

Women in Black say **NO TO NATO**



The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a military alliance of the USA, Canada, the UK and other states, set up after the Second World War to oppose the USSR. The 'Communist Bloc' disintegrated twenty years ago, but NATO lives on, a dangerous Cold War dinosaur.

On the occasion of NATO's Summit Meeting, Chicago May 19-20, we protest against NATO's Strategic Plan and against UK membership of this aggressive alliance....

Ever larger: NATO is recruiting new member states year by year, encircling Russia, threatening Iran and even China. Finland and Sweden are being courted, so as to control the resources opening up in the melting Arctic. There is talk of Israel joining. NATO now accounts for 75% of global military spending and seeks to control the world in the economic interests of the USA and other rich states.

War-prone and worldwide: NATO's founding mission is 'defence' of the North Atlantic region. **So why is it sponsored by the UN to fight an aggressive war in Afghanistan?** Why does it need a Rapid Deployment force capable of despatching fighting units worldwide within days?

Militarizing the European Union: NATO wants an increasingly militarized European Union as its 'strategic partner'. Predicting 'cyber wars', it foresees greater 'military-civilian co-operation' in the name of 'counter-insurgency', further threatening our civil liberties.

Nuclear weapons: Under NATO's 'nuclear sharing' agreement, US nuclear warheads are stationed in European member states. It is NATO policy that strategic nuclear weapons, including the UK's Trident system, be retained and modernized. The USA is going ahead with its new-model 'missile defence' antiballistic space shield, despite popular resistance to its installations.

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 neighbourhoods 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.

Dear Prime Minister,

In connection with the NATO meeting of Heads of State in Chicago May 19-20 I urge you to press for the following policies::

- Halt NATO expansion, curb NATO's 'out-of-area' operations, and ensure its observance of international law.
- Reverse militarization of the European Union – the EU is for social and economic co-operation.
- No more erosion of our civil liberties in the name of 'counter-insurgency'.
- No 'space wars'.
- Rid Europe of both tactical and strategic nuclear weapons.
- Work for a binding international Convention to abolish nuclear weapons.
- Work towards replacing NATO with non-military co-operation for peace and justice.

Signature.....Name:.....

Address:

**Women in Black, C/o The Maypole Fund, PO Box 14072, London N16 5WB
Donations for leaflets etc most welcome. www.womeninblack.org.uk**

Women in Black holds vigils every Wednesday between 6-7 pm at the Edith Cavell Statue, opposite the door of the National Portrait Gallery, St.Martin's Place, London WC2. The vigils are silent, women-only and if possible we wear black.