

Editorial

Speech by Thanassis Pailis,
General Secretary of WPC,
at the Anti-NATO Meeting
Organized by WPC in Brussels,
24 May 2017

Fellow militants,

We want to thank all the representatives of the peace movements, other organizations of the people's movement from about 20 countries, all those who responded to the call of the WPC to its meeting today, as well as all those who assisted in the events of the WPC against NATO and the Summit which is escalating the imperialist aggressiveness against the peoples.

Here at the "double capital" of the two imperialist organizations, NATO and the EU, we salute the events and demonstrations of many movements in dozens of countries in these next few days against imperialism and its apparatuses and wars.

The decisive denunciation of NATO and the governments of its member-states that support and unanimously agree to its decisions and that participate in its aggressive acts is of great international importance.

It is well-known that the WPC since its establishment in 1949 has stood in the front line of the struggle against war all these years and of course of the struggle against NATO, which since its foundation has been the murderous gun hand of imperialism.

It is of particular importance today that apart from organizing the struggle of the peoples against NATO the peace movements constantly inform their people and especially the youth about the blood-stained history of NATO, about its character, its goals, which are none other than to secure imperialist domination with guns and terror.

NATO is the armed murderous bulwark of the interests of the monopolies and capital all over the world. Its mission was and remains the safeguarding of the interests of the exploiters of the people, the safeguarding of the dominance of capitalist barbarity.

For this aim, for example, when billions of people live in poverty and misery, the governments of the NATO member-states provide billions of dollars for its needs, even 2% of the GDP, as for example the Greek government does.

NATO was founded on the 4th of April 1949 by 12 countries initially.

The real goal of the imperialists was to strike against the socialist countries and to impede the revolutionary processes in the capitalist countries.

A characteristic element which is of particular importance and must be known by the people and the particularly by the youth is that about 200 German generals and admirals from the fascist Hitler regime were integrated into NATO Command. In 1961, 136 of them that were in

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Open Letter to the UN Secretary General

International gathering of Solidarity with the Korean People held on 16th August 2017 in Pyongyang, DPR of Korea

Your Excellency Antonio Guterres,
UN Secretary General,

We, representatives of the organizations of friendship and solidarity with Korean people in different countries and international NGOs, address this letter to you after our gathering in Pyongyang, capital of DPRK, on the 16th of August 2017 in the hope that the UN will fulfill its due mission in the settlement of the Korean issue. In spite of the aspiration of humankind for peace, security and common prosperity of the world, the situation on the Korean Peninsula is getting extremely acute, arousing serious concern of the international community. The prevailing situation on the Korean Peninsula is due to the division of Korea, a product of the Cold War in the last century, and the constant intervention of the outside forces who seek nothing but their own interests.

The US, which is directly responsible for the division of Korea, answers the DPRK's just proposal to replace the armistice agreement with a peace treaty to establish a durable peace mechanism with its annual war drills with the involvement of huge armed forces and state-of-the-art military hardware. The US also stands against the Korean people's aspiration for peace and reunification, resorting to its anachronistic anti-DPRK hostile policy.

In spite of this fact, the US and its alliance make vicious attempts to shirk the responsibility for the worsening situ-



ation on the Korean Peninsula and go the length to usurp the name of UN for their despicable purpose to isolate and stifle the DPRK.

Unfortunately, however, the UN, duty-bound to regard respect and impartiality for sovereign states as its lifeline, is sympathetic to the US anti-DPRK hostile policy aimed at the overthrow of the system in the DPRK, its lawful member state and an independent state, far from condemning the US.

We unanimously recognize that the DPRK's nuclear tests, satellite launches and test-fire of ballistic missiles, which are now used as pretexts for anti-DPRK "sanction resolutions", belong to the sovereign state's lawful right to self-defense, especially when the US is deploying the missile defense shield "THAAD" in order to obtain first strike option without response.

We also share the same understanding that any relevant international laws, including the UN Charter and the existing resolutions of the UNGA, have no provision at all that the nuclear test itself is a "threat to world peace and security."

We are concerned about the fact that you and the UN Secretariat give no answer to the repeated request of the DPRK mission to the UN to explain the legal basis of the UNSC's "sanction resolutions".

This clearly shows that the UNSC's anti-DPRK "sanction resolutions" are nothing but unlawful and illegitimate documents cooked up in pursuit of a certain political purpose to oppose a country and its people.

As we assume the mission to promote mutual understanding and friendship among people of different countries, we

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Halt the U.S. Drive to War with North Korea!

U.S. Peace Council
July 14, 2017

U.S. television news programs (CNN, MSNBC, and Fox) have been pounding the war drums in the last few weeks and days, since North Korea successfully launched a long-range missile. The long drift to war with North Korea[1] has seemingly become, overnight, a U.S. drive to war with North Korea.

With his usual bluster and saber-rattling, President Trump on his recent tour of Europe continued to threaten "severe action" against North Korea. Trump has made matters worse by devolving authority to battlefield commanders who inflame tensions with their own incendiary statements. Example: the U.S. commander in Korea, General Vincent Brooks, stated publicly "the only thing which separates armistice from war" with North Korea is "our self-restraint, which is a choice."

Anyone in the U.S. could conclude, quite reasonably, that the U.S. is the aggrieved and threatened party; that North Korea obviously wishes to harm the U.S. people; that the U.S. confronts a new danger; that North Korea is the aggressor; that an innocent and remarkably patient U.S. is the intended victim.

Such a conclusion — all of it — would be false. Almost nothing of what the U.S. mainstream media says about North Korea is true. Only a grasp of the history and the broader context can shed light on this Korea Crisis.

A Few Key Facts

- The U.S. refusal to accept the legitimacy of the North Korean government (DPRK) is part of its long-term policy that any state in the world that follows an independent course is subject to being overthrown by the United States. Economic independence and sovereignty are considered by the U.S. financial and corporate elite as an act of aggression. Therefore, the DPRK, Viet Nam, Cuba, the USSR and now Russia, Syria, Venezuela, China and others have all been targeted by the U.S. politically and militarily. U.S. policy insists that it has the right to curb independent states, to determine a country's political leaders and socioeconomic system, and to use whatever means it takes — economic sanctions, sabotage, assassination, war — to achieve those goals.

- North Korea acceded to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1985.

- In 1994, the DPRK agreed to freeze its nuclear program in return for the U.S.

providing energy materials and generating stations. In January of 2002, President George W. Bush announced that the DPRK was part of the "Axis of Evil," and subject to regime change and even nuclear annihilation by the US. By the end of 2002, the DPRK had essentially exited the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and began to develop nuclear weapons as a deterrent.

- The notion that North Korea poses a threat to the U.S. is false and absurd. It would be national suicide for the DPRK to start a war with the U.S. or South Korea, which have massively superior military capabilities. The DPRK has never threatened to start such a war, rather it has always asserted that it developed weapons of mass destruction in order to deter the U.S. and its allies from an (often threatened) U.S. attack such as those that decapitated Iraq and Libya. The constant denigration and demonization of the North Korean leadership (they are portrayed invariably as madmen, or clowns, or both) is a strategy to make the Big Lie of a threat from North Korea believable to an ill-informed and fearful U.S. public.

- The DPRK has offered to freeze its nuclear weapons program if the U.S. freezes its war practices targeting that

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WPC Anti-NATO Actions Held Successfully in Brussels During the NATO Summit

The World Peace Council concluded successfully its anti-NATO actions in Brussels, as decided in its last World Assembly in Brazil last year, under the campaign "Yes to Peace-No to NATO."

Several member and friendly organizations have organized or are planning to hold anti-NATO protests in their respective countries these days, in particular in the Czech Republic, Norway, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Canada, USA, amongst others.

The WPC participated in the INTAL (Belgian member of WPC) public event on 23rd May in Brussels, where amongst others spoke the President of WPC Socorro Gomes, the Executive Secretary WPC Iraklis Tsavdaridis, the member of the National Board of the Portuguese Council for Peace and Cooperation, Helena Quasqueiro, along with the coordinator of INTAL Veronique Coteur invited guests from Afghanistan and Syria.

On the 24th May the WPC held successfully its anti-NATO conference in Brussels, in which more than 80 people participated, representing 21 Organizations from 15 countries (Belgium, Brazil, Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, Turkey, Ireland, Nepal, Czech Republic, Serbia, Italy, Iran, Poland, USA and guests from Ukraine.)

The representatives of two International organizations, namely the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL) with its General Secretary Jan Fermon and the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), with its representative Antigoni Kounoupi, took part and spoke in the conference.

In the WPC anti-NATO conference the President Socorro Gomes and the General Secretary Thanassis Pafilis held introductory speeches followed by all the other delegates of the conference. The opening welcome was made by Veronique Coteur from INTAL Belgium and the discussion was coordinated by the Executive Secretary WPC, Iraklis Tsavdaridis.

The conference and all the speakers emphasized the historical, criminal and reactionary character of NATO, as armed tool of imperialism, with a long list of interventions, coups, aggressions and wars.

In particular the solidarity of the WPC to the peoples struggling for their just causes and their national sovereignty was expressed, with special attention to the peoples of Syria, Ukraine, to the Palestinian political

prisoners on hunger strike and to the people of Venezuela and the peace movement in Turkey.

The conference reaffirmed its demand for NATO's dissolution on in-

ternational level and the support to the struggle of the peace loving forces inside the NATO member States for the disengagement/withdrawal from NATO. It stressed the responsibilities of the gov-

ernments of the NATO members which endorse unanimously NATO's decisions and actions, in particular the goal for 2% of the GDP, in each member state, for military expenses.

Holding the anti-NATO conference in Brussels, which serves as Headquarters for two imperialist organisms -NATO and the EU-, the WPC underlined and denounced the close cooperation of them in all levels and to the detriment of the peoples.

All participants agreed that the enemy of peoples and of peace is NATO, without personalizing or reducing the struggle to one or another NATO leader.

The NATO summit ratified all decisions taken last year in Warsaw and paid special attention to the formal involvement of NATO "anti-terror" coalition led by the USA in Syria and Iraq, supposedly against the the "ISIS", which was actually created, trained and used by the imperialist themselves.

The summit of heads of states and governments decided to support the military operations in Syria and Iraq with Radar planes Awacs, which will use the US basis in Incirlik/Turkey and will be fueled in the air by special US planes, along with a center of coordination of the above operations.

These decisions are additional to the already taken decisions on the deployment of NATO troops on a belt from the Baltic States till Bulgaria, with concrete distribution of forces amongst the member states. NATO is continuing its war drive policies with the installation of the "Missile Defense Shield" in Poland and Romania in order to secure the first strike option while avoiding any retaliation.

On 24th May afternoon and after its conference, the WPC took part in the anti-NATO rally (in which some thousands of people took part), which was organized by a coalition of Belgian Organizations, with a massive and militant block of WPC members and friends which was joined as well by foreign workers and migrants living in Belgium. The anti-NATO rally marched through the streets of the centre of Brussels for two hours, preceded by a concentration at the North Station of the city.

The WPC organized its events in Brussels with its own resources and without and funding from any institution, government or foundation, as always.

The demonstration in Brussels can be seen in the following video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xyPa5eEIIo>. ■



WPC Statement about the Recent UN Security Council Resolution on DPRK

The World Peace Council (WPC) expresses its serious concern about the recent resolution of the UN Security Council on the 5th of August (2371/2017) to impose new sanctions against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its people.

