



International Coordinating Committee Statement – Lisbon - November 19, 2010

NATO MEANS WAR: NO TO THE NEW STRATEGIC CONCEPT

As NATO leaders gather for the Lisbon Summit, peace activists reaffirm their opposition to NATO's aggressive military and nuclear policies. We assert our vision of a just world free of war and deplore the squandering of the world's resources on violence, militarisation and weapons of death and mass destruction. This is a vision shared by the overwhelming majority of humanity and, as peace movements from across the NATO states, we will work together until our countries no longer stand for brute force and suffering but for peace, justice and equality across all borders.

As NATO tries to reinvent itself, through its new strategic concept, to maintain and extend its domination in an increasingly globalised world, its role and purpose are increasingly questioned. Whilst trying to present itself as a humanitarian body with an increasing political and economic remit, it remains a vehicle for US-led use of force with military bases on all continents. It is an alliance that intervenes militarily in pursuit of economic interests and advantage. It bypasses the United Nations and the system of international law, accelerating militarization and escalating arms expenditure – NATO countries account for 75% of global military expenditure. At a time of global economic crisis this expenditure represents a crime against the living standards of ordinary people as pay and conditions are slashed to meet NATO budget requirements.

NATO leaders are seeking a face-saving way out of the catastrophic war in Afghanistan. This brutal war, which has cost so many innocent Afghan lives, must be brought to an end now. The people of Afghanistan and the region cannot wait five years to start the process of rebuilding their lives. The war will only exacerbate the existing problems of the region. The way out is to bring our troops home – now!

In Europe, NATO continues to pursue increased militarisation, and policies which are increasing tensions within Europe. For the first time, NATO's new strategic concept asserts that there will be a strategic partnership with the European Union. This means that NATO recognizes the European Union as a military alliance as provided by the Lisbon Treaty. Indeed, under the Treaty's solidarity clause member states have greater immediate military responsibilities than they do within NATO.

The US continues to station its tactical nuclear weapons in Europe under the guise of NATO, despite states' demands that they should be withdrawn. NATO must cease to impose nuclear weapons on Europe and must end its nuclear first use policy. The Obama

Administration is also promoting, via NATO, a new version of Bush's missile defence programme - that was so comprehensively defeated by the Czech people. Now Turkey is being pressed to host the radar base which the Czechs rejected. So-called missile 'defence' systems are designed to serve as shields to reinforce NATO's first-strike swords. They pose an immediate danger, destabilise international relations, and promote a new arms race. We reject any version of missile defence and call on NATO member states instead to pursue just foreign policies which will help generate a culture of peace not war. We must democratise and demilitarise the relations between peoples and establish new forms of peaceful cooperation to build a more secure and just world.

NATO has no place in our vision of a just world. It stands in opposition to democracy, as its support for the corrupt and warlord backed Karzai regime in Afghanistan and its repeated repressions of free speech and assembly on the occasions of NATO summits demonstrate. Its creed is aggressive, expansionist, militaristic and unjust. We call on all peoples to reject these values, to reject and resist NATO and its vision of global domination and to join with us in building a world of peace without NATO.

No to NATO!