

Kristine Karch, Chicago 17.05.2012

Dear friends,

I'm very proud that I have been invited here to speak and thank you all.

I'm coming from a women's network, which is part of the global network "No to war – no to NATO", supported by more than 600 organizations worldwide.

I bring you warm greetings from the women in Europe, who are on the streets during these days around the NATO summit to demand the abolition of it. NATO is a dinosaurian of cold war period and have to be part of the garbage heap of history.

There are actions in several European cities like Verona and Torino in Italy, Sevilla in Spain, London in Great Britain, Oslo in Norway and Stuttgart, Germany.

Women around the world are fighting for equal rights, against violence, oppression and exclusion. In the analysis of the causes of war feminists identify the patriarchy - the dominance of masculine values within society - besides the power structures of capitalism, racism and militarism.

Male values associated with hierarchies, rivalry, and competition and resulting violence. So-called female values like concern and reconciliation will not find recognition. The attribution of values is not justified biologically, but is generated through society. If we want to struggle against war and militarism we have to analyze these power structures and gender relations in their whole complexity and with their interdependencies and we are obliged to unveiling the inherent violence that starts with domestic violence, continues on the streets, does not spare nature and ends in wars and all people suffer from these.

NATO as war and military alliance with its new strategy contributes to the further militarization of Europe and reproduces patriarchal structures of power.

The implementation of the UN Resolution 1325 (to women, peace and security) does not change anything about it, because NATO does not tackle the causes of violence, militarism and patriarchy

but try to integrate also women into their dirty war activities.

The images of Abu Grahیب demonstrate the harmful influence these structures have especially on women.

If NATO would be seriously interested in women's rights, in peace and security it would have to abolish itself immediately.

As the war in Afghanistan shows women's rights cannot be implemented by bombs into a country. War enforces patriarchal power structures and leads to a loss of already won (women`s) rights.

**Women of NATO states are saying ‘No to NATO’ for all these reasons, and more.**

Military expenditure squanders money needed for the education, health and housing services badly needed by women, who carry the main burden of domestic life.

Women suffer displacement, rape, loss, injury and increased burdens due to war.

NATO’s military bases in many neighborhoods are a source of social stress, toxic pollution, sexual exploitation and violence.

Women’s security is not military security.

Women call for the negotiated, non-violent settlement of all conflicts, and the inclusion of women in peace processes.

This means at first: Troops out of Afghanistan