The WPC stands firm in solidarity with the Korean people for its right to decide alone and without any foreign interference its fortunes and future, while we reject and denounce the threats by the US administration and its allies in the region against the sovereignty of the DPR of Korea. We condemn the increasing military exercises of the USA, South Korea and Japan in the area as well as the military presence of more than 28,000 US troops in the South of the Korean peninsula. The deployment of the US missile defense shield THAAD in South Korea constitutes a further escalation of the strategy of threats, aiming at the ability for first strike without the possibility for retaliation.

The WPC is in favor of the abolition of all nuclear weapons in the world but we do not accept the one-sided eclectically applied propaganda against the "nuclear program" of the DPR Korea. At the same time we support and demand the peaceful settlement of the differences between the USA and DPR of Korea and the replacement of the armistice agreement of 1953 with a comprehensive peace accord of the two sides.

We are historically opposed to the singling out the DPR of Korea with further sanctions that serve to hurt the people and are in reality a form of aggression or preparation for a military intervention as in the cases of Iraq and Libya before.

The legitimate concerns of the DPR of Korea cannot be met by sanctions and threats, by efforts to strangle a people in order to impose the geostrategic control of the imperialist domination, which functions as the real threat to peace and stability in the region. We remind especially these days that not only is the USA the only country which used nuclear bombs 72 years ago in its crime in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but it refuses to refrain even today from a first nuclear strike option.

The WPC reaffirms its support to the Korean people's struggle against the imperialist plans, the defense of its sovereignty, for the demilitarization and nuclear disarmament of the region and the independent and peaceful reunification of Korea.

The United Nations should respect and safeguard the principles of its founding Charter and not violate them!

The WPC Secretariat, August 9, 2017



WORLD PEACE

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- Cuban Movement for Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples (MOVPAZ)
- Cyprus Peace Council (CPC)
- Greek Committee for International Détente and Peace (EEDYE)
- Japan Peace Committee (JPC)
- Nepal Peace and Solidarity Council (NPSC)
- Palestinian Committee for Peace and Solidarity (PCPS)
- Portuguese Council for Peace and Cooperation (CPPC)
- South African Peace Initiative (SAPI)
- Syrian National Peace Council (SNPC)
- US Peace Council (USPC)

A Persistent Intervention for Peace!

Contribution of CPPC Portugal

Following the World Peace Assembly of the World Peace Council (WPC) held last year in Brazil, the WPC member organizations in Europe carried out several initiatives aimed at implementing the objectives and continuing the guiding lines defined by the Assembly.

With this aim, the WPC member organizations in Europe met in Berlin on April 29 and 30, 2017, with the German Peace Council as host and the Portuguese Council for Peace and Cooperation chairing the proceedings of the meeting as coordinator of the Europe Region.

At the meeting - which was attended by 12 organizations from Europe and also by 2 non-European organizations — General Secretary Pafilis Thanasis, Executive Secretary Iraklis Tsavdaridis and WPC Vice-President Jamshid Ahmadi — there was a debate on the situation in Europe and, at the international level, the important and pressing challenges and tasks facing the peace movement, and restated the commitment of the organizations present in the development of the struggle for Peace, against militarism and war and, as a priority, against NATO and its Summit which took place in Brussels in May.

Yes to Peace! No to NATO!

Continuing the World Peace Council campaign “Yes to Peace! No to NATO!,” the WPC member organizations in Europe adopted an “Appeal to organizations and activists in Europe advocates of the cause of Peace—Yes to Peace! No to NATO!” with the aim of promoting greater involvement of the peace movement in Europe in its actions against NATO and against the holding and objectives of its Summit in Brussels.

The Appeal denounces NATO as imperialism’s aggressive military arm, as the largest and most dangerous military organization in the world, strongly linked to the economic and foreign policies of both the United States of America and the European Union.

The text also denounces the expansion of this political-military bloc in Eastern Europe, the strengthening of the US military presence in Europe and around the world, the vast network of foreign military bases, naval fleets, anti-missile systems and global surveillance by the US and its NATO allies, its overtly offensive aims, its bellicose intervention at world level.

The text also emphasizes the pressure exerted by the US and NATO for the members of this warmongering alliance to increase their military budgets. A goal reaffirmed by successive US administrations — including that currently led by Trump — and already supported by all governments of European NATO member countries in Wales (September 2014) and subsequently in Warsaw (July 2016), using as a pretext the so-called “war on terrorism” and the alleged “Russian threat” not only to increase NATO military spending but also to promote even greater militarization of the European Union and its warmongering intervention, as the European pillar of NATO.

The Appeal stresses that while in most NATO member countries the rights and incomes of workers and peoples are questioned and jeopardized, there is never a shortage of funding for the arms race and war. Similarly, as the crisis worsens and peoples struggle for their rights, for development and progress, for protection of the environment, for the end of poverty and hunger and for a just world, the US,

EU and NATO continue committed to militarist policies in preparation for war.

The text recalls that NATO intervened directly or supported military interventions in countries of Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Central Asia, that NATO bombed Yugoslavia and is responsible for the destabilization, violence and war that today mark the reality of Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Libya or Afghanistan. It is also stated that in none of these wars of aggression the goal or result has been democracy or Peace, on the contrary, the only legacy of these aggressions against sovereign States is terror, death, destruction, chaos and increasing domination of the resources of those countries by large companies of NATO member countries, as well as their profits.

The Appeal denounces that NATO’s so-called “war on terrorism” has only led to more terrorism and that NATO wars are responsible for the plight of millions of displaced persons and refugees.

The WPC member organizations in Europe also alert that the US, NATO and EU warmongering actions fuel escalating tensions, destabilization and aggression with the real danger of a widespread war that would mean the destruction of humanity.

But war is not inevitable! The forces of Peace and the peoples have a word to say!

The WPC member organizations in Europe called on all organizations and activists in Europe advocating the cause of Peace — a cause that is inseparable from the struggle against the roots of war - to promote actions against NATO, for the dissolution of this political-military bloc and for the struggle of every people in each NATO member state to leave this military organization.

Continuing the “Yes to Peace! No to NATO” campaign, while holding the governments of the NATO member countries to face their responsibilities, the European organizations have carried out activities against NATO and its Summit in Brussels and have undertaken initiatives in several countries, calling for:

- No to increased military spending for war, devote money to social progress and peace;
- The withdrawal of all NATO forces involved in military aggression and occupations;
- The end of blackmail, destabilization and of wars of aggression against sovereign states and peoples;
- The support to refugees, victims of the wars NATO promotes and supports;
- The closing of military bases in foreign territory and the dismantling of USA and NATO anti-missile system;
- The abolition of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and general disarmament;
- The opposition to the further enlargement of NATO, namely to the Nordic countries, the Balkans, Eastern Europe and Cyprus;
- The dissolution of NATO;
- The respect of the principles of the founding charter of the UN and of the sovereignty and equality of peoples and States.

In the context of this Appeal, together with the initiatives developed in each country, side by side with the broad peace movement, the WPC member organizations in Europe mobilized to participate in the actions promoted in Brussels at the NATO summit in May, namely at the Public Event promoted by INTAL on 23 May at the WPC Conference held on May 24 and in the participation with INTAL at the demonstration held on the afternoon of May 24 in Brussels. ■

Statement of the World Peace Council on the International Day of Victims of ‘Agent Orange’

The WPC is underlining 56 years from the start of the dirty imperialist war of the USA against the Vietnamese people the need for comprehensive and overall compensation of the victims of the toxic ‘Agent Orange’, their relief and overall support. The US administrations all these years never acknowledged their heavy responsibility towards a people and a country which fought with dignity for its freedom and the right to determine alone its fortunes.

As for bombs and ammunition alone, the USA dropped over Vietnam about 14 million tons of all kinds of bombs (while another 3 million tons in Laos). This is twice as large as the total tonnage of all bombs and ammunition dropped in the World War II, and equivalent to total power of two hundred atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Now, 42 years after the war, there are, everyday unexploded ordinances still kill an average of 1500 Vietnamese a year (and 300 Laotian people). Most of these victims are mountainous people and children.

42 years after the end of the US war in Vietnam the consequences of war are still visible at thousands of children being born with mental diseases and birth defects. This shameful chapter, the use of the chemical dioxin by the USA continues to poison Vietnam and the people exposed to the chemicals. The deadly mark left by ‘Agent Orange’ on the natural environment of Vietnam includes the destruction of mangrove forests and the long-term poisoning of soil especially in the known “hot spots” near former U.S. military bases.

The WPC expresses its full-hearted solidarity to the Vietnamese people and in particular with the Vietnam Association of Victims of Agent Orange (VAVA), and demands the recognition of the responsibility by the US administration and the necessary steps and measures to support the victims and their the families.

We call upon our members and friends in the world, not to give up raising and fighting for this just matter of the Vietnamese people, which fought heroically and defeated the US imperialist aggression in 1975.

*The Secretariat of WPC
10th August 2017*

Respect for the Sovereignty of the Peoples and the Right to Their Free Determination is the Way to Peace

Venezuela in recent years has been facing the most aggressive media war on the part of the Latin American Right in collusion with the interventionist policies of the US administration that has tended a destabilizing and terrorist fence to ignore the advances of the Bolivarian Revolution.

The economic war, the disinformation, the media propaganda promulgated daily in the media at the service of financial capital try to undermine and blur the truth of what really happens in Venezuela and is nothing more than trying to justify the true goal of the empire by seize the wealth of the peoples and maintain their hegemony.

Venezuela has become an example for Latin America and the world, in its struggle for sovereignty and self-determination to live in PEACE working to build a just and equitable society, and has been doing so.

As fighters for Peace we pronounce decisively and we do not accept; we reject the policies of the US administration that threaten military intervention against Venezuela, and all actions that threaten the region’s PEACE.

We call on all progressive organizations in the world to show solidarity with the Venezuelan people, to defend their right to free self-determination; and to protest by all means and peaceful actions against all the aggressions that are being carried out against our brother country.

Latin America is a territory of PEACE, Venezuela is a sovereign people, we support President Nicolás Maduro and we support the Bolivarian Revolution.

LONG LIVE FREE VENEZUELA!!!

LONG LIVE THE BOLIVARIAN REVOLUTION!!!

EVER ONWARD TO VICTORY!!!

FUNDACION ESCUELA DE PAZ COLOMBIA
5th September 2017

Congress of the Cyprus Peace Council (CPC)

Nicosia, Cyprus — July 8, 2017

The Congress of the Cyprus Peace Council (CPC) took place in Nicosia on 8th July with the participation of dozens of delegates from the whole island and the discussion and adoption of a declaration which you can see below. The Congress was attended by personalities and representatives of political parties and movements of Cyprus and by guests from the Cuba, represented by Aleida Guevara, daughter of the revolutionary “Che” and by the General Secretary of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), Jose Angel Maury. Furthermore the CPC received messages of solidarity and greetings from the World Peace Council (WPC), the WPC member Organisations from Turkey, Greece, South Africa, India, USA, Nepal, Syria and Brazil, which were read out at the Congress.

The Congress of the CPC concluded with the election of a National Council and Secretariat with the election of Stelios Sofocli as President and Fanis Christodoulou as General Secretary of CPC.

Final Declaration of the Congress of the Cyprus Peace Council

The Congress of the Cyprus Peace Council is convening at a time when where:

- the imperialist order continues to provoke wars and misery all over the world,
- the global capitalist crisis is widening the gap between the wealth of the few and the poverty of the majority of the people,
- drug and human trafficking are booming,
- military spending and armaments show a huge increase despite the global economic crisis,
- the environment is under threat for the sake of capital’s profits,
- our own homeland not only continues to suffer from the tragic consequences of the treacherous fascist coup d’état, Turkish invasion, illegal occupation, and partitionist status quo, but is also from the destructive austerity policies that are increasing social inequalities, humiliating the people and making them poorer.

