

Manifesto for Peace



Official newsletter of the Committee for International Solidarity & the Struggle for Peace (COSI) - Venezuela
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COSI Stands Against Foreign Military Bases on February 23

The Committee for International Solidarity and the Struggle for Peace (COSI) commemorated the Global Day of Action Against Foreign Military Bases this February 23 with a series of

activities in various regions of the country.

In the palafito village of Coquivacoa, **COSI Zulia held a political-cultural activity** in which more than a hundred people heard human rights specialist Nelly Chiquito argue against foreign military bases and the **“military hegemony of capital,”** as well as cultural presentations from the El Marullo Poetry Collective, singers Carlos Guillén and Darvin Romero, theatre actor Romer Urdaneta and the Ali Primera Cultural Front.

Likewise, COSI Mérida crossed the **highest road in the country at 4118m above sea level with an anti-base delegation** to the rural community of Timotes on February

19 and 20, where they painted a mural, **sewed consciousness about the day in a rural workers’ assembly**, participated in three radio shows and led a special session of the Municipal Chambers in commemoration of the day, in which they recorded a video message.

Venezuela finds itself **surrounded by imperialist military bases** with at least 7 in Colombia and a host in the Caribbean pointing towards Bolívar’s homeland.

With the deepening of political contradictions in 2019, the militarisation of the region, open and covert destabilising intervention, and the **peoples’ struggle for peace** in the region all assume new importance for the Venezuelan people.

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- COSI expresses solidarity with Haiti
- New logo launched
- Rosa Luxemburg conference raises the banners of solidarity
- WPC visits Caracas for Global Anti-Imperialist Gathering

Aguirre Denounces Human Rights Violations in Bolivia

During the 43rd session of the United Nation’s Human Rights Council in Geneva, the COSI, in representation of the World Peace Council (WPC), presented **denouncements of multiple human rights violations seen in Bolivia** since the coup d’état last November 2019.

During the presentation, general secretary of the COSI Gabriel Aguirre addressed member nations and civil society, exposing the need to investigate the cases of the **29 people who have died in irregular deeds**, such as the Argentinean journalist **Sebastián Moro**. Likewise, he highlighted the need to look into the more than 800 injured and **1,503 arbitrary arrests** which the

country has seen in recent months, including that of the **Argentinean photographer Facundo Molares**, who currently finds himself kidnapped by Bolivian dictatorship. The case of the journalist Morales, who also is delicately ill and suffers **torture** from the Bolivian police, has come to represent yet another crime in a large file of human rights violations which the **de facto government** of Bolivia has amassed since the coup d’état, which was promoted by the United States with the complicity of the Organisation of American States and carried out by the Armed Forces and Bolivia’s National Police.

From Venezuela, we continue to raise our voices denouncing the



criminal behaviour of the illegal government of Bolivia. We also express our **solidarity with all of the political and social leaders who are on the side of the people** and demand respect for the rights of the indigenous people in strong defence of peace and in rejection of **fascism** and xenophobia.

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Embassy Protection Collective in Washington: “WE AREN'T THE ONES WHO VIOLATED THE LAW”

In March 2019, the Committee for International Solidarity & the Struggle for Peace (COSI) received a delegation from the US Peace Council. One month later, some members of this delegation led the famous occupation of the Venezuelan embassy in Washington to prevent its handing over to Guaidó's team.

The following is an extract from an exclusive interview with the activists days before their trial. The full interview can be seen on the website www.cosivenezuela.org



For those not familiar with the Embassy Protection Collective, can you summarize the charges being levelled against you, the process to date, and the potential scenarios ahead?

Four Embassy Protector Collective members are being prosecuted in Washington DC's federal court for “interfering with the protective functions of the US Department of State.” The Trump administration is arguing that our refusal to leave interfered with the government's ability to protect the embassy. The trial will begin on February 11 and could last approximately one week. The maximum penalties are up to one year in jail and up to a US \$100,000 fine each.

Can you explain how it is that in a political trial you are banned from talking about politics?

