

No to War – No to NATO

Nein zum Krieg – Nein zur NATO | Non à la Guerre – Non à L'OTAN | No a la Guerra – No a la OTAN

Press release, March 14th 2013

Annual meeting of the International Network "No to NATO - No to War": The delegitimization of the NATO war machine will continue

From March 8th – 10th 2013 the annual meeting of the International Network "No to War, No to NATO" was held in the Belgian city of Ghent. The Network has more than 650 partners and organizations from over 20 countries.

Marking the beginning of the conference the event "For gender justice, peace and solidarity - No to War - No to NATO - stop the militarization" took place on March 8th, the International Women day. Christiane Reymann, a former board member of the European Left, clarified the context of patriarchal structures and power, based on the duality of male and female, which always involves exclusion and devaluation of others and leads to violence and war. For achieving a united world, inclusion, tolerance and acceptance of differences are necessary. In the subsequent round-table discussion, it was illustrated that all women need to strengthen women's rights and roll back the militarization of society.

The more than 30 delegates attending from 11 countries exposed a very positive assessment of the various activities of the last two years like the participation at the Counter NATO Summits and the large demonstration against the NATO Summit in Chicago, two international peace congresses on Afghanistan, and the first anti-NATO conference in Argentina, among others. The annual report of the retired speaker of the network Reiner Braun, is available at:

www.no-to-nato.org.

One of the newly elected speakers, Claire Chastain of "No to NATO" Network France, described the international meeting as "lively, dynamic and active in many fields". This not only became obvious in the participation of a new member organization of the network from Montenegro (www.neunato.net/), but also in the comprehensive working program of the weekend. "We will continue the delegitimization of the greatest war machine by actively denouncing war, destruction, social breakdown, and environmental disasters as dangers to our planet," said the newly elected second speaker, Lucas Wirl of INES from Germany.

In a supportive and constructive atmosphere reflecting a significant consolidation of the Network, a detailed action program was developed unanimously (www.no-to-nato.org).

It was agreed:

- To actively accompany NATO Summits with alternative Counter-Summits, protests, and civil disobedience

- To continue the struggle for peace that opens the way to democracy and justice, at the international conference with Afghan exile organizations of the European society on 11-13.10 in 2013 in Strasbourg.
- Planning a conference on NATO and Africa. Not only the current development in Mali, but also the drone deployment requires increased attention on this continent, which was declared by NATO as a high influence area.
- Better public relations to more effectively reveal the role of NATO, for example, the militarization of the North, i.e. the "neutral" Sweden (in close cooperation with the Swedish Government) or the expansion of military bases.
- To continue to actively work against NATO's nuclear strategy and to support the various activities for the NPT summit, as well as actions at nuclear bases in Germany and Belgium.
- A special emphasis will be placed on the connection between economics and war, and the social consequences of policies of war and armament. Therefore, the Network will get involved with their own contributions to the upcoming Alter-summit "another Europe now!" in Athens, June 7th to 9th 2013.
- Highlighted was the need to comprehensively commit, with many actions in the different countries, to the event "100 years war 1914-2014 beginning of World War I" and to demand the abolition of war and weapons. The Network will also provide input to the large peace actions in Sarajevo in June 2014.

The spirit of solidarity of the meeting was followed by the unanimous election of a new "International Coordination Committee (ICC)".

It consists of:

Reiner Braun, Germany (International IALANA / International Peace Office (IPB))
Claire Chastain, France (Collectif National OTAN-Afghanistan)
Ludo De Brabander, Belgium (Vrede vzw.)
Joseph Gerson, USA (American Friends Service Committee)
Luis Gutierrez-Esparza, Mexico (Latin American Circle of International Studies)
Kristine Karch, Germany (Women's Network No to War - No to NATO)
Judith LeBlanc, United States (Peace Action)
Joe Lombardo, USA (United National Antiwar Coalition)
Miguel Monserrat / Cinthia Ruiz, Argentina (Asamblea Permanente por los Derechos Humanos (APDH))
Agneta Norberg, Sweden (Swedish Peace Council)
Tobias Pflüger, Germany (Information Centre Militarization (IMI) / DFG-VK)
Patrice Salzenstein / Jean-Yves Gallas, France (Mouvement de la Paix)
Dave Webb / Kate Hudson, UK (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament)
Lucas Wirl, Germany (International Network of Engineers and Scientists for Global Responsibility (INES))
Michael Youlton / Seamas Rattigan, Ireland (Irish Antiwar Movement / Peace and Neutrality Alliance)

A new electoral system for this body was also adopted, which provides for the future, an e-mail vote of the ICC under more active participation of the entire Network.

Since its foundation in 2008 the Network, especially the many member organizations, have been putting the overcoming of the most powerful military bloc of history on the international

agenda, the agendas of national peace movements, and the international politics. With a strengthened Network, with a variety of imaginative, peaceful actions, and a comprehensive educational work, the dinosaur NATO shall finally become history. Peaceful, non-violent and preventive forms of conflict resolution in a just world must become reality – that was the unanimous conclusion of the participants of the Annual Meeting 2013 of the international network " No to War - No to NATO".

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