Having all of this in mind, the Congress of the Cyprus Peace Council held in Nicosia on 8th July 2017 under the slogan “Peace with Justice in Cyprus and the World” declares that it:

1. Remains faithful to the principles and ideals of peace, justice and the building of a better demilitarized world, without wars and criminal warmongering alliances such as NATO; a world where scientific and technological achievements will be used to eradicate poverty, hunger and diseases; a world that will respect and protect the rights of the peoples and people, as well as the environment.

2. Stands against the militarization of Europe, the EU’s coupling with NATO, the orientation of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and the European Union’s Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) and its military missions and interventions throughout the world. It calls for the dismantling of the military bases and removal of all nuclear weapons from the territory of our continent. It calls for cancellation of the plans for the use of nuclear power in Cyprus, and denounces plans for the promotion of a plant to produce electricity power through the use of nuclear energy in Akkuy, Turkey. At the same time, it strongly reacts to the European decisions that have turned the EU’s economy into a war industry, indeed on the pretext of generating jobs.

3. Reiterates its belief in the Charter of the United Nations, International Law and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and demands their implementation in practice.

4. Welcomes the development of the World Peace Movement and the efforts to coordinate its activity. In this respect, it particularly welcomes the prominent role played by the World Peace Council, of which our own Council is an integral part and pledges to continue and step up as much as it can its own contribution to the universal effort.

5. Conveys a warm greeting to the Cypriot people, Greek Cypriots, Turkish

Cypriots, Maronites, Armenians and Latins, and calls on it to intensify the difficult struggle against the partitionist status quo for a free and reunited Cyprus, the common homeland of all its children. It expresses its anxiety and willingness for the talks to arrive at a conclusion based on principles and an agreed framework that will ensure a mutually acceptable, viable and workable solution based on International Law, the UN resolutions on Cyprus and the High-Level Agreements; a solution that will safeguard human rights and fundamental freedoms in conditions of lasting peace and security. It calls on the international community to put pressure on Turkey so that it abandons its intransigence and complies with the principles of the solution of the Cyprus problem.

6. Considers as pressing the need to intensify our struggle for a solution that will lead to a united country within a federal, bi-zonal, bi-communal state with political



equality between the two communities as set out by the United Nations, that will be characterized by a single sovereignty, a single citizenship and one single international personality; a solution that will guarantee fundamental freedoms and human rights for all Cypriots, in a country without foreign troops, guardians and bases. We recall that this is the basic demand of Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, and the only way for a just under the concrete circumstances solution to the Cyprus problem.

7. Reaffirms, in relation to the above, its firm position in favor of the complete demilitarization of the Republic of Cyprus and the abolition of the British Bases.

8. Strongly opposes the accession of Cyprus to the “Partnership for Peace” program, which is a branch of NATO and does not in any way serve the interests of Cyprus and its people, but instead puts the country in the entrance hall of the NATO war machine, which planned the 1974 twin crime committed against Cyprus. Such a development undermines peace, stability and the future of the children of Cyprus.

9. Denounces the military cooperation of Cyprus with Israel and demands its immediate termination. At the same time, it calls for the immediate respect for the International Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982

10. Denounces Turkey’s growing aggression towards the Cypriot people, an

aggressive strategic part of the Turkish Government’s policy in pursuit of its goal of enhancing its role as a regional policeman to the benefit of the country’s ruling class and to serve wider imperialist interests.

11. Expresses its gratitude to the forces all over the world supporting our people’s struggle and expresses its unwavering solidarity with all the peoples fighting against imperialism, for freedom, justice and peace.

12. Expresses its support and solidarity with all peoples struggling against imperialism. In particular, it expresses its support and solidarity with the heroic and martyr Palestinian people who is resisting the barbarity of the state of Israel and struggling for its freedom and the recognition of a Palestinian state on the 1967 border with East Jerusalem as the capital. It expresses its support and

15. Joins its voice with the Middle East peace-loving fraternal movements calling for the Middle East to be declared a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction (nuclear, chemical and biological). We call on Israel to sign and respect the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

16. Demands an end to the illegal occupation of Palestine, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Western Sahara, Afghanistan and, of course Cyprus, as well as the immediate termination of outside interferences and interventions which, on the pretext of existing or non-existent issues relating to minorities, are inciting nationalist and chauvinist outbursts and cultivating civil war conflicts aiming at destabilization and the changing of the borders of states.

17. The struggle is continuing, together will all the peoples and peace-loving forces for PEACE AND JUSTICE IN CYPRUS AND IN THE WORLD.

The Congress of the Cyprus Peace Council calls on all the members of the Peace Council, as well all those who feel the need for promoting peace in Cyprus and in the world, to support the efforts to upgrade its role for a more effective intervention by the movement. The Cyprus Peace Council, improving its organizational capacity in the period ahead, is aiming to:

- decentralize its activity by reactivating its district branches, which are responsible for defining actions and fulfilling their obligations according to the statutes of the CPC.

- making new members from trade union, educational and environmental organizations, from personalities from the arts and letters, sports and from all levels of education, as well as from Members of Parliament, Mayors, doctors, journalists and figures from the mass media.

- strengthen the movement’s bicomunal action with the participation of more of our Turkish Cypriot compatriots,

The Cyprus Peace Council, aiming at developing the peace-loving, anti-imperialist and anti-war sentiment and sense of solidarity among the Cypriot people, in the period ahead is aiming at strengthening the struggles:

- for a peaceful solution of the Cyprus problem, for freedom and the reunification of Cyprus in conditions of permanent peace and security,

- for the full demilitarization of Cyprus,

- to rid the Middle East from weapons of mass destruction,

- for denuclearization and disarmament,

- for the dissolution of the NATO imperialist machine and to rid the peoples from imperialist wars,

- for cooperation with fraternal peace movements through the World Peace Council,

- for promoting peace in Cypriot society in collaboration with personalities from the fields of culture, education, media and health. ■

FARC Builds Peace as “the Most Beautiful of Tasks”

Maria do Socorro Gomes Coelho
President of the World Peace Council

The Colombian people is confident in the future. Peace already sprouts, still fragile, but involving everyone with its message of hope. Struggle continues for its affirmation. For that, not only memory, the protection of human rights and political inclusion with social justice are essential, but it is also essential to eradicate para-militarism. Therefore, the world peace movement must strengthen its support and solidarity with the Colombian people.

In the new Colombian political party's foundation as Fuerzas Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (literally “Alternative Revolutionary Force of the Common” — or, as some media outlets have translated it, “Common Alternative Revolutionary Force”), after the disarmament of the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP, Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia — People's Army), confidence in the future and determination in a struggle of over five decades have inspired the founding Congress with the announcement of new challenges.

Gathered in the very Colombian capital city, Bogotá, in August, hosting guests from over 60 countries and receiving the people's confidence, FARC's leadership — until recently, persecuted and incriminated — reiterated the whole nation's hope and responsibility for the country's transformation.

Colombia's armed conflict has lasted five decades and killed over 220,000 people, forcing displacement on almost six million. Over 25,000 people are still disappeared and at least 7,000 political prisoners await freedom — approximately 3,400 are FARC members and many others are leaders or members of popular movements or opposition political forces that are historically persecuted and brutally repressed. There are still cases such as Simón Trinidad's (Ricardo Palmira), convicted to 60 years in jail in the United States after having been extradited by his own country to receive trial in US soil, in 2004. To this day, the amnesty agreed upon in 2015 was effected to less than a third of the prisoners. An Integral System of Truth, Justice, Reparation and Non-Repetition was established, which includes a Special Jurisdiction for Peace and defense of human rights.

The struggle for social justice in a profoundly oligarchic regime was brutally repressed by the successive Colombian governments, with the direct support of the United States and the support to paramilitary forces responsible for an actual genocide. Besides provoking new levels of suffering to the Colombian people, for half a century the conflict was used as a huge entrance gate for US imperialism and the militarization of the entire Latin America.

In the country, Plan Colombia and the dissemination of over 10 US military bases were this policy's most evident points. Therefore, peace movements in

the whole world have followed up closely and with determination the Colombian people's struggle for the end of violence and, in the region, stressed that Colombia's Peace is Latin America's Peace.

Since 2012, we have engaged and supported the dialogues developed by the FARC leadership and the Colombian government in Havana, Cuba, one of the process' guarantor countries. The negotiations were hosted with solidarity and commitment by the revolutionary island, which invested all its confidence and support on the overture of pathways that would enable peace-building in Colombia.

Attentive to a process that can only be legitimate if it includes the population in their various regions and demands for a just peace, with the uncovering of truth, the end of paramilitary activities, repression, persecution of popular leaders, and political and social inclusion, the democratic forces have followed the negotiations closely as the promise of a new chapter in the region's history.

In the new political party's Congress, the leader Timoleón Jiménez (alias of Rodrigo Londoño Echeverri, also known as Timochenko) has assured that FARC will continue to “struggle for the establishment of a democratic political regime that guarantees peace with social justice, respects human rights and an economic development with well-being for all who live in Colombia.”

It is evident that the party's foundation is a decisive step for the constitution

of a political instrument able to embody, beside other popular organizations, the Colombian people's dreams and revolutionary hopes. But the challenges are still numerous, as the new party's leaders have stressed in the Congress, which is why the Colombians must continue to count on our resolute solidarity.

Peace process, commitment with transformation

Defending the Colombian people's and the insurgent forces' legitimate right to resist the brutality of the successive governments' repressive policy, with a special mention to Alvaro Uribe's (2002-2010), we saluted with great joy FARC's dedication and the commitment of the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN — National Liberation Army) with dialogue, and celebrate the final path opened in 2016 and 2017. This new path has made it possible, amongst other commitments from both sides, that the guerrilla laid down their weapons, sustaining the legitimate struggle for a project that buries the destructive neoliberal and neocolonial legacy in the country, one of subservience towards US imperialism.

On the other hand, we vehemently denounce the persistence of para-militarism. Ending a phenomenon that is so pernicious to democracy is the responsibility of the Juan Manuel Santos' government. Warnings against this reality have been reiterated by the FARC over the years,

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country, actions aimed to precede negotiations. Russia and China have endorsed this approach. The US, however, refuses.

The U.S. is Provoking the Crisis

North Korea would not have a nuclear weapons program if it were not under increasing threat from the U.S., which has been trying to force regime change in the North since 1945 by war, subversion, diplomatic isolation, and economic strangulation.

A recent article noted that,

“As University of Chicago history professor Bruce Cumings [a leading U.S. historian of the Korean War], writes, for North Korea the nuclear crisis began in late February 1993, when General Lee Butler, head of the new U.S. ‘Strategic Command,’ announced that he was retargeting strategic nuclear weapons (i.e., hydrogen bombs) meant for the old U.S.S.R., on North Korea (among other places.) At the same time, the new CIA chief, James Woolsey, testified that North Korea was ‘our most grave current concern.’ By mid-March 1993, tens of thousands of [US] soldiers were carrying out war games in Korea...and in came the B1-B bombers, B-52s from Guam, several naval vessels carrying cruise missiles, and the like: whereupon the North pulled out of the NPT.”[2]

It is the U.S. that has been provoking the DPRK with its stationing of THAAD missile (“Terminal High-Altitude Area Defense”), a first-strike weapon, in South Korea over the last year. The U.S. is now testing the THAAD missiles. US-South Korea practice military maneuvers, which used to recur several times a year, are now almost incessant.