Judge Howell is trying to keep politics out of the courtroom. As a result, the jury is unlikely to be given important facts or context to understand our presence in the embassy. This is not unusual in political prosecutions in the United States. Under a long-time and consistently upheld US legal precedent, courts do not get involved in political questions. Particularly relevant to this case is that the US president decides who is recognized as the leader of a foreign nation. Courts do not second-guess the president's decisions. As a result, the courtroom will be operating within the legal fiction that Juan Guaido is president of Venezuela even though he [effectively] has not been president for even one minute. If the prosecutors have their way, the jurors will not be told the Embassy Protection Collective was in the embassy for 37 days with the permission of the elected government of Venezuela, that Carlos Vecchio is not an ambassador but part of a failed coup, and that the Vienna Convention made it illegal for the US to enter the embassy. They will not be told that the US

Secret Service, responsible for protecting foreign embassies, worked with a pro-coup mob to terrorize members of the Collective, destroy doors and windows, break into the embassy, block food deliveries and assault activists. They will not be told the electricity and water were illegally turned off. This is often the reality of the US criminal justice system.

How would you describe the support from grassroots and progressive groups in the US and especially in Venezuela?

We greatly appreciate the support of movements in Venezuela and the US during this entire ordeal. During the time in the embassy, we were supported constantly by people who rallied outside and who stayed through the night to watch what the mob was doing. There was a constant media presence by teleSUR, Grayzone and Mintpress News as well as social media activists. People worked incredibly hard to allow us to continue in the embassy. We received donations and messages of support from people across the United States. We loved the messages of solidarity we received from social movements in Venezuela and appreciated the words of support from the Venezuelan foreign ministry and president.

In the face of the potentially life-changing consequences of the trial, how are you holding up psychologically?

We are doing well overall. We will accept the outcome of this process and are resolved to use whatever happens as a positive to keep raising awareness and building the anti-imperialist movement. We know that being in a US prison is very unpleasant, but we also know we will still have supporters on the outside and we will get through it. We are taking steps to make sure our families and children are looked after, and our anti-imperialist work continues. If we lose the case, we will know that it is not a bad reflection on us as individuals but the reality of the system in which we live. We will join the millions of other people who have had similar experiences. The psychological impact has been a greater commitment to take action for justice in the US where we have very serious economic, racial and environmental problems as well for justice in the US' Venezuela policy.

**PAUL DOBSON
COSI MÉRIDA**

COSI launches new logo

The Committee for International Solidarity and the Struggle for Peace unveiled its new logo at the start of 2020, updating the image of the organisation in all of the press and social media outlets.

The new logo, which incorporates the colours of the Venezuelan flag, carries the important symbol of the peace dove, also the icon of the World Peace Council.

The logo continues to use the red star, a symbol of anti-imperialist struggle and rebellion of the peoples against the capitalist system.

WPC Visits Caracas for Global Anti-Imperialist Gathering

From January 22 to 24, the **Global Gathering against Imperialism, for Life, Sovereignty, and Peace** was held in the city of Caracas.

The international gathering brought together **403 international delegates from 150 countries of the 5 continents** and 2,096 Venezuelan delegates under the banners of the political parties, social movements, classes, and social forces which struggle for peace, democracy, people's self-determination, solidarity between peoples, against imperialist interventionism and the neoliberal model."



This activity was attended by a **high-level delegation from the World Peace Council (WPC)**, which included WPC Executive Secretary Iraklis Tsavdaridis, US Peace Council Executive Secretary Bahman Azad, Cyprus Peace Council President Stelios Sofocli, Milan against the War Committee International Affairs Secretary Marcello Gentile, Cuba-Germany Solidarity Movement President Petra Wegeneer, Brazilian Centre for Solidarity of the People and the Struggle for Peace Vice-President Wevergton Brito, Caribbean Movement for Peace and Integration President David Denny and Sri Lanka's People's Liberation Front representative Bimal Rathnayake.

The delegation was received by a **COSI team** which took advantage of the activity to further fraternal relations with the respective organisations.

The WPC delegation participated in 12 thematic and 9 sectorial workgroups, which covered issues such as:

imperialist attacks in the 21st century; militarisation and NATO; neoliberalism versus social inclusion; the experiences of progressive governments across the world; workers; women; communes and social movements amongst others.

This space of struggle brought to light the struggles of the peoples who resist against the system, as well as those of the governments which struggle for their sovereignty.

