination by Agent Orange/dioxin and other toxic chemicals has led to the poor physical health and death of many, loss of family happiness, a life of poverty and deprivation for deformed children, and absence of support in times of sickness and old age. The manufacture and use of those toxic chemicals are in violation of international laws.

4. We utterly dispute the conclusion reached by Judge Jack Weinstein who dismissed the Vietnamese victims' lawsuit without paying respect to justice and the obvious realities in Vietnam.

5. We, victims of Agent Orange/dioxin, and our supporters affirm our commitment to working in solidarity, regardless of race or political belief, and demand that the US chemical companies pay compensation equal to their liability, as stipulated by law.

6. We strongly support the lawsuit filed by the Vietnamese Agent Orange/dioxin victims till their final victory in their fight for justice.

We congratulate the initial success of the Republic of Korea victims and will continue to support them until their final victory. We support the fight for justice of the Vietnam veterans of the United States, Australia and New Zealand.

We nevertheless support the victims of Agent Orange/dioxin in Canada and other countries in their struggle for justified trust.

7. We demand that the United States Government be held responsible for making contributions to overcoming the consequences of toxic chemicals.

8. We call upon governments of the Republic of Korea, Australia, New Zealand and the United States to adopt appropriate policies towards victims of their respective countries and also support the victims in Vietnam.

9. We call upon governments, international and national organisations, and non-governmental organisations to provide material and spiritual support for victims of Agent Orange/dioxin in Vietnam and help the country overcome the heavy aftermath of the toxic chemicals.

The pain and sufferings are not a single individual's.

This struggle for justice is for the entire world, for future generations, and for our peaceful and healthy Planet Earth.



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