Moreover, the U.S. is further militarizing South Korea. Residents of the South Korean island of Jeju have

strongly object to the South Korean military setting up a base on the island, with the possible deployment of the U.S. Navy's newest Zumwalt-class destroyer “to deter North Korean aggression.” At the end of World War II, after the Japanese Imperialists had been defeated, Jeju

ready to take such responsive steps as temporarily suspending the nuclear test over which the U.S. is concerned.”

The North Korean proposal was seconded by China and Russia and recently by South Korea's new president Moon Jae-in. But Washington peremp-



Islanders rose up against the US-installed colonial dictatorship of Syngman Rhee. The U.S. responded by employing the former brutal Japanese military rulers to violently put down the protests.

It is the U.S. that, again and again, has refused talks with North Korea's leadership.

In January [2017], North Korea offered to “sit with the U.S. anytime” to discuss U.S. war games and its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. Pyongyang proposed that the United States “contribute to easing tension on the Korean peninsula by temporarily suspending joint military exercises in south Korea and its vicinity this year, and said that in this case the DPRK is

torily rejected the proposal, refusing to acknowledge any equivalency between US-led war games, which U.S. officials deem ‘legitimate’ and North Korea's missile and nuclear tests, which they label ‘illegitimate.’ (Stephen Gowans, *ibid.*)

Having partitioned Korea in 1945, the U.S. permanently stationed about 40,000 of troops in South Korea after the end of 1950-1953 hostilities and the 1953 armistice. The U.S. still denies Korea a peace treaty, which the DPRK has insisted on. But peace was never the intention of U.S. imperialism. U.S. foreign policy sees Northeast Asia only through the lens of domination.

The permanent occupation of South

Korea was aimed at geopolitical control of the region, including elimination of the DPRK and moving U.S. missile and military forces right up to the Chinese and Russian borders. The occupation was symbolized by the giant, yearly provocative military maneuvers by the U.S. and its regional allies, such as South Korea. Such rehearsals for real war with the DPRK have stepped up dramatically in recent months.

Few Americans grasp the enormity of the trauma suffered by millions of Koreans in the war of 1950-53. The war devastated dozens of Korean cities. The U.S. dropped over 428,000 bombs over the capital Pyongyang alone, and killed 1.2 million people. The U.S. war on Korea included the use of napalm. The U.S. war's brutal and blatant violations of international humanitarian law remain unpunished.

The real nature of U.S. policy to the Korean peninsula is neo-colonial domination, through occupation and partition. This has been so since 1945. The U.S. has stooped to employ the same quislings that had run Korea as a Japanese colony. Prof. Cumings wrote in the London Review of Books:

To shore up their [1945] occupation, the Americans employed every last hireling of the

Japanese they could find, including former officers in the Japanese military like Park Chung Hee and Kim Chae-gyu, both of whom graduated from the American military academy in Seoul in 1946. (After a military takeover in 1961 Park became president of South Korea, lasting a decade and a half until his ex-classmate Kim, by then head of the Korean Central Intelligence Agency, shot him dead over dinner one night.)

After the Americans left in 1948 the border area around the 38th parallel was under the command of Kim Sok-

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Is Iran Next on Trump's Regime Change Agenda?

Jamshid Ahmadi, Spokesperson
ADPSD-Iran

The 'putting America first' policy of the Trump administration in the United States does not appear to have limited the desire of the US to intervene when it sees fit. Jamshid Ahmadi, the spokesperson for ADPSD-Iran, explains that in relation to Iran, President Trump has been a vociferous opponent of the 5+1 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), made under the Obama administration. The deal agreed to lift a range of sanctions imposed on Iran in exchange for Iran scaling down its nuclear energy programme.

A vote in Congress at the end of July this year, aimed at re-imposing sanctions upon the Iranian regime, was carried by 419-3 votes. The House bill would block the assets of any individual who works with Iran on its ballistic missile programme or sells it arms. The bill also sanctions anyone associated with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps or anyone whom the United States determines is complicit in Iranian human rights violations.

Robert Malley, a former White House coordinator for the Middle East under Obama, claims that the deal "is counterproductive because it comes in the context of an administration that has made its hostile intentions vis-a-vis Iran and the JCPOA clear while refusing to engage Tehran diplomatically."

US pressure on the regime in Iran is aimed primarily at constraining the influence of the Islamic Republic in the Middle East and bolstering support for the United States' key regional allies, Saudi Arabia and Israel. Recent reports suggest that intense lobbying by the Saudi and Israeli governments has reinforced the Trump

administration's anti-Iran tendencies.

Both governments are concerned about Tehran's extensive involvement in Syria and Iraq and its support for Hamas and Hezbollah. As a result, they argue, Iran is gaining ever more influence in the Middle East. To stop Iran, sanctions have to be reinforced, not lifted.

On 21st May 2017 Donald Trump delivered his infamous "speech to the Muslim world" from Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in which he played to the host gallery and cast Iran as the regional bad guy.

Only three weeks later, US Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, threw more fuel on the fire when he restated US antipathy towards Iran and threatened taking "Action to respond to Iran's hegemony [and that] additional sanctions actions have been put in place against individuals and others."

More alarmingly Tillerson went on to explicitly call for regime change in Iran, stating:

"Our policy towards Iran is to push back on this hegemony, contain their ability to develop obviously nuclear weapons, and to work towards support of those elements inside Iran that would lead to a peaceful transition of that government. Those elements are there, certainly as we know."

Tillerson's stance potentially puts Iran in the position of becoming another Syria, with the West justifying intervention to support 'democratic forces' in order to destabilise the regime.

It is not implausible to anticipate a scenario in which some manufactured 'Free Iranian Army' could become the conduit for Western funding and arms, to attempt to bring down the present regime, while the real opposition inside Iran would find themselves having to fight on two fronts. It may sound far-fetched but the so-called Free Syrian Army could

be the template.

Whatever method is finally decided upon, the main objective of US policy is to weaken Iran as a force in the Middle East, effectively bolstering the position of Saudi Arabia in the Muslim world and ensuring that the Saudis, along with Israel, remain the eyes and ears of the US in the region.

As NATO-led Western interventions in Afghanistan, Libya, Iraq and Syria have shown, US policy to date has been nothing more than a recipe for destabilisation and uncertainty in the region. The political vacuum created by US interventions has been the breeding ground for the development of the Taliban, al-Qaeda, Isis and various warring militia.

There is no doubt that the present regime in Iran is implicated in supporting a range of forces including Hezbollah, the Popular Mobilisation Front in Syria and Houthi rebels in Yemen. The proxy battles in the region are being fought between the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the self-styled mainstay of Shi'a Islam, and the dictatorship in Saudi Arabia as the self-styled saviours of Sunni Islam.

The current crisis in the Gulf, centred on sanctions imposed on Qatar by the Saudi government and other Gulf states, is a further extension of the proxy war in the region. At a recent meeting of the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt, they expressed their readiness for dialogue with Qatar if it "confirmed the cancellation of terrorism support." The phrasing was widely read as code for cutting ties with Iran, with whom Qatar shares a major gas field.

When Islamic State claimed the terrorist attack in Tehran on 7th June, which killed twelve people, Iran's Revolutionary Guards were quick to lay the blame on Saudi Arabia. Coming so close to the

Trump speech in Riyadh, it was clearly timed to increase regional tension.

From the point of view of human rights and democracy, however, it is only possible to take a position of a plague on both the Iranian and Saudi houses. Neither the theocratic dictatorship of Iran nor the Saudi regime is acting in the interests of their own people or those of the wider region.

The US State Department has recently released a long-awaited "retrospective" volume of documents on the 1953 coup in Iran, which led to the overthrow of Iran's Prime Minister, Mohammad Mosaddeq. For decades, neither the US nor the British governments would acknowledge their part in Mosaddeq's overthrow. Until now this has been justified on various spurious grounds including protecting intelligence sources and methods, bowing to British government requests and, more recently, avoiding stirring up Iranian hard-line elements who might seek to undercut the nuclear deal Iran signed with the United States and other P5+1 members in 2015.

The current document release confirms what Iranian democrats have known for decades — that the US and British intelligence services have form when it comes to interfering in the internal affairs of Iran. The recent statements of both the US president and the secretary of state indicate that history may be in danger of repeating itself.

Those fighting for peace, human and democratic rights, and social justice inside Iran undoubtedly need our support. ADPSD-Iran and other affiliates of the WPC will continue to give that support. However, like the Iranian people, we must remain vigilant against outside interference and be prepared to support the real opposition in Iran, not the opposition of Donald Trump's choosing. ■

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won, another ex-officer of the Imperial Army, and it was no surprise that after a series of South Korean incursions into the North, full-scale civil war broke out on 25 June 1950. Inside the South itself — whose leaders felt insecure and conscious of the threat from what they called 'the north wind' — there was an orgy of state violence against anyone who might somehow be associated with the left or with communism.

The historian Hun Joon Kim found that at least 300,000 people were detained and executed or simply disappeared by the South Korean government in the first few months after conventional war began. My own work and that of John Merrill indicates that somewhere between 100,000 and 200,000 people died as a result of political violence before June 1950, at the hands either of the South Korean government or the U.S. occupation forces. In her recent book *Korea's Grievous War*, which combines archival research, records of mass graves and interviews with relatives of the dead and escapees who fled to Osaka, Su-kyoung Hwang documents the mass killings in villages around the southern coast. In short, the Republic of Korea was one of the bloodiest dictatorships of the early Cold War period; many of the perpetrators of the massacres had served the Japanese in their dirty work — and were then put back into power by the Americans.

The most important new factor is the destabilizing THAAD missiles. According

to the U.S. peace organization, Global Network, an authority on questions of war technology, the U.S. has recently deployed the THAAD "missile defense" system in Seongju, South Korea despite massive protests by South Koreans. It is claimed by U.S. authorities that THAAD is there to intercept missiles from North Korea. But many experts believe China and Russia are the real targets, given the enormous range of THAAD radar, which counterproductively intensifies unnecessary military tension in the region. The U.S. has also deployed other "missile defense" systems through the Asia-Pacific region, Europe and the Middle East to encircle Russia and China. "Missile defense" is a key element in Pentagon first-strike attack planning.

De-escalate Tensions Now!

The U.S. Peace Council joins with other U.S. antiwar organizations in demanding that

- The U.S. must reverse course. De-escalate tension now. No more provocations from the US. The United States and South Korea must immediately cease military maneuvers in the region, providing North Korea with an opportunity to reciprocate. The THAAD missiles near the North Korea-South Korea border must be de-activated and removed.

- The United States must engage in good faith, direct talks with North Korea. Such talks should include the perspective of a peace treaty to end the Korean War. A commitment to denuclearization

should not be a precondition for talks with North Korea.

- The United States and all states in the region must stop military actions that could be interpreted as provocative, including such actions as forward deployment of additional military forces by the United States, and the testing or assertion of territorial claims by deploying of military forces in contested areas by any state. Withdrawing U.S. naval forces newly concentrated near the Korean peninsula would be an important confidence-building step.

Korea — all of it — has a right to its sovereignty and independence. The recently elected South Korean leader, Moon Jae-in, represents a break with the repressive and reactionary leaders of the past. He campaigned on a number of

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cannot remain indifferent to such approach as expressed by the recent UNSC resolution.

The sanctions imposed on the DPRK constitute an aggression and the violation of the principles of the founding chapter of UN.