One of the strategic and urgent objectives was the unity of the antiimperialist struggle so as to be able to triumph against the threats of military intervention, attempted coup d'états, and focal points of terrorist violence.

ÚRSULA AGUILERA
COSI CARACAS

COSI Rejects Entry of Haiti into Lima Group

The COSI, together with different Venezuelan social movements and the **Haitian community**, held a protest and mobilisation this past February 5 in front of the Haitian embassy in Caracas to **reject the incorporation of the government of Jovenel Moïse into the Lima Group**, which looks to continue its attacks against the Venezuelan people.

Haiti is one of the countries in the region where **direct US intervention** can be observed in the clearest way, as well as imperialism's desire set up new colonies to finance its domination over other countries and to **loot their resources**, exploit their workforce, and control their markets and commercial trade routes.

Each of these objectives can only be achieved through imposing war-like conditions on nations, destroying nation-states and promoting internal conflicts between the exploited classes so as to guarantee control.

The incorporation of Haiti into the Lima Group is an action which is driven by the United States and which directly responds to its

objective of dominating other countries.

In the case of Haiti, these interests are manifested in the representative of capitalism Jovenel Moïse, who forms part of the **large landowning bourgeoisie connected to banana production**. The Haitian people have already called out the **fraud** with which he arrived to power and have demanded his sacking for responding to US interests.

This has been a **struggle which has kept the Haitian people mobilised in the streets**, resisting the oppression from the police and armed forces, which have caused thousands of injuries and hundreds of deaths.

Confronted by these actions, the working people of Haiti and numerous political, social, and religious organisations **have all come together** with a common call which focuses around the quitting of the current government, the start of a constituent process and the push for social programs which may challenge the alarming social

indicators of the country, where 60% of the population live on the poverty line.

For these reasons, and due to the **historic friendship between our peoples** which began in the struggle for independence of both countries, we, the Venezuelan organisations, express our firm condemnation of the actions of US imperialism in Haiti and reject its entrance into the Lima Group as an instrument of domination of the peoples.

JOJANNY URBINA
COSI CARACAS



Venezuela PRESENT at 25th Rosa Luxemburg Conference

The 25th Rosa Luxemburg Conference was held between January 11th and 13th in Berlin, Germany. It is an activity which has been held every second Saturday in January since 1996.

The Committee for International Solidarity and the Struggle for Peace (COSI) was present on the Latin American panel through a speech delivered by COSI **President Carolus Wimmer**, in which he declared that “the German press ignores the issue of Venezuela,” and “in **Venezuela we continue to defeat imperialism** which is looking to put its claws on the continent through the Monroe Doctrine,” affirming that “the Venezuelan people continue to resist through a civil-military alliance, and for this reason - as well as due to the international solidarity we have received - we are still standing.”

Those participating in the conference held a **great march in honour of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht**, during which the COSI marched together with the different organisations to the “The Socialist” cemetery to place a **nail in honour of the anti-fascist fighters**.

The Rosa Luxemburg Conference, named after the

famous German communist, is a space which brings together progressive, anti-imperialist and anti-fascist forces and is convened by the journalist Junge Welt, as well as being supported by more than 70 German political and social organisations and trade unions.

This year’s event saw more than **3,000 people participate from Germany and the world**, assisting in different activities organised for the gathering, including speeches, debates, meetings to exchange experiences of people’s struggles, and diverse cultural activities.



ABOUT COSI

The Committee for International Solidarity and the Struggle for Peace (COSI) is a Venezuelan organisation which struggles to coordinate and organise the widest possible friendship and solidarity between the peoples who have been victims of imperialism.

President: Carolus Wimmer - General Secretary: Gabriel Aguirre - Youth Secretary: Hugo Rojas

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Created in 1971, the COSI is a plural, national, and independent movement, made up of activists-internationalists from various areas of struggle and organised by region. It is the only voice of the World Peace Council in Venezuela, which has consultative status in the UN, the UNDP, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNCTAD, ILO and is a special guest at the summits of the NAM, the African Union, and the Arab League. The COSI fights to form resistance to imperialist wars and foreign military bases; fascism, racism, xenophobia, and against every form of discrimination; for world peace and universal disarmament, especially of WMDs; and to promote respect for human rights and the right to self-determination of the peoples.

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