During our stay in Pyongyang, we visited several places in DPR Korea and talked to many people only to notice that Korean people are the true peace-lovers of kind and beautiful hearts and also the brave ones who respect the righteous choice of people in different countries of the world and tolerate no injustice and aggression.

progressive ideas — more independence from the US; more engagement with the North. But he has had to contend with bullying by a U.S. Administration bent on heightening tensions. The U.S. has no right to enforce the partition of the Korean peninsula and to block steps to unity and social progress desired by the people of Korea, North and South.

War can still be prevented, but only if the antiwar movement compels the U.S. to reverse course. ■

[1] More properly, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the DPRK. Here the terms will be used interchangeably.

[2] Stephen Gowans in "The Real Reason Washington is Worried about North Korea's ICBM Test" (What's Left, July 5, 2017. <https://gowans.wordpress.com>)

It is really regretful for us that indiscriminate and inhumane sanctions are inflicted upon such great people in the name of UN.

These severe sanctions on the DPRK unprecedented in history are a grave challenge to the people's rights to survival and development and the acts against humanity and civilization to turn our world back into medieval darkness.

We urge Your Excellency UN Secretary General and the UN Secretariat to take appropriate measures, including lifting of sanctions against DPRK, true to the UN's mission to pursue world peace and security and common development of mankind. ■

A Tough Struggle for Peace

Peace Committee of Turkey

Capitalism is going through a deep crisis throughout the world. This crisis, on the one hand, is helping escalate the aggressiveness of imperialism; on the other hand, it is causing shockwaves within the correlation of forces, globally.

In Syria, which is literally the main centre of the conflicts between big capitalist powers, the jihadist aggression that is incited by Western imperialism is shown its limits by the great resistance of the Syrian people. It is clear that this is realised also with the intervention of Russia in this country. On the other hand, the developments clearly depict that confrontations between imperialist powers become increasingly intricate; and humanity is feeling the threat of war more and more each day.

As it is well known, the Turkish government is heavily involved in the aggression against the Syrian people from the start. The Turkish armed forces are one of many that are actively present in this country, with the pretext of fighting ISIS. This pretext does not coincide with the truth. For a long time, it is clearly known that Western powers are actually behind the jihadist aggression, including that of ISIS. The Peace Committee of Turkey is opposed to the Turkish military presence in Syria and asks for immediate withdrawal of the troops positioned in this country. The way to confront imperialism and jihadist terrorism is primarily the withdrawal of the US and its allies' forces.

Another important question is the situation in the region of Rojawa, in northern Syria. The Rojawa Kurdish authority has been collaborating with the

USA for some time and has allowed this country to establish military bases in the region. Today, it is not possible to speak of a secular or a libertarian struggle going on the region, regarding the Kurdish population living in Syria.

A different issue regarding the Kurdish population in the region is the referendum in Iraqi Kurdistan. The referendum will be concerning the independence of this region from the central Iraqi authority. Under the present circumstances, where imperialism is the leading force in the region, and all political calculations are made on this basis, it is not possible to assess the right of the nations to self-determination, as a taboo. The authority in Iraqi Kurdistan was established as an output of the US invasion of Iraq. The fact that the majority of the people living in this region are Kurds, does not automatically bring legitimacy to the step for independence. The fact that the present Kurdish authority was established with the direct involvement of the USA, has severely damaged this legitimacy. The main criticism against the referendum is its timing; this criticism is superficial and inadequate. The peoples living in the region cannot have the chance to decide freely on their own fate, unless they dismiss the influence of imperialism.

The havoc in the region has caused a big flow of migrants from especially Syria. Over three million Syrians are now residing in Turkey, while some have gone to different European countries. The legal statutes in Turkey, regarding immigrants, are rather weak; the migrants have very limited rights. In this respect, they are being made a cat's paw in the hands of the Turkish government, capitalists and

human traffickers. They are mainly used for cheap labour. The Peace Committee of Turkey demands the creation of the conditions for the migrants to return their countries and to be let to exercise their deserved rights in the countries they have taken refuge in.

The tension between the Turkish government and several EU-member countries' governments, especially Germany, is another important point in the complex international relations. While the AKP government in Turkey is very reactionary, the governments of the relevant EU countries are that imperialist and colonialist. On the other hand, a part of the tension is false, because it is not possible for the Turkish ruling class and the government to sever the relations with the EU.

The peace forces in Turkey demand Turkey's withdrawal from the membership process with the EU, the termination of the agreements between the EU and Turkey that bound the latter with the imperialist union, and withdrawal from NATO. As it is the most important military base in Turkey, utilised by NATO,

the incirlik air base should be closed to all imperialist activity and disclosure of information regarding the nuclear weapons stationed in this base.

The Peace Association of Turkey was the only peace organisation that held a clear stance for all of these issues. Other organisations that use the notion of peace, fall into the error of regarding the EU as centre of democracy, to overlook the anti-imperialist struggle, to support the Turkish military operations on the basis that they are made against ISIS or PYD, etc. The Peace Association was banned on this basis, by a decree issued in November, 2016. This is one of many examples, which show that Turkey is drifting towards fascism, with the means of the so-called state of emergency. However, to establish a new regime in this way is not possible. Massive political and social tensions, the political crisis and the discontent of the masses will not allow this regime.

The struggle for peace in Turkey and the region she is situated in, is very tough. And now, the Peace Committee of Turkey is the peace force, ready to carry out this struggle. ■

The WPC will hold its Executive Committee Meeting in Hanoi, capital of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, from 23-25 November 2017 with main aims to review the situation in regards to peace and security in the world and plan its future actions for the coming year. The EC of the WPC will meet for the first time after the successfully held Assembly of the WPC in November 2016 in Sao Luis/Brazil and will be hosted by the Vietnam Peace Committee. During the Meeting a special session will be held about the 100 years' anniversary of the October Revolution and its contribution to Peace.

Czech Peace Movement: Yes to Peace! No to NATO!

In 1999 the Czech Republic joined, against the will of its people, the North Atlantic Treaty organization (NATO) and became a member of this aggressive and criminal military organization serving the interests of imperialism United States of America and European Union. Since its creation almost seven decades ago NATO has been an aggressive military arm of imperialism and the largest and most dangerous military organization in the World.

NATO intervened directly or supported wars of aggression against the sovereignty of states in Europe, Middle East, Africa and Central Asia. NATO bombed Yugoslavia and is responsible for the destabilization, violence and war that today mark the reality in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria or Ukraine.

The vast part of the people of the Czech Republic, at important moments, expressed their clear option for Peace and against the participation of Czech military forces in aggressions against other peoples. A wish that was not respected by successive governments that gave their support to NATO actions, including its wars of aggression, and spent hundreds of billions of Czech Crowns with the adaptation of the armed forces of the Czech Republic to the requirements of NATO and to serve its military adventures. The Czech Peace Movement, peace, anti-war and anti-imperialist organization which was created within the successful move-

ment against that time efforts to build a United States of America's military base in the Czech Republic several years ago, struggles against the membership of the country in NATO. As member organization of the World Peace Council, the Czech Peace Movement participates in its international campaign "Yes to Peace! No to NATO!" for the dissolution of NATO, organizing demonstrations, protest events and other public activities.

The Czech Peace Movement stands together with other Czech peace and antiimperialist forces in the front line of the struggle against NATO and the membership of the Czech Republic in this aggressive imperialist military organization. It opposes the pressure to increase military budgets to 2% of GDP, sending of Czech troops to participate in military imperialist interventions, aggressions and occupations abroad and against all kinds of foreign military presence on the territory of the Czech Republic. For example, today the Czech Peace Movement particularly struggles against contemporary efforts of right wing forces and social democracy to change the Czech Republic's constitution to cancel the need of parliamentary approval of the presence of the foreign military forces in our country and for the Czech Army deployment abroad. The Czech Republic should not be involved in NATO's warmongering imperialist intentions which pose a threat to world peace! ■



Three Years of Modi: Dark Clouds Threaten to Engulf Us

Nilotpal Basu
General Secretary, AIPSO

It started with a bang. For peace activists like us in India, the beginning could not have been any better. Prime Minister Modi had invited government leaders from our neighbourhood for his inauguration. And, crucially, this included Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif. Since the campaign for the formation of the new government had become uniquely presidential with the top corporate of the country and the RSS pitching for Modi as PM, and given the RSS's pathological hatred for Pakistan, there were legitimate doubts as to whether the Pakistan policy of the new government would be nuanced enough to factor what Vajpayee famously observed: 'You cannot change neighbours'; but the inaugural day optics came as a huge relief.

We are aware of the great complexity in our relationship with the North Western neighbour. Though we have a shared history, a shared common present of poverty, unemployment and the most deadly challenge of facing terrorism, we have more often entered into acrimonious broadsides over the question of terrorism and the infrastructure that helps its obnoxious continuation. The trouble is the terrorists know it only too well. Therefore, whenever there is a likelihood of a structured dialogue between these two South Asian neighbours, cross border terrorist activities do take place. The only safeguard in the face of such irritants would be to beef up our own security and not allow the impact of these to affect the public psyche. So much so, that the engagement does not get derailed. But most regrettably, the course of development has compounded the worst of apprehensions. The biggest casualty of this fractious sequence has been the situation in Kashmir.

For a government in office, the policies pursued by it cannot remain insulated to its electoral interests. But the manner in which the Modi government has gone about in the last three years to placate the war cries of RSS and the Hindutva forces in dealing with issues pertaining to our neighbourhood policy is unprecedented. Not just refusal to engage with Pakistan, but the extent to which the government has displayed its single point obsession of isolating Pakistan has created conditions for rupturing our traditional relations with countries with whom we shared a great degree of comfort.

After the widely publicized tete-a-tete with President Xi Jinping in Gujarat, Prime Minister Modi and his government had developed such a cold feet that India, in its effort to stay away from the massive infrastructure creating Chinese initiative of One Belt One Road, has virtually landed itself in grand isolation. India became a member of the Eurasian union of Russian President Putin. But now in the latest Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in Russia, Putin has clearly and publicly stated that it values its newly emerging relationship with Pakistan and also intends to integrate the OBOR initiative with that of the Eurasian union. Though delayed, India has now indeed become part of the SCO, but with SCO being increasingly intertwined with OBOR and Eurasian Union, India's capacity to align with these major regional initiatives as a core player in the SCO process would be severely compromised.

Not only Pakistan and China, but even with traditional neighbours like Nepal, the Modi government has managed to rub the wrong way. The manner in which the government tried to intervene and reverse some of the provisions of the Constitution that the Nepalese polity adapted would never be accepted by any self-respecting nation. Therefore, the blockade

put up by the Madhesi political forces with more than liberal support from Hindutva forces obstructing the movement of essential commodities to Nepal in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake has given rise to deep anguish and opposition among the Nepalese population.

Therefore, the last three years has signaled a worsening of our standing in the neighbourhood under the Modi government. The hawks that appear to hold the sway on the Modi establishment is fraught with further disastrous consequences.

New and uncomfortable levels of proximity with US imperialism

Not that past governments had not been moving close to the US administration in the past; but the new levels of cooperation is virtually sealing the subordination of India under Modi. More importantly, this is coming at a time when Trump presidency is creating havoc in alienating itself globally. The now clearer US involvement in the Middle East in protecting Islamic State and its ideological and material mentors of Saudi and other Gulf monarchies, have created new tensions. The imminence of return of some degree of peace and stability in Syria has been dashed. The Trump administration seems to be inevitably moving towards dovetailing with the Saudi gameplan of confronting Iran. Naturally, all these have also reenergized Israel and its obnoxious policies of expanding settlements in occupied Palestinian territories.

It is in this context, the Modi government has entered into a ten year defence framework agreement with US. It has been followed up with more specific Logistics Support Agreement (LSA), Communication and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA) and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA). All these are further firming up India as a defence partner of US, which enables US to have at its disposal Indian harbours, airfields and bases and the possibility of borrowing Indian equipments and help integrate

with the Indian armed forces through 'inter-operability' of their arms and equipments. In short, India is a junior US military partner in the Asia-Pacific region. The implications are obvious. The increasing proximity between Russia and China emphasizing on their separate but increasingly complementary regional initiatives are giving a boost towards a growing multipolarity. Modi government's unabashed hitching with the US grand design will place itself under a cloud of suspicion. Further, Modi will be the first Indian PM to be visiting Israel with all its adverse ramifications.

Foreign Policy does not come from thin air

The record of the three year old Modi government makes it abundantly clear that the proximity with the US imperialist designs arise from a convergence of their ultra rightwing initiatives in respective domestic spheres, particularly the economy. The Modi government assumed office on

the express claim and commitment that addressing the popular distress would be the priority of the government. Achche din could be ushered in with major intervention in agriculture, manufacturing industry giving a boost to employment generation. Most importantly, Modi's war cry was to bring an end to corruption 'na khaunga, na khane dunga'!

But these three years the economy has been on an unprecedented trajectory of downside. The slowdown of the economy is marked! With index of industrial production slowing down substantially, the agrarian crisis has deepened with ever increasing pace of farmer's suicides. But three years back, there was unambiguous commitment for implementing Swaminathan Commission recommendations of providing the farmer the cost of production plus a 50 per cent return over that within months that was abandoned in the Supreme Court. The aggressive encouragement to corporate players in inputs, complete withdrawal from

continued on page 10

Press Release:

AIPSO Condemns the Killing of Journalist Gauri Lankesh

The All India Peace and Solidarity Organisation (AIPSO) severely condemns the barbaric and heinous killing of the senior journalist and activist Gauri Lankesh.

This, we believe, is yet another manifestation of the crude pattern of continuing attempts to silence the sane and powerful voices against the corrupt and the communal in the country. In spite of open threats, Gauri stood by her conviction and paid the ultimate price for her fearless journalism. The Right wing forces that were responsible for the murders of people like Kalburgi, Dabholkar and Pansare, had one more victim in Gauri Lankesh.

All the state units of AIPSO join hands in solidarity. The incidence strengthens our resolve to continue to fight the evil forces that threaten the harmony and the plural character of our country.

AIPSO Secretariat
6th September 2017
New Delhi

WPC at the Congress of International Federation of Resistance Fighters

The 17th regular congress of the International Federation of Resistance Fighters (FIR) — Association of Anti-Fascists took place November 18 – 20, 2016 in Prague, Czech Republic. More than 50 delegates representing anti-fascist and resistance fighters organizations from about 20 European countries participated in this congress. The congress included also a special awarding ceremony of the Michel-Vanderborght-Award as well as the commemoration of victims of fascist terror in Lidice. The congress of FIR was attended also by the World Peace Council represented by Milan Krajca. In his greeting speech he stated among others:

"Our two organizations, World Peace Council and International Federation of the Resistance Fighters — Association of the Anti-fascists, struggle together for almost 70 years against fascism and war. Their roots were based in heroic anti-fascist struggle of the peoples of the world and in the victory over fascist barbarism in 1945, when the slogan — Never again fascism, never again war! — was raised. The lessons from the victory over fascism as well from the causes which have led to the war are present today in a period of growing imperialist aggressiveness, occupation and threats to the sovereignty of the peoples, in a period of deep global



economic crisis of capitalism.

Today, seven decades after the defeat of fascism in World War II, serious threats hang over the peoples. In view of the current threats and dangers it is more important than ever to mobilize in favour of peace, respect for the sovereignty and independence of the states, the principles of the United Nations Charter and international law. It is necessary to fight against war, to denounce the armed wing of imperialism — NATO, to oppose plans to establish a permanent army of the European Union, to struggle for general, simultaneous and controlled disarmament and for the end of the arms

race, to organize a solidarity with people victims of aggression and interference, to demand policy of peace, solidarity and cooperation with all peoples of the world.

We have in our favour the fact that the defence of peace is in the interest of the peoples of the world, because it determines the welfare, progress, development, happiness and even the life of the planet. But we are also fully aware that wanting peace is not enough; we have to defend it and act for it. This is a reason, why there is still a absolute relevancy of words of Czechoslovak national hero, communist writer and antifascist fighter Julius Fučík: People, be vigilant! "■

Palestine: The Two States Solution

Dr. Akel Taqz
Palestinian Committee for
Peace and Solidarity

After 70 years of the UN resolution 181, and 70 years of establishment of the state of Israel, the other state, "Palestine," is still waiting to be established.

The question is: In the current situation in the region Is this goal really effective? and whose responsibility to end this tragedy of Palestinian people?

1988 the Palestinian leadership made the historic decision to accept the establishment of the Palestinian state on only 22% of historic Palestine making the compromise, while according to the resolution 181 this state had to be established on around 46%.

After its establishment 1948, Israel occupied more than one half of the territory of the state of Palestine (78%) of historic Palestine, and 1967 occupied the

rest of this territory.

Oslo agreement between Israel and PLO signed 1993 with timetable to be ended 1999 and the final solution, the "Two States Solution," to be achieved.

23 years of negotiations under "Exclusive US Sponsorship" with no results, and with Israel to use these negotiations for public relations and to implement its plans of changing the facts on the ground by controlling more and more land owned by Palestinians, building more and more settlements especially in East Jerusalem which supposed to be the capital of the Palestinian state, to build the separation "apartheid" wall in the Palestinian land and Other measures against Palestinian population including three wars against Gaza and invading west bank with full support of USA which never been a neutral mediator.

After the so called Arab Spring, and the direct engagement of US in the conflict especially in Syria and the continu-

ation of the US policy for New Middle East under the slogan of the so called "War against terror" and "democratization" of the region Palestinian issue was pushed aside.

USA and allies (NATO, EU and reactionary regimes) are trying to create a new coalition in the ME with some Arab countries and Israel claims that the priority is the war against terror and the Palestinian problem can wait the final arrangement after the end of this war.

Nowadays we can notice that the "Two States Solution" is in big danger, especially with Donald Trump as a president of USA and the extreme right government in Israel which representing the settlers, ignoring all the resolutions of UN related to the Palestinian issue especially the latest ones about the recognition of Palestine as non-member state by the general assembly of UN and the resolution of the security council about the settlements.

After the collapse of the negotiations and Israel to behave as a state above the international law supported by USA, we believe that the international community has to take its responsibility to end this abnormal situation, to force Israel to respect and to implement the international law and the resolution, to end the occupation and to enable Palestinian people to exercise its right for self-determination and to establish the independent state within the borders of June 4TH 1967 with East Jerusalem as its capital.

We believe also that time is not in favor of the peaceful solution and the two states solution is in danger, which means that the region will continue to be a threat for the world peace not only the peace in the region.

Solidarity with Palestinian people is very important and effective to continue its struggle against occupation and the peoples of the region against the imperialist plans and wars. ■

Editorial ... (from p. 1)

service were convicted war criminals.

Its bloody course began very quickly after its founding. Invasion in Korea in 1952, support for France's war in Indochina, for Holland's war in Indonesia, France's war in Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Portugal's war in Goa, India, Britain and France's invasion of Egypt in 1956, the US-British intervention in Lebanon and Jordan in 1958, Belgium's intervention in the Congo in 1960.

Millions of dead and wounded, enormous destruction are the results.

NATO also supported reactionary regimes and dictatorships in Greece, Turkey, Spain and Portugal. It supported and promoted the dismemberment of Cyprus. It unleashed new wars after 1990 in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Iraq.

After the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact in 1991, NATO not only did not dissolve itself, but proceeded to adapt itself rapidly to the contemporary needs of the multinationals and monopolies.

It replaced the supposed communist danger with new pretexts, such as terrorism, asymmetric threats, the threat to cut the flow of natural resources, and even the impact of climate change in order to justify its existence, which is nothing other than the safeguarding of imperialist domination.

It proceeded to expand and integrate other former socialist countries, it forged special partnership agreements with countries from the Middle East, North Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Japan. It maintains a network of cooperation with over 60 countries, e.g. via the "Partnership for Peace" and other fine sounding initiatives.

In the military field, it rapidly formed aggressive rapid reaction forces, abolished the limits on its activity and defined them as being over 6,000 miles, i.e., global.

Its adaptation in new conditions did not remain at the level of declarations, but proceeded in practice with its first victim being Yugoslavia in 1999, with its dismemberment and the creation of the protectorate of Kosovo, on whose terrain the USA installed its largest foreign base, Camp Bondsteel.

There followed new wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Syria.

NATO's aggressiveness has escalated at each one of its summit meetings over these years.

They formed a new more dangerous strategy against the peoples and promoted new pretexts for wars and

interventions.

One such example that is of great significance and relevance is the NATO Summit in Istanbul in 2004, which decided on the Plan for the Greater Middle East. A plan that was also approved and saluted by the EU. The war in Syria, the attack on Libya, the so-called Arab Spring, the situation in Lebanon, the attacks against Yemen and in the region in general are the result of this plan.

The New Strategic Doctrine of NATO for it to function as a political military organization in the 21st century was decided on in Lisbon. There for the first time, there were official references to the close



cooperation with the EU, their coordination and allocation of tasks. The EU did the same in the so-called Lisbon Treaty or the so-called Euro-Constitution.

On this basis, the decisions at the NATO Summit in Wales were specialized, where NATO oriented itself to Central and Eastern Europe, the Baltic states, focused on Ukraine (where the USA and the EU were competing over who would gain more from the coup of 2013), Georgia and proceeded with the plan to encircle Russia.

At the same time, the Readiness Action Plan and the creation of an exceptionally rapid and ready reaction forces which can intervene in missions all over the planet was pushed forwards.

At the Summit in Warsaw, it elaborated, amongst other things, the experience from recent years in light of the imperialist wars in Syria, Libya and the conflict in Ukraine.

The measures that were decided include:

The concentration and transfer of military forces to countries that border

with Russia, the completion of the installation and operation of the so-called "Anti-missile Shield", with bases in Romania, Poland, naval support and more general infrastructure connected to the use of nuclear weapons for a catastrophic confrontation.

The fixation and reinforcement of NATO's presence in the Black Sea, the Aegean and the Mediterranean, utilizing for these two maritime regions the pretext of controlling the refugee flows caused and intensified by the imperialist wars and the painful consequences at the expense of the peoples.

The reinforcement of the military

and Black Sea will be investigated, as well as its participation in the war in Syria, the continuation of the intervention in Afghanistan. We denounce the installation of thousands of NATO soldiers along a line from the Baltic to Bulgaria and the simultaneous installation of the "Anti-Missile Shield" in Poland and Romania.

The military cooperation between NATO and the EU will be even further strengthened at this Summit and for this reason the ground was prepared at the meeting of the EU Defense Ministers in Brussels on the 18th of May. Just as before the Warsaw Summit, the presence of the GS of NATO has become permanent at the meetings of the EU Defense Ministers. One of the topics was the "closer military cooperation between the EU and NATO, the better structuring of military forces in order to increase their combat ability."

After the meeting, the GS of NATO, J. Stoltenberg, stated that "We are now really taking the NATO-EU cooperation to new levels. Last December we agreed on 42 concrete measures, and we are now implementing those measures."

NATO was and is the enemy of the peoples and peace. At the last Assembly of the WPC in Brazil, we saluted the struggle of the peoples in the member-states against NATO and for the disengagement of these countries from it, as a specific measure to weaken NATO, in the struggle for its dissolution at a global level.

In a few days, we will demonstrate with the flags and banners of the WPC, in the framework of our campaign "YES TO PEACE-NO TO NATO", on the streets of Brussels, denouncing NATO itself as being "not welcome", ALL its leaders as being not welcome, because they are planning together and signing and implementing their imperialist and murderous plans. All together they share and bear the responsibility, regardless of whether the USA has the first role.

We do not fall into the trap of personalizing imperialism or demonizing the various figures, which lets the governments of the member-states off the hook in terms of their responsibilities and in the end provides valuable services to the enemies of peace and NATO itself.

The struggle of the peoples against NATO cannot be restricted to or won with isolated slogans, it will be gained through the victory of the peoples who are the real super power, for a truly peaceful world, with prosperity for the people, without imperialist domination and exploitation. ■

Mass Event at the Acropolis in Commemoration of the Bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

Many hundreds of youth, workers and women along with trade unions and other popular organisations participated on 8th August in the anti-imperialist gathering organized by the Greek Committee for International Detente and Peace (EEDYE) on the Athens Acropolis, in order to honour the victims of the imperialist crime, 72 years after the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the USA.

The event was at the same time a step in condemnation of imperialist plans and wars today, and the demand for disengagement of Greece from them, for no change of borders and the conventions that set them, to close the US base of Souda and all the Euro-Atlantic bases and headquarters in Greece to return all military missions that are outside the borders which are participating in NATO and EU operations and the demand to eliminate all nuclear weapons and to ban nuclear tests.

With slogans such as "Outside NATO from the Aegean Sea", "We do not want NATO protection, no the «wolfspack»", "The soldiers are children of the people, outside the borders they do not have a job", "Neither land nor water to murderers of the peoples, the event was followed by a march through the historic center of Athens, which ended in the Constitution Square (Syntagma)

In his speech Christos Marganelis, a member of the EEDYE Secretariat, underlined, amongst others, that the purpose of the Holocaust in Hiroshima and Nagasaki was "the peoples who were victorious from the Second World War, namely the Soviet Union, the rising revolutionary and workers'

movement." He also noted that by continuing the struggle to overthrow the rotten exploitative system, "we honour the memory of the millions of dead that the imperialists have ever brought to Earth."

The speaker extensively referred to the dangers posed to the peoples by the exacerbation of the inter-imperialist contradictions, the military-political plans and the interventions of the imperialist centers for the control of the markets, the natural and the energy resources, underlining the "huge responsibilities of the SYRIZA-ANEL government, as well as other bourgeois parties because they promote and support the further involvement of our country in the tug of competitions, raids and wars in the region. In a period of prolonged poverty for the Greek people, the government spends huge sums on military equipment directed to NATO needs."

He stressed that the government's rhetoric is illusory that Greece, within NATO, is an "island of peace and stability in the region," adding that "the Greek bourgeoisie is becoming more aggressive as it seeks a way out for its own standing capital. Greece's participation in offshore military missions, ship patrols in the Mediterranean Sea and Africa and common exercises with forces from Israel, Egypt and the United States show that the famous "investment extroversion" is directly linked to engaging in military adventures. In order to satisfy these interests, the government bargains the country's geostrategic position and provides bases, harbors and infrastructure to NATO's war machine, turning the country into a base of death." ■



Statement of the Greek Committee for International Detente and Peace (EEDYE) about the "Greece-US Defense Cooperation Agreement"

The Greek Committee for International Detente and Peace (EEDYE) denounces the government for the extension of the "Greece-US Defense Cooperation Agreement" of 31st August 2017.

The US will continue to have the Souda base and the full range of its bases in the country at the disposal of their war plans. The SYRIZA-ANEL government, engages the country more deeply in imperialist plans and wars.

The Souda base has fulfilled and is carrying out a special mission earlier in the imperialist wars in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, and in the recent US missile attack against the Syrian people. The USA-NATO leadership have congratulated the governments of ND and PASOK before along with the SYRIZA-ANEL government today for their anti-people's policies, and have stated that this base is a determining factor in the preparation and conduct of imperialist wars.

Both the government and all the bourgeois parties bear tremendous responsibilities towards the Greek people for the great dangers that expose it.

These developments require readiness and vigilance.

Let us step up the anti-imperialist struggle against US-NATO-EU.

Let us strengthen our efforts to close the base of Souda and all foreign bases in Greece.

Disengagement from NATO and the EU to the people in our homeland!

Three Years ... (from p. 8)

procurement, and the introduction of a corporate friendly Fasal Bima Yojana which leads the peasants fleeced, and, finally, the disastrous demonetization leaving the cash driven rural informal economy completely devastated.

Therefore, with the two primary sectors of economy in throes of severe strain and the weakest and the poorest disproportionately taking the hit, there is disquiet. The overall condition of the economy is most pronounced in the sphere of employment generation. The data goes to show that instead of redeeming the electoral commitment of creating two crore jobs annually, there is actually a growing unemployment. The government had to even admit this on the Floor of the Parliament.

The deteriorating conditions of the people had to be complemented by the brazen protection and promotion of top corporate whose enthusiasm and funding marked the Modi for PM campaign blitzkrieg. The PM and his government has not failed the Adanis and Ambanis of the world! In 2014, top one per cent of asset holders had 49 per cent of national assets under their control; in the last three years, this has gone up to 58 per cent!

The familiar route of tax waivers and kid-glove handling of corporate debtors in the public banking and financial system has buttered the creamy side of the economic bread; and, all these in the name of 'na khaunga, na khane dunga'.

Aggressive step up in the politics of polarization

With growing uncertainty and deepening distress staring the people at their face, the Hindutva forces have been working

overtime. For the RSS, the time of reckoning is here and now. Chief Mohan Bhagwat had announced that by 2020, Hindu Rashtra will be established with its full force. Who will benefit from this transformation of India, secular democratic Republic to a theocratic Brahminical Hindu Rashtra? Surely, not farmers who are committing suicides at an accelerated phase or hundreds and thousands of informal sector workers who suffer from far less than subsistence wages! The food and nutrition insecurity that stops the country are there for all to see. Sharp downslide in social sector investment is accompanied with digitisation through introduction of new identity instrument of Aadhar. It threatens to further bring down the level of subsidy for the most disempowered sections of the population. Surely, such changes will not bring any succor to dalits, tribals, and other socially backwards sections who suffer from the accentuated economic and social inequality. Not surely, the women of the country who are in the rapidly intensifying attacks on their independence and empowerment.

Therefore, not just minorities, the RSS-led Hindutva forces have mounted an obnoxious campaign in the name of ghar wapsi, love jihad and now gau raksha. There is a wholesale stereotyping of minorities. The entire population of the Kashmir valley which ironically continues to be claimed as an integral part of India is condemned as terrorists and Pakistani sympathizers. In the last seven decades of independent India, never has the idea of India based on unity through diversity, come under such a severe stress. Constitutional officers and functionaries are berating provisions of the Constitution with impunity to generate divisiveness and 'othering'.

India, under Modi, it appears has started resembling theocratic Pakistan.

Can authoritarianism be far behind?

Naturally, the brazen undermining of Constitutional values cannot but result in vicious attacks on institutions of governance and otherwise. Therefore, judiciary and legislatures and their rights are also coming under grave threats. The vitiated atmosphere is affecting individuals of the judiciary, while the council of States, Rajya Sabha where the government does not have a majority as yet is witnessing erosion of its powers on a daily basis. The civil and the police services, the specialized investigation and prosecution agencies under the Modi dispensation does not remain merely 'caged' but often unleashed like a vulture! The mainstream media through its corporate owners is largely claimed and co-opted. The social media has been turned as a

Acquisition and Cross ... (from p. 11)

the West since the adoption of neo liberal political and economic policies in 1977. Hence, by now, Sri Lanka is under regular pressure from multiple powers.

Successive governments in Sri Lanka including the present one, constantly display their gross weakness in international dealings, not just with regard to military pacts like this but on trade and economic matters too. Poor handling of human right affairs after the end of the war paved the way for the interference of UN organizations and certain Western countries to her internal affairs; trade agreements and related negotiations with India are running at a lost to Sri Lanka; adoption of mega

space for launching the vilest of attacks on opponents and critics.

There will be light at the end of the Tunnel

The forward march of history has been severally disrupted and sought to be reversed by retrograde ideas. The history of human civilization stands testimony to this. But in the ultimate analysis, such policies end up in provoking and inspiring the widest possible opposition and resistance. Fascists and authoritarian rulers have eventually failed. The history of the world and that of India are replete with such instances. An electoral minority, and surely not on the basis of the agenda that they are advancing and appears to be humongous at this point in time, cannot sustain itself. Hatred cannot triumph over harmony. Violence cannot overpower peace. Enmity cannot dominate over friendship and solidarity. The rule of majority cannot be substituted by majoritarianism. ■

"investment" projects under the influence of certain countries and multinational companies have put the country under huge external debt trap. Consequently, the government is selling "parts" of the country together with those constructions as debt settlements. In addition, Sri Lanka's routine diplomatic affairs and missions abroad too have been miserably weakened through political interference including nepotism.

To face this crisis, only one way is left to the people of Sri Lanka. That is to rebuild the sovereign state with autonomous political and economic policies, by their own. This can be done only if the masses form a broader front to win these objectives. ■

Stop the U.S. War Crimes in Syria!

Bahman Azad
Organizational Secretary
U.S. Peace Council

In the name of “uprooting ISIS” in Syria, the U.S. military has begun a brutal barrage of airstrikes and artillery shelling of Syrian cities. These airstrikes have demolished schools, colleges and universities, cultural centers, gas stations, whole neighborhoods, hospitals, water systems, post offices, mosques, bridges and many other civilian facilities. Even Amnesty International has reported that “US-led collusion” has been using “white phosphorus munitions in the airstrikes of al-Raqqa, Syria,” which the U.S. military has never denied.

According to various sources, these indiscriminate airstrikes have resulted in the death of many thousands of innocent civilians. On May 25, the *New York Times*, quoting the *Airwar*, reported that “at least 3,100 civilians were killed in America-led airstrikes from August 2014 to March 2017.” *Airwar* has also “identified additional ‘contested’ episodes that resulted in 2,700 civilian deaths.” And even this is a clear underestimation.

The main reason behind these blatant war crimes by the United States is the fact that the Syrian Arab Army and its Lebanese, Iranian and Russian allies have been able to turn the tide against U.S.-led

terrorist strategy of forced regime change in Syria, liberating one Syrian city after another from the control of U.S.-armed and funded terrorist groups.

Beginning with the liberation of Aleppo, the U.S. leaders realized that the policy of forced regime change in Syria was a doomed project and that they had to come up with a new strategy to secure a stronghold for the U.S. military within the Syrian territory. Thus began a hasty deployment of U.S. ground forces to Syria and the establishment of several U.S. military bases in that country. In the context of this strategy, the U.S. is now trying to secure a protected perimeter for the so-called “Syrian Democratic Forces,” to be later declared as an autonomous region under the protection of the U.S. military.

On August 17, Reuters reported that “Washington’s main Syrian ally in the fight against Islamic State says the U.S. military will remain in northern Syria long after the jihadists are defeated, predicting enduring ties with the Kurdish-dominated region.” Reuter report continues: “The U.S.-backed Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), an alliance of militias dominated by the Kurdish YPG, believes the United States has a ‘strategic interest’ in staying on, SDF spokesman Talal Silo told Reuters. ‘They have a strategy policy for decades to come. There will be military, economic and political agreements in the

long term between the leadership of the northern areas (of Syria) ... and the U.S. administration,’ Silo said.”

This makes it quite clear that the terror bombing of the civilian population in northern Syria has nothing to do with the U.S. claim of “uprooting ISIS” and has everything to do with carving out a part of Syrian territory in the north and establishing permanent U.S. military bases in the so-called “autonomous” territories

thus created. And this is not just related to Syria. It is part of the broader U.S. plan for a new Middle East under direct control of the U.S. and NATO, as well as further encirclement of Russia and Iran as the main foes who, based on their own strategic interests, oppose on the state level the U.S. imperialistic plans in the region.

Time is running out. Peace forces around the world must unite and mobilize if they want to avoid such an outcome. ■

Declaration of the Cuban Movement for Peace and Sovereignty (MOVPAZ)

The Cuban Movement for Peace and Sovereignty of Peoples (MOVPAZ) reiterates its strongest rejection of the media and psychological campaigns that, orchestrated and directed by the United States government and accompanied by sectors of the national and international oligarchic right, violate the free exercise of democracy and peaceful life in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

For several months, the Bolivarian people, their government and the democratically elected President, Nicolás Maduro Moro, have been facing the aggression of the most reactionary forces in the region and the world led by imperialism and its main exponent, the current President of the United States, Donald Trump, who in sharp rapturous connotation with the extremist sectors of the local opposition stimulate and support the imposition of political, economic, commercial and financial sanctions against the Bolivarian revolution with the purpose of frustrating and reversing social achievements and the example of humanism and solidarity that this process heads with dignity.

The threat of a military intervention does not escape the brutal siege that today tends to that fraternal Latin American and Caribbean nation.

In the present circumstances that Venezuela of Bolivar and Chavez is confronted with, the expressions and genuine actions of support and solidarity coming from the peace-loving sectors of the whole Planet are now more necessary than ever, and especially in our Region that sustains the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a «Zone of Peace» is in full force.

In view of the above, the Cuban Movement for Peace and Peoples’ Sovereignty (MOVPAZ) reiterates its call to all organizations, movements and people who love Peace to multiply the denunciation against imperialist aggression against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and to carry out actions in strong solidarity with the Venezuelan people and their leaders.

Havana, September 12, 2017

Join the Hands Off Syria Coalition!

World Peace Council calls upon all of its member organizations and other peace activists around the world to endorse and support the Hands Off Syria Coalition. The U.S. Peace Council is one of the founders of the Hands Off Syria Coalition, and the WPC has already endorsed the Coalition and has signed on to their Statement of Unity.

To endorse the Coalition, please go to the following link:
<http://HandsOffSyriaCoalition.net>

Acquisition and Cross Servicing Agreement (ACSA) Between the USA and Sri Lanka Renewed Despite Protests

Bimal Rathnayake, President
Peace and Solidarity Organization
of Sri Lanka (PASOS)

ACSA was signed for the first time between Sri Lanka and the USA on 5th of March 2007 clandestinely without making the Cabinet of Ministers and the Parliament aware. Interestingly, the signatories of both parties of the agreement were Americans. It was signed by the then U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka Mr. Robert O. Blake and the Secretary of Defense of Sri Lanka Mr. Gotabhaya Rajapakse who holds dual citizenship of the USA and Sri Lanka. Unethical and undemocratic.

Recognizing the threat to the security of the entire citizenry and the sovereignty of the country through the adoption of this agreement, Peoples’ Liberation Front (JVP) opposed it back in 2007 at the Parliament and outside. The response of the government was that it needs help of the USA for its war against LTTE. Yet,

the USA never extended such assistance during the war or afterwards.

Applicable period of time of the agreement ended on 5th March 2017. On inquiry at the Parliament, the Prime Minister Mr. Ranil Wickramasinghe said that the agreement will be renewed for another 10 year term. Cabinet of Ministers have granted approval for the renewal without seen the real agreement.

Has Sri Lanka benefited from the ACSA or will she benefit from it in future? The truth is that nowhere in the world that the USA has really “protected” a country. Indeed what has happened is destruction of sovereign countries by the name of protection and liberation; for example Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria.

According to the ACSA, each party can utilize certain services of military nature of the other country. Obviously, Sri Lanka will receive only petty benefits on rare occasions such as in humanitarian operations in other countries where the USA military

too is active in parallel. On the other hand, when the USA use the terms of the agreement for her benefit in a future military operation in the region, Sri Lanka could become an easy victim of an inter state war among major global powers. Being strategically located in Indian ocean Sri Lanka is at a constant threat of first being a military base of the USA or USA dominated NATO alliance and then a battle ground, if their enemies choose retaliation.

In the recent history, the USA has entered in to similar military agreements with number of countries around

the world. The tactics used for such engagements ranged from diplomatic negotiations to the application of force. Sri Lanka, being weak both politically and economically is very vulnerable to such pressures. Since “independence” in 1948 from direct colonialism of the British empire, Sri Lanka can be recognized as a country which gradually lessened her sovereignty, political and economic autonomy and risked her territorial integrity. Country’s non aligned balanced foreign policy became polarized towards

continued on page 10

On the occasion of the 100 years anniversary of the Great Socialist October Revolution the WPC will attend the international event organized by the Communist party of the Russian Federation (CPRF) with a delegation comprised by its President Socorro Gomes, the General Secretary Thanassis Pafilis and the Regional Coordinator of Asia&Pacific Rabindra Adhikari. The events will take place from 2-7 November 2017 in St Petersburg (Leningrad) and Moscow.

FARC Builds Peace ... (from p. 5)
including during the peace process.

According to international organizations for human rights, in 2016, almost 80 social activists were murdered — 17 of them only in the National Syndicalist School — and paramilitary activity is ongoing, as in the case of the heirs of the so-called Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia, including in territories formerly protected by the FARC.

Zones of the interest of the agribusiness and of mining companies are under focus, where rural, indigenous and afro-

descendant communities resist. At the same time, urban popular leaders have denounced serious threats to their safety, which do not come only from paramilitary forces. There are still unacceptable delays in the inquiries into thousands of cases of extra-judicial killings perpetrated by official forces and of operations staged to incriminate targets amidst social movements, the so-called “false positives”, in the already known quest to criminalize the people’s movements.

But the Colombian people resist valiantly, as they have for the past 53

years — since in 1964, the horrendous attacks on Marquetalia, called for by the Colombian oligarchy against peasants, has inaugurated the armed conflict, in the framework of Plan LASO (Latin America Security Operation) of the John F. Kennedy Administration, an operation that was part of the so-called Alliance for Progress launched in 1961 to actually contain the region’s progressive and revolutionary forces.

Hence the necessity of commitment from all peace forces in the accompaniment of the Colombian people’s struggle

for a just and lasting peace, with social justice and a political transformation that can eliminate para-militarism and the oligarchy’s violent methods once and for all.

The new chapter ahead finally recognizes political inclusion and social struggle as the FARC’s and other insurgent forces’ legitimate endeavors. Now is the time for the general and unlimited commitment with peace-building and social justice, and Colombia’s de-militarization. The struggle is ongoing, after all, as Jiménez said in the Congress, “peace is the most beautiful of the tasks.” ■

World Peace Council Call to the Youth and Students at the XIX World Festival of Youth and Students in Sochi, October 14-22, 2017

“For Peace, Solidarity and Social Justice, we struggle against Imperialism — Honouring our past, we build the future!!!”



Dear comrades and friends, fellow peace militants in the struggle for a world of peace and social justice!

Dear comrades of the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY)

The World Peace Council (WPC) salutes the many thousands of youth and students, representatives of the progressive anti-imperialist youth and students' organisations of the world in their gathering in Sochi/Russian Federation. As WPC, the historical international organisation rallying dozens of organisations and movements struggling for peace in the world and against imperialist domination and exploitation, we salute the vanguard youth and students who are struggling side by side with the workers and peasants all over the world.

The 70 years of history of the World Festivals of Youth and Students carries the banners of the peoples' and youth struggle for national liberation and social emancipation, for the right of every people to determine freely their fortunes and destiny. It is full of heroic struggles and achievements in all continents always with the same desire and aspiration: To build a world where people will live in peace together, without the fear of war, aggression, occupation, without the threat of imperialist forces against the lives and future of mankind.

The period during this XIX. WFYS takes place is unfortunately one of growing imperialist aggressiveness in all spheres and in all continents. In a period of deep economic crisis, the world is facing new dangers and threats to peace, including ongoing imperialist military interventions against sovereign countries and the revival of Fascism in old and new forms. Humanity is facing the dangers of a generalized war of global dimensions. However, this is also a time for hope, based on the struggles of the peace-loving peoples of the world, that this eventuality can be stopped. We need to recall lessons from historical struggles, and unite all consequent and broad forces for peace and progress in a strong mobilization whose strength, breadth and conviction can prevent new tragedies from occurring.

The United States' doctrine of "full-spectrum dominance" defines its global orientation and combines dismantling sovereign countries in the Middle East, confronting the expansion of the emerging economy of China, and promoting a non-conventional war against Russia. The latter tactic is part of the fierce competition and creates a comprehensive "wall of containment" against Russia that extends through the Balkans and Eurasia. It is an action led by NATO and the EU, which has been broadening its bellicose machine and seeking the incorporation of countries of the ex-USSR. The most relevant, recent episode directly involving Europe is Ukraine's destabilization through a Fascist coup d'État. At the same time, an aggressive response to this doctrine will deteriorate the situation and further increase tensions.

The escalation of imperialist wars and aggressions against sovereign states in the Middle East, Africa and Asia have

shown that the threats to humankind are even bigger. The organizations and terrorist groups that US imperialism and its allies have helped create and to which they gave resources and weapons are sowing violence against the peoples in the Middle East and are instrumentalized to promote a "security trend" that violates and disregards fundamental rights, guarantees and freedoms in many countries, as the last years' developments have shown.

As an organization and movement struggling for a cause that concerns all of humanity, we feel connected to the hardships affecting the majorities of deprived and oppressed all over the world by an unequal socio-economic system. The current threats of war are directly related to the wide range of crises affecting the

world. The dominant economic system shows its exploitative and oppressive nature ever more, in the contradictions between those owning capital and the dispossessed. In addition to economic and financial aspects, the systemic crisis also affects energy resources, food and the environment.

The 19th World Festival of Youth and Students coincides this year with the 100th anniversary of the Great Socialist October Revolution, which shook the world and opened a new phase for the peoples of the USSR and the world. We pay our tribute and respect to the peoples of the ex-Soviet Union which struggled and built the first socialist State 100 years ago. Despite setbacks and reversals, the October Revolution remains a source of inspiration for the

people and youth of the world!
The World Peace Council is attending your XIX. World Festival of Youth and Students with the conviction that the progressive and anti-imperialist youth of the world can contribute decisively to the common struggle we share as WPC, in order to defeat the enemy of our dreams and aspirations and comply with the needs of the youth and the students for education, decent jobs and recreation, in a world where the peoples will be the masters of the wealth and their destinies.

- Imperialism is not all-powerful!
- Long live the anti-imperialist Solidarity of the Peoples!
- Long live the World Festivals of Youth and Students! ■

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